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## Uncertain Boundaries: Dispositive Techniques in Provost's Novels

### Abstract

Archaeological survey, GIS, Longue duree, Roman ceramics, Settlement history, Sicily

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UNCERTAIN BOUNDARIES  
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Benjamin Hillel Baker

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*To Elisa*

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ABSTRACT

UNCERTAIN BOUNDARIES  
DISPOSITIVE TECHNIQUES IN PRÉVOST'S NOVELS

Benjamin Hillel Baker

Gerald Prince  
Christophe Martin

This thesis examines the relationship between part and whole in novels by Antoine François Prévost to question the modern assumption that prototypical novelistic narrative structure and dispositive structure (chapters, books, volumes, parts, installments, etc.) share the same points of articulation. In Prévost's day, the combination of the unpredictable rhythm of publication in installments and the ever-present possibility of continuation made it difficult for authors and readers to identify a novel's definitive conclusion. This uncertainty led to tension between a novel's concrete parts and its imagined narrative whole, and that tension created what I have termed a segmentary esthetic that stands in contrast to both the more regularly serialized novels of the nineteenth century and to more recent single-installment novels. To support these hypotheses, I first investigate schemas of interaction between dispositive structure and narrative structure in Prévost's novels that differ from modern formal expectations: pseudoworks (works-within-works) and narrative units that cross dispositive boundaries in the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* and the *Voyages de Robert Lade*, and interrupted publication and unauthorized continuation in *Cleveland* and *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*. I then identify similar interactions in two of Prévost's more formally modern novels *La Jeunesse du Commandeur* and *Histoire d'une Grecque moderne*. This study shows that unstable boundaries can be compatible with compositional sophistication, and outlines a new method of analysis that can be applied to narrative fiction from other periods and in other media.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
Introduction .....	1
Context .....	1
Serialization and Literature .....	3
Prévost's place in the study of the history of the French novel .....	8
Origins of modern critical ideas about part-whole relationship .....	13
Modern background of recent critical ideas about part-whole relationship .....	17
Publication rhythm .....	18
Boundaries and the idea of unity .....	20
Parts and the idea of structure .....	22
Crossing the Genettian threshold to walk on Dionne's path to chapters .....	26
Two mutually-illuminating ideas: narration and disposition .....	38
Findings .....	45
Methods .....	45
Chapter Summaries .....	50
Part I: When the Whole Has Wholes in It .....	50
Part II: When the Whole Has a Hole in it .....	52
Part III: When the Whole Story Has Been Told .....	55
Part I: When the Whole Has Wholes in It .....	58
Chapter 1: When the Whole is in Pieces: Dispositive Structure, Narrative Structure, and the Segmentary Esthetic in <i>Mémoires d'un homme de qualité</i> .....	58
Disposition, Narration, and the Identity of a Work .....	58
Disposition and Narration as Simultaneously Operating Independent Systems Subtending the Structure of a Text as a "Work" .....	60
Dual Structure and the Segmentary Esthetic .....	62
Characteristics of the Segmentary Esthetic .....	64
Wholeness and the Segmentary Esthetic .....	66
Characteristics of the Narrative and Dispositive Structural Systems .....	69
Locating Internal and External Frontiers in the <i>Mémoires</i> .....	71
External Boundary Test Case: <i>Manon Lescaut</i> .....	73
Internal Boundary Test Case: The First Installment of the <i>Mémoires</i> .....	75
Installments of Publication as Wholes and Parts .....	78
Instability of Relationships Between Installments .....	78
Narratorial Evolution as Structural Principle in the First Installment .....	85



Dispositive–Narrative Tension as a Sign of and Impetus for Character Development.....	85
Dispositive–Narrative Tension as Product and Source of the Segmentary Esthetic .....	86
Narrative Structure vs. Dispositive Structure in the First Major Narrative Unit: Renoncour’s Metamorphosis from Passive Subject to Active Protagonist.....	90
Dispositive Structure vs. Narrative Structure in the Second Major Narrative Unit: Renoncour’s (First) Career as a Circular Trajectory.....	100
Adding Parts to a Whole that is Already Complete, Yet Never Was.....	112
The Second Installment as a Site of Narrative and Dispositive Interface: The Cycle Begins Again with Renoncour’s Second Career .....	112
The Provisional Wholeness of the First Installment.....	112
The Productive Paradox of the Infinite Circle as a Model for the Narration of a Life: Simultaneously Always-Already Complete and Always-Already Incomplete .....	115
The Segmentary Esthetic in Action at the Transition Between the First and Second Installments: Renoncour’s First Career as Both Whole and Part.....	117
Dispositive-Narrative Tension at Moments of Transition Between Installments: The “Avant- Propos” as a Narrative Unit. ....	119
The Segmentary Esthetic in Interactions Between Books and Major Narrative Units in the Second Installment: Two Intertwining Lives .....	124
The Evolving Identity of the Work in the Third Major Narrative Unit: Transforming the Unity of a Life into Part of a Multisegment Whole.....	125
Narrative–Dispositive Interaction at the Diegetic–Metadiegetic Interface as Manifested by Transitions Between Installments.....	128
The Origin of the Second and Third Installments as Presented Within the Diegesis Through Narratorial Meta-Commentary and Pseudo-Editorial Commentary.....	129
Narrative–Dispositive Interaction as an Element of the Internal Paratext at the Transition Between the Second and Third Installments .....	131
Dynamic Structural Tension in the Third Installment: Transitioning from Protection of Possible Continuation to Fostering Provisional Conclusion.....	134
Minimizing Dispositive Disjunction: The Beginning of the Third Installment as an Element of an Important Nexus of Narrative Structural Transition.....	134
Thematic Alternation as Narrative Structure: Rosemont’s Independence and Renoncour’s Ineffectiveness Increase in Parallel in the Fifth Major Narrative Unit.....	138
Narrative–Dispositive Mismatch and Coincidence as Structural Devices in the Fifth Major Narrative Unit: When the “How” is More Important than the “What” .....	143
Asynchronous Narrative and Dispositive Boundaries.....	144
Synchronized Dispositive and Narrative Transitions of Unequal Rank.....	146
Synchronized Dispositive and Narrative Transitions of Equal Rank .....	148
Conclusion.....	151
Chapter 2: When the Parts Nearly Overtake the Whole: “Pseudoworks” and Intertextuality in <i>Les Voyages de Robert Lade</i> .....	155
Beyond <i>Manon Lescaut</i> : Pseudoworks in <i>Voyages de Robert Lade</i> .....	155
Pseudoworks and Intertextuality .....	159
Title as Itinerary of Narrative Structure .....	160

Editor's Preface as Narrative Structural Guidebook .....	164
Pseudoworks and Fictionality.....	171
Pseudoworks Fully Embedded Within Lade's narration.....	190
Major Embedded Pseudoworks .....	190
A Problematic Pseudowork: The Mémoire sur Carthagène .....	190
Shorter Inserted Texts.....	203
Mémoire sur Carthagène vs. Description of Cuba .....	203
The Story of Mr. Speed, a Description of Barbados, and Mr. Rytwood's Journal .....	205
Description of Veracruz and San Juan de Ulúa .....	209
Description of the Parishes of Jamaica.....	210
Transition from Embedded Pseudoworks to Open-Ended Pseudoworks.....	211
Last Pieces of Text Directly Attributed to Lade Himself.....	211
Transition from Lade to Lade's Son.....	214
Transition from Third Party, Lade's Son, to an Anonymous Fourth Party .....	217
Conclusion.....	223
Part II: When the Whole Has a Hole in it .....	225
Chapter 3: When Two Halves Surround a Hole: The Influence of a Publication Gap on Narrative and Dispositive Structure in <i>Cleveland</i> .....	225
Interrupted Publication, "Super-Installments" and Significant Emptiness .....	225
Interpolated Narratives .....	234
Narrative Models .....	235
First Narrative Model: Mally Bridge.....	235
Second Narrative Model: Axminster.....	239
Third Narrative Model: Bridge.....	246
Narrative Complements.....	254
Angélique's Letters as a Narrative Structural Device .....	254
The Stories of Fanny and Mme Riding .....	257
Self-Portrait of the "Text" as a "Work" .....	261
Editorial References to the Work and its Parts.....	261
Narratorial References to the Work and its Parts .....	266
Shaping and Reflecting Perception of the Whole through Summary and Relay .....	274
Narrative Summary.....	274
Narrative Relay .....	285
Combined Summary and Relay .....	287
Before-After Moments .....	293
Prospective and Dynamic .....	293
Retrospective and Static .....	300

Prospective and Static.....	307
Symmetry .....	309
Conclusion.....	320
Chapter 4: When the Second Part Redefines the Whole: Narrative and Dispositive Structure in <i>Mémoires d'un honnête homme</i> .....	322
Continuation, Plagiarism, Reboots and Retcons .....	322
Representation of Narrative Structure Within the Text.....	324
Beginnings: Sketching Narrative Contours .....	329
Prévost's Narrative Structure: Plot as Dialectic Cycle.....	333
Thesis: Accurate perception of reality can lead to social satisfaction .....	334
Antithesis: Despite the Impossibility of Counteracting Others' Distortion of the Truth, an "Honnête Homme" Can Remain True to His Own Principles .....	353
Incomplete Synthesis: Only Inner Truth is Valid, Willful Ignorance of Potential Correspondence or Divorce Between Appearance and Reality is Necessary .....	374
Mauvillon's Narrative Structure: Plot as Linear Descent .....	381
Successful Reactive Phase: Gaining Independence by Avoiding Mlle de St. V.....	382
Successful Proactive Phase: Apogee of Agency in Pursuit of Mme de B.....	406
Unsuccessful Proactive Phase: Declining Agency in Pursuit of Lizon.....	423
Conclusion.....	440
Part III: When the Whole Story Has Been Told .....	442
Chapter 5: <i>La Jeunesse du commandeur</i> : When the Whole is More Than the Sum of its Parts.....	442
Dispositive <i>Parts</i> vs. Narrative <i>Caravans</i> : Opposition as Narrative Foundation .....	442
The First Two Caravans: Transferring Opposition from Family to Order of Malta .....	449
Third Caravan: Creating New Obstacles to Replace the Ones That Disappear .....	455
Fourth Caravan: The Commander Lays a Foundation for Durable Obstacles.....	468
Fifth Caravan: Permanent Opposition through Internalized Obstacles.....	477
Conclusion.....	493
Conclusion.....	495
Bibliography .....	506

# Introduction

## Context

The way an eighteenth-century novel's parts relate to the work as a whole is important today because developments in the genre and changes in attitudes toward it have shifted since then in a way that prevents us from fully appreciating the fundamental mechanisms that undergird all prose narrative fiction, and even narrative fiction in other media. There is a formal similarity between long eighteenth-century French novels published by installments and the recent phenomenon of releasing whole television show seasons online all at once that highlights the possibility of interactions between the visible structure of a work of narrative fiction—chapters, books, volumes, and installments in the case of novels, and episodes and seasons in the case of television shows—and its underlying narrative structure, and by studying these interactions in Prévost's novels I hope to make it possible to identify similar interactions in other works of narrative fiction. The method of analysis I outline here could be applied to various kinds of narrative fiction, whether in printed prose or in visual form, and could help to overcome or to better define problematic categories such as *romance* (as opposed to *novel*), *philosophical tale*, *realist novel*, etc.

In the present analysis I seek a better understanding of how eighteenth-century French novels were divided into parts, whether by inscribed divisions such as *parties*, *livres*, or *tomes*, or by the installments of publication. The main reason why this is worth doing is that the realities of eighteenth-century publication changed how novels were perceived by audiences in ways that modern readers, including scholars and critics, are

unused to, and it is necessary for us to understand the differences if we hope to approach these works on their own terms. Among these differences, the one that my project primarily addresses is the uncertain boundaries of eighteenth-century novels. Because publishers could not commit to producing a long work without knowing whether or not it would be profitable, authors had little incentive to plan long works in advance, but did have incentive to allow the possibility of continuation to capitalize on the popularity of works that did sell. Accordingly, neither audience nor author could tell if the “end” of a novel was truly the end. This may have led to an aesthetic of the “segment” or the “part,” which is perhaps reflected in the prevalence of intercalated narratives. Each inserted story provided the eighteenth-century novelist an opportunity to display his or her skill at evoking the reader’s emotions. Nevertheless, this characteristic of the eighteenth-century novel came to be considered by nineteenth-century novelists as one of the flaws of their predecessors’ work, and by scholars—until the latter half of the twentieth century—as a sign of those novelists’ lack of sophistication, happily eradicated by the development of literary technique as time went on. Although my research confirms some scholars’ suspicions that Prévost did not make extensive use of dispositive techniques to create suspense or to manipulate his plots (e.g. Escola “Longueur”), it provides a more nuanced understanding of his use of dispositive techniques. Analyzing how Prévost was influenced by the pragmatic realities of his changing situation, allows us to overcome the limitation of past attitudes toward his work, specifically, and toward eighteenth-century novels in general, to see what Prévost’s use of dispositive techniques may have meant to readers of his era, and perhaps gain some insight into how dispositive techniques guide

interpretation of serial narrative fiction in other eras, especially given the increasing prevalence of serial forms of narrative fiction today.

Prévost is an ideal candidate for examination toward that end, given his prominence among French novelists of the first half of the 1700s, and because his body of work exhibits a relatively varied sample of the ways in which dispositive techniques could interact with the publication of a novel: long novels published in several installments, sometimes with significant gaps between one installment and the next; incorporation of semi-independent works of varying length within longer novels, which also varied in length; and shorter works published without significant delay between volumes, though still consisting of multiple volumes. Accordingly, I have divided my dissertation into three parts, each addressing a different scenario of interaction between disposition and narration. While modern readers see chapters as the basic building blocks of a prototypical novel's narrative structure, even if many of the novels published since the eighteenth century are not divided into chapters, my analysis of the structure of Prévost's novels shows that this definition of the genre is a product of modern publication methods, not an inherent characteristic of the form, thus changing our perspective on the relationship between artistic *wholes* and the *parts* that make them up—whether novel chapters, television show episodes, or films in a franchise—and challenging our ideals of artistic purity by revealing art as a commodity subject to pragmatic realities.

### *Serialization and Literature*

Beginning with the advent of radio drama in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, serialized narrative has been making increasing inroads into the daily lives of everyone living

within the reach of the various media that have served as the vehicles of its expansion. First radio brought the likes of the “Lone Ranger” and “The Shadow” into the homes of a generation of American children every week, then the relay was taken up by television, with some characters—the Lone Ranger among them—even making the leap from one medium to the other. Television soap operas soon began to provide viewers with daily installments of extremely complicated plots of seemingly endless possibility constrained only by the pragmatic realities of production (e.g. actors’ illness), while weekly shows came to be governed by the rhythm of the “season” more often than by a predetermined plot. The tendency toward serialization seems ubiquitous today, with nothing apparently more common than film “franchises” such as the “Indiana Jones” series, which often spawn their own serialized spin-offs, in the form of comic books and television shows. Indeed, it would appear that the process is (almost) infinitely repeatable in every direction. In the case of “Star Trek,” a serialized television show gave rise to a series of movies, which in turn prompted several overlapping television series, which led to several films, not to mention the seemingly innumerable novelizations and comic books that were inspired by the various television series and films. Hence, it is tempting to claim that we live in an age of serialization. However, serialization—taken to mean publication by installments—has played an important role in both literary and popular printed narrative fiction since the eighteenth century, and continues to do so today. Because serialization is only one way to divide narrative fiction into parts, I propose to study the novels of Antoine François Prévost, much of whose work was published in installments, to gain a better understanding of how he negotiated the interaction of the

disposition of his works (i.e. their division into chapters, books, volumes, parts, etc.) and their publication by installments.<sup>1</sup>

One need look no farther than the example of nineteenth-century serialized novels to see that serialized fiction did exist before electronic broadcasting began to bring it to audiences in new ways. And although serialization is now commonly perceived to have become the special province of “genre” fiction and is therefore no longer associated with “literary” fiction—despite the fact that many works now considered literary masterpieces were originally published in serial form—there is perhaps even more similarity than difference, especially in the realm of print media, between nineteenth-century modes of serialization and those of the twentieth century. Moreover, just as there may have been greater continuity in print serialization than might be immediately apparent, the changes brought on by the new media were perhaps not as great as they appear to be at first glance. Convenient recording and playback systems for electronically broadcast serialized narrative—such as audiocassettes, VHS and DVD—have made it possible for audiences to experience serialized narrative without being bound to certain aspects of its serial nature. Whereas audiences previously had to be in front of a television set at a particular time in order to avoid being forever deprived of an episode of their show of choice, it became possible to record episodes for later viewing, first on VCRs, then on DVR devices. And although VHS technology made it possible to buy or rent television episodes, it was impractical to buy whole “seasons” of a television show until the advent

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<sup>1</sup> While the Latin term *dispositio* refers to the organization of speech according to the rules of classical rhetoric, here the term derives from the idea of relationship between things, or their “disposition” toward each other. It is also distinct from the Foucauldian notion of “dispositive” analysis.



of DVD technology, which even made it possible to purchase a television show in its entirety. Once it becomes possible to watch all the episodes of a given television series back-to-back, the formal differences between a serialized novel republished in book form and a serialized television show collected in a “boxed set” start to seem at least somewhat less significant. After all, if most people choose not to watch all of “Battlestar Galactica” in a single sitting, it is doubtful that anyone reads *Great Expectations* from start to finish without interruption either (or Prévost’s *Mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité qui s’est retiré du monde*, for that matter).

Recent innovations in recording technology, then, reveal a similarity between nineteenth-century serialized novels and twentieth-century television series: both are examples of extended narratives initially made available to the public in more-or-less regular installments, and subsequently repackaged in collected form. What if this similarity also applies to French novels of the “classical” age? Perhaps the similarity is the result of an inherent characteristic of narrative fiction itself, or perhaps of any narration, whether fictional or not? That is what I would like to find out by investigating the relationship between the part and the whole in the work of Prévost, and—within the temporal and spatial constraints of my project—in the work of certain contemporaries, predecessors, and successors. It seems clear that our criteria for what can constitute “art” depend on our conception of how the part relates to the whole, most likely as a result of the pervasive influence of the Romantic aesthetic—which itself is perhaps ultimately nothing more than an interpretation of the classical ideas of unity inherited from Aristotle—despite the best efforts of post-modernist and deconstructionist artists and

theorists to eradicate it. However, it is extremely difficult—if not impossible—to set up firm empirical criteria for what constitutes a work of art based on “unity,” if for no other reason than that seemingly every critic, scholar and writer defines it differently. Does “unity” mean “organicity,” “wholeness,” “tightness of plot,” “non-episodic structure,” “coherence,” or something else? For that reason, it seems unjust to fault periodically-published novels of the *ancien régime*, like those of Prévost, for their segmentary structure, when “literary” authors as different from each other as Larry McMurtry, with *The Berrybender Narratives* and the *Lonesome Dove* tetralogy, and Proust, with his *À la recherche du temps perdu*, have written series that resemble long novels like Prévost’s in that they are published in novel-sized installments at that appear unpredictable intervals. It is important to note a significant difference Prévost’s work and that of these modern authors, namely that while Prévost’s novels and most television series represent the result of writing without knowing exactly where the plot is going, Proust and other recent authors of multi-part works are often much more certain in advance of their narrative’s ultimate ending. Nevertheless, a comparison of the formal similarities invites a kind of analysis that has not yet been conducted on the work of Prévost.

Novelists of the nineteenth century such as Scott, Dickens, Zola, and Balzac wrote “whole” works that were *published* in parts, sometimes after the whole thing had been written. Balzac’s works, while not strictly sequential, fit together into a common universe mostly through the repetition of themes and the reoccurrence of characters and settings, but with little continuity of plot or events. Zola’s *Les Rougon Macquart* tells the story of a family but not in a strictly chronological way, although it is treated in certain

respects as if it were a single work. Even a work such as Henry Miller's *The Rosy Crucifixion*, a trilogy published over a period of more than a decade, earns its place in the canon in part because it exhibits signs of unity that presumably come from having been at least somewhat planned in advance. Dumas' "Three Musketeers" novels show the difficulty of differentiating between a series and a long work. Although first published as a sequence of three works, each written after the other, when it was time for republication the previously independent works were given a collective title and each was demoted to the status of "part" of a longer work (Dionne 48-49). It would appear, then, that the only definitive difference between a series and a multi-part work is one of terminology. In light of this realization the preference of scholars and critics for coherent wholes over multipart works seems to be more of a prejudice than a necessary criterion for judging narrative fiction, and Prévost emerges as an ideal candidate for exploring this issue, given the mixture of long, multipart novels and shorter, less divided novels in his body of work.

*Prévost's place in the study of the history of the French novel*

Known today by his ecclesiastical title, *abbé*, during his life and for some time after his death Antoine François Prévost was referred to by the pen-name conferred upon him by his first successful work: "l'auteur des *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde*." While successful at the time of their publication, the *Mémoires* are now mostly forgotten even though Prévost's best-known work today, *Manon Lescaut*, was originally published as the seventh volume of the *Mémoires* and only later came to be considered an independent work. This metamorphosis of *part* into *whole* radically transformed Prévost's authorial identity in a way that suggests the extent

to which ideas about narrative fiction have changed since Prévost's day. While critics and general audiences largely appreciated much of Prévost's work long after his death, by the end of the nineteenth century *Manon Lescaut* had almost completely eclipsed his other work. Jean Sgard's seminal *Prévost Romancier* was the first modern scholarly work to return to the entirety of Prévost's novelistic production—although as the title suggests, Sgard did not study Prévost's work as a journalist in *Le Pour et Contre*. However, while Sgard brought new attention to Prévost's artistic sophistication, his method for doing so relied on the author himself as the unifying principle: all of Prévost's novels, taken together, form a portrait of the artist. This method of analysis not only glosses over the novels' internal divisions, but also blurs the boundaries between the novels themselves.

Before and after Sgard, however, Prévost has remained an important figure in accounts of the history of the French novel, but his thematic and stylistic contributions and influences have received much more critical attention than the dispositive structure of his novels. He figures as an important precursor of the use of the novel by the *philosophes* to critique society in English Showalter's study of the evolution of the French novel from the mid-seventeenth- to late-eighteenth-century, but like Sgard Showalter mostly limits himself to thematic analysis and leaves aside the structure of Prévost's works. René Démoris has shown that Prévost uses his narrators as a mask for his own role as author in order to invite a critical reading of his text (414-45). In his study of the memoir-novel in France during the first half of the eighteenth century, Philip Stewart cites Prévost as one of his main examples of the difficulty for modern readers to distinguish between history and fiction in the work of eighteenth-century writers (196-

97). Stewart also mentions Prévost as an exemplar of the various strategies that authors of the period employed to infuse the narrator's perspective into the fabric of the narration (e.g. 109-12). However, he only rarely stops to consider that Prévost might have manipulated the division of his novels into parts, or have been constrained by that division (e.g. 51-52). Several of the communications presented at a conference about the French novel of the 1730's deal with Prévost, most often as an example of the decade's marked affinities with later autobiographies and realist novels, and principally deal with the division of his novels into parts only as far as the relationship between *Manon Lescaut* and *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* are concerned. However, the relative lack of critical attention to the dispositive boundaries<sup>2</sup> in Prévost's novels is justified, given that Prévost was not a great innovator of these techniques. And yet, the reason for studying dispositive structure in Prévost's novels is not that it differs greatly from that of his contemporaries, but rather precisely the fact that Prévost is roughly representative of his period,<sup>3</sup> and that representativeness, along with his prominence in the first half of the eighteenth century, make him an ideal subject for the beginning of a more general investigation.

Different critical ideas about the timeline of the novel's development in France arise from different conceptions of the novel's role in, and reflection of, the evolution of

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<sup>2</sup> Jean-Paul Sermain addresses the rhetoric of Prévost's novels, which is a kind of structure, in *Rhétorique et roman au dix-huitième siècle : l'exemple de Prévost et de Marivaux (1728-1742)*, and Erik Leborgne deals with the narrative possibilities that are evoked by imagination in *Figures de l'imaginaire dans le Cleveland de Prévost*, but neither of these studies systematically addresses the role of dispositive boundaries in shaping either the rhetoric or the imagined narratives of Prévost's novels.

<sup>3</sup> Although the particularities that set him apart from Marivaux are interesting, I will not treat them here.

French society, and, therefore, Prévost's role in that development. The fact that Prévost's prominence among early eighteenth-century French novelists persists in the modern scholarly narrative of the novel is in part due to a tendency to treat the French Revolution as the key moment of transition between the *ancien régime* and the modern period in the development of the French novel, as typified by the example of Henri Coulet's seminal study, *Le Roman jusqu'à la révolution* (1967). If, as Coulet argues, the novel was born in the eighteenth century, and if its development began in earnest in the last decade of the previous century, Prévost's prominence in the 1730's and continued activity in the 1740's makes him a key figure of the midpoint of the genre's development. Ugo Dionne cites Prévost as one of the authors, including Marivaux and Mouhy, who contributed to "les efforts déployés en France pour dépasser l'opposition de la pesanteur et de la drôlerie," efforts that tend to be discounted in favor of the influence of English novels of circa 1740 (316-317). Other scholars argue in favor of more continuity between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, following the example of Françoise Barguillet, who sees the novel taking itself seriously as early as the 1770's, and Alain Montandon, who identifies multiple continuities and ruptures between the two centuries and among the various parts of Europe, thus complicating the question of continuity itself. Jean-Paul Sermain has demonstrated that the influence of Ian Watt's seminal study on the "rise of the novel" (1957) extends into the Francophone sphere through scholars such as Vivienne Mylne, Philip Stewart, Frédéric Deloffre, Henri Coulet, and Françoise Gevrey, whose work tends to support Watt's thesis that the novel arose in parallel with the formation of the bourgeoisie (*Métafictions* 71). However, Sermain follows in the footsteps of René

Démoris in an effort to oppose a different understanding of the history of the novel, one in which attention to effects of illusion and realism would be merely one moment among many, rather than the single most important axis for measuring the “rise” of the novel (*ibid.* 71-72). Instead, Sermain proposes to extend Démoris’s emphasis on the role of metafiction in creating the novel as a genre by applying it not only to first-person novels, and by paying more attention to the esthetic experience of the reader (*ibid.* 72-73).<sup>4</sup> My project continues in this vein by combining attention to the subjective experience of

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<sup>4</sup> Regrettably, Olivier Delers neglects this line of criticism in his recent examination of the concept of a “rise of the novel” in the French context (2015). Delers is primarily concerned with using *character* to highlight the problems that arise from applying Watt’s thesis—or variants of it—namely that the development of realism in the French novel is a result of the rise of the middle class, by adapting sociological methods in the tradition of Bourdieu, Boltanski, and Latour, in order to avoid assigning characters to predetermined social groups and to remain open to the text’s own presentation of itself through its characters’ behavior (17-20). Delers mobilizes Deirdre Lynch’s concept of the “pragmatics of character” as a way of avoiding “the pitfalls of the paradigmatic assumption that realism as a mode of storytelling emerged at the same time as rational individualism” and of recuperating romance as an important influence in the history of the novel (13). Just as each novel, as Delers argues, “produces a self-contained theory of interest—almost always an unfinished theory steeped in its own contradictions” (16), each *ancien régime* novel had the potential to be continued, so the interaction between its disposition and its narrative should be taken into account to get a full picture of how the novel elaborates its idiosyncratic response to the issues of the day. Latour’s idea of the “*under-determination of action*” as essential to sociological analysis, which Delers uses to understand the actions of characters in novels (20), can also be applied to analysis of dispositive structure. Rather than starting from an assumption that it participates in the creation of the novel’s narrative structure, we must remain open to the possibility that the two systems may not operate in cooperation with each other, or at least not all the time, and that this variability may be a constitutive element of the novel, rather than merely a byproduct of the conditions under which it was produced. Delers uses this method of sociologically-informed close reading to show how the “alternative economies” that *ancien régime* novels create are complex and contradictory, neither directly inspired by social critique or economico-political philosophy, nostalgic yet dynamic, and marked by “alternative forms of rationality” (20). In the case of *Manon Lescaut*, Delers argues, “those who belong to the elite and the privileged classes engage in oppositional behaviors in an attempt to carve out a space where authentic friendship and sentiments can be preserved” (20). Despite the convincing arguments in favor of *Manon Lescaut*’s independent genesis, the novel’s original publication leaves its marks on the text even after its liberation, and Delers’s argument could stand to gain from a better understanding of how *Manon Lescaut* fits into the overall narrative and dispositive structures of the *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité*. The evolution of the protagonist’s status as an active individualist agent is also entwined with his identity as noble by nature, in contrast to some of his relatives who are noble only by birth, and this evolution is better understood in light of the interaction between narration and disposition in the novel.

reading with attention to some neglected formal aspects of the text that influence that experience.

*Origins of modern critical ideas about part-whole relationship*

French critics and novelists of the *ancien régime* did use dispositive terms when discussing novels, and the ways they did so indicate that the relationship between the part and the whole was differently conceived prior to the advent of the chapter's dominance in the nineteenth century. Pierre-Daniel Huet's *Lettre-traité sur les origines du roman* (1669) mentions *chapters* in a way that shows a confusion between the different levels of the dispositive hierarchy and a confusion between the idea of the work as a whole and the idea of the work as part of a larger text (54-60). Mostly these dispositive terms serve to locate specific textual elements within works.<sup>5</sup> While it was not a major focus, critics of this period did also talk about novels and their parts in ways that admit the possibility of a mismatch between narrative structure and dispositive structure. For example, when a critic uses the term *moitié* to contrast the first part of a novel with the second part it is unclear whether this "half" corresponds to any dispositive unit, and might refer more to the kind of narrative structure that is under examination here (Smyth and Hopes 118-119). The terms *livre* or *ouvrage* designate an entire work, or any entity that can be designated by a relationship between a text and a title, associated with certain

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, in Armand-Pierre Jacquin's *Entretiens sur les romans* (1755), one of the characters in the conversation, an abbé, cites a chapter of Voltaire's *Essai sur le poème épique* in which the philosopher classifies Tasso as an epic poet, as proof that the philosopher contradicted himself later in *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* by categorizing him as a novelist (23). Another of Jacquin's characters, a countess, dismisses a boring novel by scoffing that "Je ne sçais pourquoi je n'ai jamais pû terminer le premier Volume" (89-90).



boundaries.<sup>6</sup> Even so, the relationship between the “wholes” thus conceived and other textual entities can be complex, as in the case of the *Christiade*, which Jacquin’s abbé describes as a “suite” of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (182-83). In *De l’usage des romans*, Lenglet-Dufresnoy cites the second part of *Don Quixote* as an example of an author responding to criticism, although his work suffered for it (Google 159). Eighteenth-century French novelists also thought about the relationship between the narrative structure of their works and the expression of that structure in dispositive form. We can see this awareness in Crébillon’s advice to another author, advocating a two-step process of composition that begins by deciding what should go in each chapter and continues with a more global review to determine the order of the chapters (Lynch [1978] 61, citing Emile Henriot in *Les Livres du second rayon* [Paris: Chamontin, 1920] xxi-xxvii). Together, these examples show that while *ancien régime* novelists and critics recognized the instrumental potential of dispositive units, their understanding of the role of such units within the overall structure of a given work was complicated by the narrative structure of the work in question.

Sources from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries show the origins of our tendency to conflate the dispositive and narrative structures. As part of his demonstration of the trend toward increasing realism in the novel, Le Breton (1898) argues that French novelists of the seventeenth century had no pretensions of creating the illusion of reality, and that while authors did represent reality, it was always disguised, as

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<sup>6</sup> See Jacquin: “Le Livre des Proverbes porte encore aujourd’hui le nom de *Paraboles de Salomon*” (33), or “Tout ouvrage doit avoir une fin : celle du Roman, fondée sur le précepte d’Horace, doit être de plaire & d’instruire, en mêlant l’agréable à l’utile” (23-24).

when Scudéry presented her social circle as Romans shepherds and shepherdesses (4). Le Breton further associates this lack of realistic ambition with a lack of logical relationship between disposition and narration, as Scarron demonstrates when he “se demande tout haut à la fin de son premier chapitre ce qu'il pourra bien mettre dans le second” (*ibid.*). Rather than taking the apparent non-correspondence between the narrative structure and dispositive structure in *ancien régime* French novels as a sign of compositional technique, Le Breton sees it as betraying the lack of an organizing principle: “Ce n'est pas la vie, ce n'est pas la secrète et impérieuse logique des faits et des passions qui impose à l'*Histoire de Gil Blas* son plan et ses limites” (54). This lack further manifests itself in the lack of a logical dispositive structure: “Nous [...] avons conscience que le désir de rassembler dans son livre toutes ou presque toutes les variétés de la sottise et de la friponnerie [...] a seul guidé [l'auteur] dans sa marche, amenant tel chapitre après tel autre” (54). It is perhaps telling that Le Breton confuses dispositive terms of different hierarchical levels: “à l'origine, *Manon Lescaut* elle-même n'était qu'un chapitre ou plutôt un supplément ajouté à ces mêmes *Mémoires* dont elle formait le tome septième et dernier” (104). The hesitation between “chapter” and “supplement” suggests an unconscious awareness of the existence of narrative structures of various scales that are not accounted for by the various dispositive units that form the whole of a work such as the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*.

Le Breton demonstrates the instrumentalist attitude toward dispositive units, in which each unit is seen as a vehicle for a particular plot point or subject, as in the second chapter of *Gil Blas*, which is “consacré à Monneville” (369), or “le chapitre des

*Aventures de Beauchêne* qui nous conduit chez M. Rémoussin, le colon canadien” (388).<sup>7</sup> Étienne mentions a “thesis” that is developed in a certain chapter, and cites a sentence of Crébillon’s *Égarements du cœur et de l’esprit* that is “exactement le résumé de toute la partie psychologique du premier volume de *Grandisson*” (267, 54). The *volume* serves mainly as a means of judging narrative density: in a comparison between the treatment of similar plots by Courtilz de Sandras and La Calprenède, Le Breton notes that “ce que La Calprenède délayait en un volume tient maintenant en une cinquantaine de pages” (29). The volume, as a compositional tool manipulated by “les grands romanciers” is something that incites the reader to continue reading it until finished, unlike the work of a novelist like Marivaux, in whose work “chaque page prise à part est un régal,” with the result being “qu’il est difficile d’aller jusqu’au bout du volume” (80). Servais Étienne (1922) remarks on the impossibility of finishing a “roman psychologique,” which continually begins anew: “comme dans la vie qu’il s’efforce de représenter, un chapitre ne conclut pas seulement, il en amorce encore un autre” (55). The idea of the (potential) equivalence between a “line” or a “sentence” and a “chapter” or “volume” is common among these critics: Étienne cites a sentence by Marmontel “que Richardson aurait développée en un chapitre” (129). And while Le Breton and others after him have argued convincingly in favor of considering *Manon Lescaut* to be an independent *whole* based on the fact that contemporary readers did mark a difference between it and the preceding

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<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that this attitude was not uncommon in the eighteenth century as well, perhaps particularly in more comedic novels such as *Gil Blas*, whose chapters, as Le Breton reminds us, are preceded by summaries (369).

six volumes of the *Mémoires*, it is now important to turn our attention to the underlying structural systems that made it possible for *Manon* to begin its existence as a *part*.

*Modern background of recent critical ideas about part-whole relationship*

Two of the major approaches in novel studies of the past century are the narratological and the historical, and in my dissertation I open a dialogue between them. The narratological approach (e.g. Genette) is embodied by structuralism and its offshoots, while the historical approach (e.g. Chartier) is embodied by the New Historicists and the scholars of the “History of the Book.” Ugo Dionne’s *La Voie aux chapitres* can be seen as an example of the narratological school allowing itself to be influenced by the historical school.<sup>8</sup> Dionne aims to pursue a narratologically-minded goal, i.e. refining the typology and classification of narrative techniques to reach a better understanding of the poetics of the novel, by means of historically-minded methods, i.e. avoiding anachronism, acknowledging the impossibility of codifying a universal, trans-historical poetics of the novel, and reaching into the past to see how it was different from the present. However, his overall objectives remain decidedly narratological. I have produced a study that allows each approach to influence the other, and that serves the ends of both. Allowing the historical approach to influence the narratological approach has meant acknowledging the effects of material constraints on publication, while for influence to flow in the other direction has meant bringing a narratological perspective to bear on the discoveries provided by the historical approach. Limiting the analysis to one author has

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<sup>8</sup> Yannick Séité has also contributed to this kind of scholarship with his study of paratext in *La Nouvelle Héloïse (Du Livre au lire)*, as well as in an article on the novel (*Le Monde des Lumières*), and an article calling for new directions in scholarship (“Pour une histoire littéraire du livre”).

facilitated this methodological cross-pollination, because subtracting the variations among authors highlights the distinctions between results of different approaches.

To introduce my analysis of structure in Prévost's novels, it will be necessary to situate my work with respect to two major scholarly traditions: literary theory and novel studies. In both cases, some subfields are particularly relevant to my project. On the theoretical side, I rely primarily on narratological concepts derived from the work of Genette, although he deals with the structure of the narration and not of that which is narrated, and to a lesser degree on structuralist and poststructuralist ideas about the boundaries of the text, such as those of Barthes, and on deconstructionist ideas about the boundaries of artworks, such as those of Derrida. On the novel studies side, my work enters a long tradition of scholarship both on the novel as a genre, generally, and on the work of Prévost, specifically. In the realm of general novel studies, my approach particularly depends on the work of Ugo Dionne and others regarding the relationship between the part and the whole, but I have also been influenced by the work of material text scholars such as Roger Chartier. In the specific domain of Prévost scholarship, I am particularly indebted to Marc Escola's work on narrative structure in pre-nineteenth-century periodical fiction, which crosses the boundary between part-whole studies and Prévost studies.

### *Publication rhythm*

Publication rhythm is at the heart of the present inquiry, and there are two principal ways in which its influence manifests itself in Prévost's work: the evolving relationship between journalism and fiction and the evolution of publication practices.

Marc Escola's work on the poetics of "periodical fictions" raises crucial questions about how the practical realities of *ancien régime* publication influenced the composition of novels. Escola's work focuses mainly on the identification and description of techniques and strategies available to authors writing novels whose ends they cannot ever completely know in advance. While this is very useful, the present analysis focuses on the influences of the pragmatic realities of publication on the interaction between dispositive structure and narrative structure of *ancien régime* novels, which is both a potential site for strategies like those that Escola seeks to define, but also a site of primary interface between authors and their texts, regardless of the authors' consciousness of or concern for the unknowable ends of their novels.

Jean-Paul Sermain notes the murkiness of the boundaries between journalism and fiction in the eighteenth century, beginning with Addison and Steele's *The Spectator* in 1710, after which European journalism began to increasingly resemble fiction, with a growing number of journalists taking on personae and describing true events from the point of view of fictitious characters or recounting fictitious events in terms synthesized from true experiences ("Roman et presse" 263-64). The result was that the main difference between the novel and the newspaper in the eighteenth century was that the former defined itself as a fictional narrative attempting to pass itself off as true, while the latter defined itself as a periodically-published text—hence the blurring of the generic lines that comes about when taking into account "newspapers" like Marivaux's *Spectateur français*, which was published in short quasi-novelistic texts but whose installments appeared at irregular intervals (Sermain, "Roman et presse" 264-65). For

Claude Labrosse, the increasing segmentation of novels over the course of the eighteenth century is a sign of an evolution beginning in the middle of the century towards a literary scene increasingly characterized by a more supple, rapid-paced exchange between writers, journalists, and readers (“Lecture du roman” 83).<sup>9</sup>

*Boundaries and the idea of unity*

The importance of publication rhythm itself, however, derives from the question of the how to identify an artistic whole, which can be conceived of as the process of identifying the boundaries of the work, which, in turn, depends on the reader’s definition of artistic unity. Prévost’s work offers an interesting challenge to both the very idea of artistic unity and the notion of fixed boundaries of a work of art, particularly with regard to the relationship between *Manon Lescaut* and *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité*. The typical modern critical position with regard to this relationship is embodied by Martin Turnell’s study of the “art of French fiction” (1959). Turnell cites *Manon Lescaut* as an example of how Prévost “stretched” the “structure of the classic novel”, the defining characteristics of which are the “tautness, [...] economy, [and] linear perfection” that come from the “relatively stable [...] society” that produced the “classic novel” (3). It seems clear, however, that this is an *a posteriori* definition constructed to validate the idea that “*Manon Lescaut* is a classic novel joined on to a long, rambling picaresque novel” (3). For Turnell, the cyclical novel is a development of the *roman d’aventure*, in

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<sup>9</sup> Prévost was not immune to the trends that these two scholars describe, and while my analysis here does not directly consider the influence of Prévost’s journalistic work on his novelistic work, I intend to do so in future study of the part-whole dynamic in Prévost’s novels. For a study of Prévost’s work as a journalist, see Shelly Charles (*Récit et réflexion*) and Rori Bloom (*Man of Quality, Man of Letters*).

which the “adventures” of the plot are matched by the psychological “adventures” of the protagonist, while the *roman fleuve* represents a further development: like Balzac and Zola before them, Rolland, Romain, and Martin du Gard “were trying to devise a literary form which would include the whole of life” (4-6). However, the inadequacy of Turnell’s account becomes clear when he describes the relationship between *À la Recherche du temps perdu* and the parts that make it up. Whereas he has no qualms about treating *Manon Lescaut* as an independent work, a *classical novel* tacked onto a *picaresque novel*, he argues for the unity of the *Recherche* as a single work, despite the independence of its parts. In Turnell’s view, “‘Un Amour de Swann’ is a psychological study of an emotional entanglement in the finest classic manner,” not an independent work (15). The unequal status accorded to each of these works is even reflected in the use of typographical conventions: the use of italics for the title of Prévost’s text identifies it as an independent work, while the use of quotation marks identifies Proust’s text as part of a larger work, or at most a subordinate work on the scale of a short story or poem.

Margaret Doody’s *True Story of the Novel* (1996) establishes the connections between the novels of antiquity and those of the modern period, which had previously been largely dismissed, in large part by focusing on realism and characterization to destabilize simplistic notions of displacement or supersession by the novel by something else, for example either epic or romance. However, she pays less attention to the importance of structure and boundaries in the novel, though she does provide a minimal definition of the form: “I believe that a novel includes the idea of length (preferably forty or more pages), and that, above all, it should be in *prose*,” although ultimately the



definition is a tool, since “If anyone has called a work a novel at any time, that is sufficient” (10). For Doody, the idea of “ending” is not particularly “literary,” since while “History puts things in the past and declares the past safely over, for literature nothing is never over,” or, in other words, “Literature never has a *Nachleben*—a posthumous existence—but only a *leben*, a life continuous” (304). While this attitude approaches the idea of uncertain boundaries, Doody seems more to have in mind “Literature” as a whole, rather than any particular given work of literature.

#### *Parts and the idea of structure*

On the whole, scholars have neglected the relationship between the “whole” of the novel and its “parts.” Philip Stevick’s monograph on the fictional chapter leaves much to be desired, as it focuses mostly on the “idea” of what a chapter “should” be, rather than on what it is (1970). Edwin Muir’s *The Structure of the Novel* proposes several categories of novels based on certain oppositions he sees in the fundamental nature of the form (100). There are *novels of action*, in which characters serve as agents of the plot, and *novels of character*, in which the plot serves as an agent of the characters. There are *dramatic novels*, in which plot and characters work together, but which are limited in their use of time and free in their use of space, and there are *character novels* free in their use of space and limited in their use of time, and in the “chronicle” “the single life is the unit,” meaning that multiples of ten years in the protagonist’s life form internal boundaries (100). In his study of fictional structure in Austen, Brontë, and Elliot (1969), Karl Kroeber uses “the unit of the page” to “analyz[e] the underlying structures of novels,” although he admits that it is “unsatisfactory,” since “the size of a novel (or of

any subdivisions of it) is measured most precisely and usefully by the number of words it contains” (141). Studies such as Clifford R. Johnson’s *Plots and Characters in the Fiction of Eighteenth-Century English Authors* typically summarize the events of novels according to their dispositive units, e.g. the summary of Fielding’s *Amelia* is punctuated with phrases such as “Book one—Booth in prison” and “Book two—The story of Booth’s romance with Amelia” even though the story could be summarized differently if one were not to base the summary on the dispositive structure (1978, 3). However, the relationship between the part and the whole has begun to receive some scholarly attention in recent years, notably at a conference in 2008, and in the publication in 2012 of a collection of scholarly essays on the “size” of novels that covers the entire chronological range of French literature.

Most scholars who have touched on the issue accept the fundamental linearity of literary texts, thus privileging the whole over the part (Dionne 233-38). Deconstructionist criticism has led to the idea that because all texts are fundamentally fragmentary any apparent linearity is an illusion, meaning that the “part” is all that remains in the final analysis, given that no “whole” is truly unitary, being composed of parts that can never truly connect to the other parts with which they are amalgamated (Dionne 238-243). Here, the term “parts” can mean the subunits of the novel as indicated in the text itself, or it can mean the installments of publication. The recently published volume *La Partie et le tout* contains the proceedings of a series of three conferences held on the topic of the relationship between part and whole in *ancien régime* fiction. Both ways of conceptualizing the “part” receive attention in this volume, but so do other ways that rely

more on the judgment of today's scholars than on objectively observable characteristics of the texts themselves. Thus, although scholarly interest in the part-whole dynamic in narrative is increasing, as shown by the publication of these proceedings and by the conferences that preceded it, that interest remains more significantly affected by formalistic and theoretical perspectives than I believe necessary.

While modern critics tend not to engage directly with the relationship between the part and the whole, their commentaries on the novel as a form imply an attitude toward that relationship of which they may not even be aware themselves. While much of what Turnell says about the history of the novel now seems outmoded, he expresses an idea about the relationship between narrative and disposition that continues to have influence today: while "[t]he core of the pre-Flaubertian novel was narrative," "[w]ith Flaubert the novel was transformed into an *arrangement of images*" (7-8 emphasis in original).<sup>10</sup> It is clear that Turnell shares the idea, common today, that a work's progression, from beginning to end, whether expressed through images or through the events of a plot, ought to follow the work's dispositive division. In the case of *Madame Bovary*, "[t]he movement, *with the division into three parts*, is circular" (Turnell 8, emphasis added). Vivienne Mylne's essay on "techniques of illusion" in the eighteenth-century French novel addresses the example of Rousseau's insistence on the division of *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* into six volumes (1965, 1981). Doody's preference for discussing

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<sup>10</sup> Individual readers may or may not agree with Turnell's claim that the events of the plot in *Madame Bovary* are less important than the juxtaposition of various images within the work, though Turnell would probably argue that such disagreement comes from the widespread adoption of the technique by authors and its universal acceptance by readers, who no longer notice it as something that was once unusual (9).

“tropes,” which she calls “the ‘deep rhetoric’ of the Novel rather than its ‘form’” is salutary, as it allows her to avoid falling into the pattern of valuing, as she puts it, “Good (Male) Form” over “Bad (Female) Matter” (304), but here I will attempt to ally a similar attention to “figures [...] of narrative,” with an attention to form, as a means of isolating and studying the very “resistan[ce] to form” that Doody reminds us is famously integral to the novel as a genre. After all, it is the *continued*, and therefore *unsuccessful* resistance to form that plays a crucial role in constituting the novel’s identity as a genre, not a process of rejecting form that could one day be complete, and therefore it is essential to understand the dynamic interaction *between* narration and the form that it resists as it becomes a novel, if we are to understand this genre. These “tropes,” according to Doody, are “something more like narrative symbols that move us through a novel’s story,” or “symbolic moments in a liturgy” (305). Like the points of narrative structural articulation that I examine here, Doody’s “tropes” provide readers with clues about how what they are reading at any given moment contributes to the eventual formation of some kind of “whole.” Unlike Doody, though, I analyze how these turning points function in relationship with the more obviously “formal” aspects of the dispositive system.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> While I examine structural articulations at all points within a narrative progression, Doody mainly focuses on the use of tropes at the beginnings of novels, noting, for instance, that a striking number of novels begin with a body of water (321). While Doody pays less attention to the tropes within the body of novels, she does note that “[t]he third movement of Proust’s *A la recherche du temps perdu* is played out by the seaside,” and that when Emma consummates her adulterous affair with Rodolphe near the marshland of a small pond “[s]he crosses a threshold [...] in mid-novel, which is not the same as the threshold that figures at the novel’s opening” (325). Doody discusses the significance of many other novelistic tropes, but rarely describes their function in relationship to their situation within the narrative or with relation to their position within the novel’s dispositive structure. She does mention that “the description of the River is the climax of the *first chapter*” of *The Wind in the Willows* (324, emphasis added). This is perhaps to be expected since her main objective is not to define the effects of tropes on narrative structure, but rather to demonstrate commonalities between novels of all time periods, which she does by citing similar uses of given tropes in novels separated by centuries.

*Crossing the Genettian threshold to walk on Dionne's path to chapters*

Identifying the underlying structures of novelistic works can help us to understand how such works function as narratives, but at the risk of imposing anachronistic criteria if the structures identified are not materially indicated by the text itself. In *La Voie aux chapitres*, Ugo Dionne shows one way to avoid this risk. His book is the first major study of the mechanics of the typographical division of novels into parts, and in it the *ancien régime* novel serves as the point of reference both for proving that the schema we now consider “classic” was not always standard, and for showing how the chapter came to dominate previous modes of disposition. Other critics’ analyses of the part–whole issue focus on the connection between novelistic writing and journalism under the *ancien régime* as another way to avoid imposing anachronistic criteria on the narrative fiction of the period. Dionne proposes four schemata for theorizing the division of texts, two of which are based on the work of Gérard Genette. The first is based on Genette’s seminal work *Seuils*, in which he distinguishes between the *text*, i.e. the material that makes up the work itself, and the *paratext*, i.e. any secondary text that accompanies the main text in its published form. As Dionne points out, though, Genette’s typology does not account for a work’s disposition, which occupies the frontier *between* text and paratext: it is more unstable than the text and less certainly attributable to the narrator or author than the text, as a novel can be divided into volumes at the whim of the publisher; and yet while it is not part of the text itself, it does help the text function as a work (201-214). The second schema is based on the distinction, laid out in Genette’s *L’Œuvre de l’art*, between those qualities of works of art that are *necessary*, and those that are *contingent*. Because novels are produced according to an artist’s directions, but by someone other than the artist, for

Genette the *essence* of a novel is not the physical object that is the book, but rather the “lexical chain” it makes available to the reader (Dionne 214-219). However, Genette never quite makes it clear whether the “macropunctuation” of a work’s disposition should be considered part of this chain (Dionne 219-220). To answer that question, Dionne advocates returning to the texts to make a determination “pour chaque cas d’espèce, pour chaque genre, ainsi que pour chaque époque, chaque régime romanesque successif”, given that standards for how much variation a text can tolerate before metamorphosing into another work change over time and vary between genres (220-221). My study of Prévost is a contribution to such efforts.

Genette’s claim that the ultimate purpose of paratext is to support the text inspires Dionne to argue that even the titles of imaginary works, such as those of Rabelais’s and Furetière’s imaginary libraries, serve only to provide those works a kind of existence (205). Yet, could we not say that the purpose of the imaginary works is to bring the titles into existence, given that the joke is in the title? From a certain point of view, the text comes into existence in order that the title can have a referent. The fact that a title can exist without a work, even as a joke, suggests that texts can be seen as materializations of ideas that can, and do, exist without them, and these ideas carry a certain degree of dispositiveness about them. If the act of artistic creation can be understood as the process of bringing an idea into the realm of material existence, then we could say that the text exists to serve the paratext, to the extent that the paratext is itself a provisional materialization of the idea that the text will eventually bring into full existence. Looking at things in this way is particularly useful for works published in installments—and by

extension for all *ancien régime* works of fiction, since they are all susceptible to continuation—because the most basic, primal element of the paratext, the title of the work, must necessarily preexist the full expression of the work. Through the title, the paratext reaches a certain degree of completion from the very beginning that forever escapes the text, given that the title, by definition, applies to the whole work, whatever its final form—even if the title eventually changes, it lays claim to the entirety of the work from the very first moment of publication.

One of the limits of Genette's approach that Dionne shares is the necessity it imposes of considering only the textual means of narration, and not the narrated itself that the text contains. Methods of narration can be described according to any number of material characteristics: voice, focalization, time, space, etc., but these descriptions fail to capture the progression of the narrative, or the evolution of characters. Noting a change of narrators, for instance, does nothing to describe what is happening in the story that first one narrator, and then the second, is telling. This optic is at once a strength and a weakness. The strength of this method is that it leads to insights that would be impossible solely based on the consideration of the narrated alone, as if it could be totally separated from its narration. Its weakness is that, conversely, it makes it difficult to reach the kind of insight that, can only come from considering the narrated in that more abstract, idealized way. Both approaches, then, have strengths and weaknesses, and my aim in this project is to attempt to combine the strengths of both as much as possible while minimizing their weaknesses. Inevitably, I will not reach insights as far-reaching as I would if I were to employ only one of these methods, but so, too, my blind spot will not

be as large as either method applied to the exclusion of the other. Here, Stevick's approach to the chapter, so disappointing when it comes to a formal study of disposition, may serve as a model. Stevick treats the chapter as a "natural" division of the text, and so is perhaps dealing more with the interaction between narrative structure and dispositive structure, but without intending to do so. While I have made an attempt to avoid treating the narrative divisions I have identified in Prévost's text as "self-evident" or "natural," by attempting to combine a study of narration with a study of the narrated, I necessarily run the risk of letting my subjective reading of a text influence my analysis, although because I am attempting to take readerly experience into account, a limited amount of such influence may actually be more help than harm.

Dionne further identifies two ways of understanding the internal divisions of a work of narrative fiction based on other theorists, who embrace one of two possible ways of conceptualizing a "work," either as a linear whole divided into segments, or as an assemblage of juxtaposed fragments (Dionne 233-243).<sup>12</sup> Dionne's opposition of the segmentary and fragmentary modes of disposition is, as he himself notes, artificial, since most works operate in both modes (249-250), but I would like to argue that even the two modes taken together do not entirely account for the narrative structure. Even if the dispositive units are completely continuous, it is not always the case that the boundaries between them must necessarily serve as the most important (or only) measures of

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<sup>12</sup> For the linear-segmentary perspective Dionne cites Ernst Curtius, Aron Kibedi Varga, Marc Fumaroli, Randa Sabry, Jean Rousset, Michael Riffaterre, Paul Ricœur, Guy Larroux, Roger Chartier, Christian Jouhaud, and Wolfgang Iser; for the assemblage-fragmentary perspective he cites J. Hillis Miller, Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, Alfred Glauser, and Barbara L. Merry.



narrative progress, and neither is it the case that a fragmentary narrative structure must necessarily be reflected by disruption of the dispositive structure. The logical error is to apply our modern assumption that the incomplete status of a dispositive unit “renvoie à une continuation, à une complétion qui aura lieu *en effet*, dans la suite de l’œuvre et les chapitres subséquents” (239), to texts of the *ancien régime*, about which neither reader nor author could say such a thing. From either perspective, it would be logical to expect these parts, segments or fragments as they may be, to correspond to dispositive units, but the relationship between textual disposition and narrative structure is not always so straightforward, and often more than one schema is necessary to fully understand the forces at work (Dionne 249-250).<sup>13</sup> Dionne’s simultaneous attention to theoretical concerns and to historical realities thus provides a partial model for my study of Prévost. However, unlike Dionne, my aim is not to use the novels of the *ancien régime* to create a

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<sup>13</sup> Dionne concludes that dispositive structure can be more or less contingent or constitutive of a novel depending on its exact generic and temporal characteristics (220-221). Dionne discusses the division of Fénélon’s *Télémaque*, which in at least one case was divided into 24 books that respected the author’s preferred division into 18 books, but divided some of the longer books according to internal narrative divisions (221-225). However, Dionne fails to note that these apparently “natural” internal divisions might not represent the only possible dispositive divisions of the text, since it is possible to find narrative transitions at almost any point in the text, which could be used as opportunities for dispositive interruption. The example of the *Princesse de Clèves*, whose division into four books can neither be totally discounted as contingent nor completely endorsed as constitutive, which Dionne notes (229-231), could perhaps be better understood by identifying a narrative structure (not necessarily dictated by formal characteristics such as level switching) and comparing that to the dispositive structure to determine what effects the tension between the two systems produces for the reader. I would agree with Dionne that “[d]e toutes les dynamiques à l’œuvre dans le processus historique, c’est bien [...] la *durée* [...] qui est le plus déterminant” (231), because that is more or less what’s happening in the case of novels published in installments: the definitive relationship between narrative and dispositive structures can’t be determined until enough time has gone by; however, there are different relationships that obtain during the process of publication, and those don’t cease to be valid once it becomes clear that the text has reached its final form. I disagree with Dionne’s contention that unless an author “inhabits” (investit) the norms imposed by the cultural norms in effect, that unless the author “integrates” these norms into his/her practice, s/he must necessarily become their slave, or that it is necessary to “subvert” a genre to be in control of one’s authorial productions, and that if one is not then one is somehow substandard (232, the last part is my interpretation of the unstated implications of Dionne’s statements).

diachronic scheme for classifying and cataloguing all the possible ways of employing disposition in print narrative fiction. Rather, I intend to study the dispositive techniques of one novelist to better understand both that novelist's idiosyncratic use of those techniques and the role of disposition in *ancien régime* fiction generally.

Dionne has studied the development of our modern conventions regarding the relationships between the novel, as a “whole,” and its parts, but his typology is decidedly retrospective: it is impossible to ever know with complete certainty into which category to place any given work until it reaches its final form. This cuts the theory off from readerly and writerly experience. From the reader's perspective, it may seem that a work is going to end up taking on one given form and not another, based on peritextual, paratextual, and textual indications, but if it doesn't reach that form within a short period of time there is no immediate way for the reader to know whether it will someday reach that form anyway. There are only increasing levels of certainty, never complete certainty. Similarly, the final form of a text may place it in a different category than the author initially intended for it to occupy. Dionne's treatment of “romans encadrés” still takes into account the final status of the text when determining the form of the resulting “work” even though only the fullness of time is able to effect the transformation of a would-be archdispositive series or an inserted narration into independent “romans encadrés,” and this fullness of time was not available to the authors as they were writing nor to the contemporary audience as they were reading and potentially waiting for the continuation (117-124). The *Heptaméron*, whose title, as Dionne notes, “inscri[t] le naufrage du projet” (124) of ten days and one hundred tales, as well as parodies of the form (127-

128), are a perfect example: the “identity” of the work is only knowable, by modern standards, after it can be safely determined that no further installments of the text will appear; and even in this case it would be possible to imagine a posthumous allographic continuation. Dionne also argues in favor of the modern principle of the critical edition, which rejects other possible dispositive structures when an authorized version is known (225). However, this acceptance fails to fully take into account the fact that readers did encounter texts in unauthorized states.

There is a similarity between the dispositive structure, as conceived by Dionne, and the narrative structure, as I propose to understand it here: both can only exist in the mind of the reader. Dionne defines the dispositive system as part of the paratext, which is *situated around* the text, and more specifically as part of the peritext, which *cohabits with* the text, either within the book, on its surface, or in some other necessarily contiguous space (202-203). I agree with Dionne’s classification to the extent that the dispositive structure thoroughly penetrates the text without becoming part of it, but I disagree to the extent that it necessarily exists beyond the text and therefore never truly “cohabits” with it. The material *signs* of the dispositive structure, e.g. chapter and section titles, are separate from the structure itself, which could be represented differently. The text is contained within dispositive units, but those units are not the words or symbols or spaces that denote them, and the story is contained within narrative units, but those units are not the words, symbols, or spaces that denote them. Rather, a chapter or other dispositive structural unit is a mental entity given a contingent form on the page, subject to modification in subsequent editions, just as a narrative structural unit depends on the

reader's understanding of how the current moment of the narration plays a role in forming a "whole" work. Dionne identifies the power of the dispositive structural system to act as a sign of a work's identity: "il révèle les lignes de force du roman, il en déclare le dessin" (250). The narrative structure signals the same things from a different angle, and perhaps more accurately, although the true identity of a text as a "work" only exists when a particular conjunction of narrative and dispositive structures are considered together.

In addition to "disposition," my translation of Dionne's term *le dispositif*, which consists of a work's division into chapters, books, parts, volumes, and installments, three of Dionne's terms deserve to be explained here: *archidispositif*, *paradispositif*, and *quasidispositif*, which I will translate as *archdisposition*, *paradisposition*, and *quasidisposition*. Dionne defines archdisposition as any system that organizes a group of novels in a way resembling a system of organization for the internal divisions of a novel (21). This includes four subtypes: 1) the "cycle," particularly as practiced during the Medieval period and in the nineteenth century, which consists of independent novels that can be read alone, but that only acquire their full significance when considered in relationship to the entire system; 2) the "sequence," in which the first novel determines the diegetic and ordinal parameters of the works to follow; 3) the "series," which is made up of independent units that each constitute a realization of the same archdispositive principle; and 4) the "corpus," which obtains when an author's complete or selected works are grouped together to form a single "work" (21-22). Dionne's "quasidisposition" corresponds to any textual element of a novel that resembles a more formal disposition,

but without fully attaining that status, whether or not a proper disposition coexists with the quasidisposition (95). This includes three subtypes: 1) what Dionne calls “collections” (*recueils*), or novels that contain shorter narratives that can sometimes approach the proportions of novels; 2) “novelistic anthologism,” which occurs when novels contain short texts such as poems, songs, or letters; and 3) “mimetic novels” such as the diaristic novel or the epistolary novel, which imitate real-world forms that provide their own conventions for divisions into parts (95). Of these four concepts, the one most relevant here is “paradisposition,” which is the division of a novel into installments during the process of its original publication or any subsequent republication (85). Dionne notes that dispositive structure can dictate an author’s way of composing the novel, as in the case of paradisposition, or novels published as their parts are composed: “chaque livraison appel[le] certes la suivante, mais constitu[e] déjà une unité de lecture et d’interprétation” (245).

In an observation that is particularly relevant for a study of authors like Prévost, much of whose work was published in installments, Dionne notes Wolfgang Iser’s analysis of the effect that the temporal dilation of a periodical work has on the reader, who is forced to imagine the eventual whole; the absence of which destroys the periodical novel as an esthetic object for Iser (86). This interpretation fails to acknowledge the simultaneous operation of the narrative structural system, which continues to operate once the temporal dilation is no longer reinforcing the divisions that compose the dispositive structure. For Dionne, the question of the author’s investment in the dispositive divisions of a periodical work are of “primordial” importance for determining

“sa pertinence relative dans l’interprétation du roman” (87). Such considerations are important when dealing with an author like Prévost because of the economic implications of publication by installment (88). I argue that considering narrative structure in conjunction with dispositive structure can lead to insight regardless of the level of authorial investment in the dispositive structure. If a disposition dictated by concerns other than the author’s artistic vision is retained in collected editions, it certainly continues to structure the reader’s interpretation of the work, and even if it disappears after the initial publication by installments, the intermediate state of the novel is worth analyzing in addition to or in comparison to its final state, or perhaps even instead of the final state, given the potentially greater relative impacts of the first state on the reading public. Dionne notes that archdisposition serves as an aid for reading its constitutive elements, while one reads a novel by reading its constitutive chapters (81). However, I argue that there are points of articulation in a novel’s narrative structure that are separate from the points of articulation of its dispositive structure, but which nevertheless furnish essential tools for reading the novel as a whole, especially in the case of periodical fiction, but to an important degree in the case of all *ancien régime* fiction, given the omnipresent possibility of any such novel becoming a periodical fiction regardless of the author’s original intentions.

Scholarship on Prévost has also tended to gloss over the divisions between the various parts of his novels, even to the point of treating the entirety of his novelistic production as a single “work” of sorts that, when properly understood, reveals the author’s unified artistic vision, in a fashion that recalls Dionne’s idea of the “corpus.”

While work along these lines has led to the identification of sophisticated artistic practices on the part of Prévost, flattening the boundaries between works and between parts of works deprives us of additional insight into Prévost's novels that can come from specifically attending to those boundaries. Dionne notes Prévost's innovation (the "roman prévostien") in employing a dispositive system based on books in a work whose subject matter is contemporary, rather than historical or mythological (304). Due to the fact that Prévost's shorter works are generally divided into parts, rather than books, and because Dionne is not interested in narrative structure except to the degree that it coincides with or motivates dispositive divisions, Dionne fails to note that there are other narrative structural devices at work in these shorter works that interact with dispositive structure in ways that can be illuminating.<sup>14</sup> Given the relative instability of dispositive structure, narrative structure, although it is not immune to modification (as in the case of a revised edition), is an important element to analyze to see how changes in dispositive structure both influence and respond to the reader's perception of the work as a whole. The dispositions of Prévost's novels combine aspects of medieval and modern "archdispositions," in that they are both author-centered, being the result of Prévost's artistic intentions, and allographic, being at times dictated by external concerns or the result of direct intervention by other individuals, such as editors or unauthorized continuing writers.

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<sup>14</sup> Dionne does mention Prévost's sole chapter-based work, *Les Aventures de Pomponius* as an example of lack of correspondence between dispositive frontiers and beginnings and ends of inserted narratives (109-110).

It is interesting to compare Prévost's long novels to more recent ones, such as the cyclical novel or "roman fleuve," which Dionne identifies as a particular instance of "archdisposition." According to Dionne's typology, novels of this type are divided into separate "works" (ouvrage) each of which "correspond à une livraison, un épisode" and contributes "à une totalité qui se constitue dans le temps" though this division into "works" is subject to later reformulation when the novel is eventually republished (43). It is true that long novels of the *ancien régime* are not typically divided into installments with subtitles unique to them and corresponding to a particular episode. There are instances where subsequent installments receive slightly differentiated titles (e.g. "suite de...") that then disappear at the stage of republication. Dionne distinguishes between medieval cycles, which are essentially allographic, and those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which are more closely tied to individual authors (43). Novels like Prévost's, then, represent a midpoint between these two configurations, because while they primarily derive from the vision of a single author, they are sometimes continued by other authors, either when the original author can no longer continue the enterprise (thus similar to the medieval instance) or when they abandon it; allographic continuers exploit the confusion between terms for *sequential* continuation and *new* continuation (50-51). We see examples of this phenomenon in the case of *Cleveland* and its apocryphal continuation and that of the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* and their "suite" and "suite et conclusion." It would appear, then, that there are (at least) two kinds of "suites" under the *ancien régime*, one that "prolongs" *another* novel (Genette's definition, which Dionne adopts, 45, my emphasis) thus forming what Dionne calls a "sequence," and one



that presents itself as *part of* the novel that it prolongs, and which I argue is distinct from the sequence. My analysis will show that the difference between these two types of continuations is less an inherent difference than a contingent one.

*Two mutually-illuminating ideas: narration and disposition*

Recent scholarship questions the heritage of the Enlightenment, but it nevertheless seems likely that the preference for order over chaos and for rational organization over organic organization, which forms an important current of eighteenth-century thought, contributed to the nineteenth-century's preference for a rational relationship between a novel's narrative structure and its dispositive structure. Perhaps the Enlightenment's emphasis on rational organization was taken up by prominent nineteenth-century novelists, which led to a general conflation of two structures that had previously operated separately by default, if not by authorial intention. Even more recent artistic trends that resist the nineteenth century's preference for orderly structure, such as the nouveau roman or the postmodern novel, include the conflation of these two structures as an unconscious assumption implicit in their point of departure, as part of the artistic norms against which they arrange themselves. Scholars of novels and other narrative genres, whether printed or otherwise, will benefit from taking the interaction between narrative structure and dispositive structure into account in their analyses. While many contemporary novels contain no dispositive divisions at all, or highly idiosyncratic ones, the prototypical novel form, against which such novels must at least be implicitly judged, is one in which the dispositive structure and narrative structure of a conventional novel are synonymous, with a few accepted variations, such as the "cliffhanger" ending.

In fact, the scholarly community does not generally conceive of the existence of two separate structural systems in prose narrative fiction, that could either work together or in dynamic tension with each other. Even in an extremely minimally dispositive work, such as one in which the text is only divided by paragraphs and occasional white space between paragraphs, can be better understood by considering disposition and narration to be independent, mutually influential aspects of a novel's form.

Although scholars have occasionally examined Prévost's work as part of their efforts to better understand how the part-whole relationship should influence how we look at novels, and although recent studies have begun to address the role that division into parts played in Prévost's work, no-one has yet undertaken a thorough reevaluation of Prévost's entire body of work with the part-whole division in mind from the start. One major benefit of this approach is that it allows us to at least partially replicate what eighteenth-century readers would have perceived as normative. In this way, it allows us to distance ourselves from the critical anachronism of "unity" serving as the implied default aesthetic norm. In this study, I hope to further both Prévost studies and novel studies. To the extent that a study of this kind will directly affect Prévost scholarship, it will result in a better understanding of the practical realities that Prévost dealt with in the course of composing his copious body of work, and it will paint a clearer picture of how Prévost negotiated the interaction between narrative and novelistic form. In other words, given that novels of the *ancien régime* could always be continued and could stop without concluding (Dionne 45-50, cf. Coulet "Remodelages" 1296), what were the consequences for Prévost in terms of his esthetic and economic goals? While even modern novels can

stimulate sequels, “prequels,” or spin-offs, any resulting new works are just that: *new*, and therefore not *part of* the work that gave rise to them, whereas continuations of *ancien régime* fiction were presented as being still part of the original work. The contribution to the field of eighteenth-century novel scholarship will be to remove the distorting lens of Romantic ideas of wholeness—and all of the developments of and reactions to Romanticism—from the distance that separates modern critics from *ancien régime* fiction. More generally, in the field of novel and narrative scholarship, this study will enable a more nuanced conception of the relationship between part and whole in narrative than the one that is currently prevalent, which will enable deeper understanding of both traditional and evolving narrative forms.

Although no global evaluation of the part–whole dynamic in Prévost’s work yet exists, scholars have paid some attention to the division of Prévost’s novels into installments, but usually they look no further than the implications of such division for the genesis of the work (e.g. Sgard, *Prévost romancier*). An exception is Chetrou De Carolis’ recent article “Entre la partie et le tout: le double statut de *Manon Lescaut*”, which points the way toward the kind of criticism I would like to do, in that it uses divisions in a text by Prévost to question our assumptions about his work.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, De Carolis argues that although we now generally consider *Manon Lescaut* either as an independent novel or as part of the much longer *Mémoires et aventures d’un homme de*

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<sup>15</sup> Here I build on the work of René Démonis. For example, his analysis of *Manon Lescaut* in relationship with the rest of the *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité* represented a new perspective at the time, and while he does not frame his analysis in such terms it does in fact amount to a partial analysis of the novel’s disposition (*Le Roman à la première personne* 420-27).

*qualité*, it has never truly been *either*, having always been *both* simultaneously. This argument is interesting because it highlights a weak point in our current attitude toward literary works: the modern critic is unsettled by a text that cannot be easily identified as either an independent unit of its own or a part of a larger unit. Looking at *Manon Lescaut* from an installment-based point of view, it is possible to see that the work would not function the same in its role as part of a whole if it did not have its own existence as an independent unit, and vice versa. For example, if the story had been inserted within *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* at the appropriate point in that work's chronology, it would not have the same impact on the reader's retrospective evaluation of the work as a whole. Similarly, though, had *Manon Lescaut* been published independently, without any ties to *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, there would be no opportunity for a reader to use the experience gained by reading that longer work to enrich their reading of the shorter one.

There are some similarities between Dionne's approach and mine. While Dionne resists the modern assumption that novels ought to occupy a single unit of publication, he fails to go far enough. He accepts the assumption that the chapters of a novel are synonymous with its narrative progression when he states that "la disposition chapitrale [...] épouse [...] la coulée narrative," but he points toward the separation between narration and disposition when he suggests that the division into chapters has this capacity because it coexists with "une segmentation seconde, discrète" that does not (95-

96). Dionne addresses an idea similar to the pseudo work (96).<sup>16</sup> Dionne does talk about the tension between long “unités textuelles” and the installments in which they were published (133). In a comment that touches on a similar idea to my “fragmentary esthetic,” Dionne notes that 17th- and 18th-c. readers possessed an “avidité narrative, une

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<sup>16</sup> While Dionne notes that chapters and books tend to follow the movement of the narrative more closely than parts do, because they lend themselves to more large-scale movements (290), he fails to note that there may be large-scale movements present in the narrative structure of the work that do not correspond to its division into parts, or even to any dispositive boundaries at all. It will be necessary to determine which, if any of the rationales for dividing the text into parts apply in Prévost’s novels. However, I will argue that the association of various parts with generic, geographical, temporal, or developmental shifts that Dionne catalogs (290-295) can often hide or coexist with other important narrative transitions, and that this phenomenon of camouflage or coexistence is particularly important in novels that were susceptible to continuation in further installments; and that even in the case of works whose authors most likely never considered them candidates for continuation it remains an underlying feature of the modes of production and distribution of the period, and therefore is never absent from the meaning of the dispositive structure. Dionne does provide an example of such a lack of correspondence between narrative structure and dispositive structure in the case of *Le Page disgracié*, whose protagonist evolves in status over the course of the novel in three phases that do not correspond to the novel’s two dispositive parts (295-297), but he fails to tie this lack of concordance to the uncertain boundaries of the *ancien régime* novel, and it would be interesting to examine this novel more closely to see if there are any signs of the beginning of an opening towards the end of the text, which would have facilitated a hypothetical continuation. Another example that Dionne explores is Crébillon’s *L’Écumoire*, in which a varying number of chapters correspond to a fixed number of episodes in a parallel sequence accomplished in succession by each of the novel’s two protagonists (308-311). Dionne also fails to fully appreciate the significance of shifting designations from one installment to the next (diachronically) or between different editions of the same installments (synchronously or diachronically). For instance, the example of *Les Douze livres d’Astrée* as title of the first *part* of Honoré d’Urfé’s novel is significant (299). Dionne fails to note that the definite article implies that these are the only twelve books that exist, and that, in the absence of other information, the reader or potential reader is to be expected to assume will ever exist (at least at a surface level that could be negated by the very text of the installment to which it applies, or by subsequent installments). Although Dionne admits that even possibly arbitrary divisions into “tomes” that may have little or nothing to do with authorial intent are often imbued with at least a minimal significance through the presence of disruptive *topoi*, he argues against attributing “dispositive” significance to these points of transition (287). This position ignores the effect of the *topoi* in question on the reader’s evolving mental representation of the eventual whole that the work she or he is currently reading will eventually form, whether that eventual point of (at least provisional) completion is imagined to be coming at the end of the text currently available, or at the end of some future installment. In minimizing the importance of the *topoi* that accompany dispositive transitions in cases where authorial intent is less than obvious, Dionne also neglects an aspect of “la question délicate du caractère, lectorial ou intrinsèque, des *topoi* de rupture” (288), namely, whether the author or editor chooses to locate dispositive boundaries at places in the text where (at least minimal) narrative transitions occur, or whether the placement of those boundaries at those locations causes readers to perceive them as moments of narrative transition. Dionne also states that the “tome” is only redundantly dispositive, since its boundaries always coincide with those of inferior dispositive units (288). Without empirical study, it is impossible to truly know if this is the case, since it is at least conceivable that if it were necessary, for pragmatic reasons, to interrupt a dispositive unit with a physical division between two volumes, there would be a significant effect on the reader if those volumes were given the name of “tome.”

satisfaction et une attente spécifiquement liées à la prolifération apparemment gratuite de récits insérés,” or “*narratophilie*” (emphasis in original) and that this attitude stands in contrast to the twenty-first-century obsession with structural economy (105), but his observation applies only to one instance of a phenomenon that I believe much more pervasive. Not only did readers appreciate the insertion of independent narratives, they also appreciated well-orchestrated transitions between and among various subjects within the main narrative. Dionne also mentions the possibility of the text making reference to other parts of itself, which he calls “renvoi interne,” and categorizes the ways in which this technique can involve the dispositive system (208-211). The interactions, simultaneity and contradictions of dispositive “renvois internes” and ones that are purely textual are an important part of my object of study. These similarities, however, do not extend to the level of my principal argument, which is that it is necessary to systematically examine the interactions between dispositive and narrative structures in all novels in order to fully understand how they function and to fully appreciate the ways in which they reflect and mold the society that produces them.

Dionne’s thorough description of novelists’ use of the artistic possibilities afforded by the dispositive structural system leads him to conclude that this was a period in which those capabilities were underutilized: works published in multiple volumes, whether periodically or simultaneously, make passive use of these capabilities (526). Dionne also notes the comparative reluctance of *ancien régime* novelists to allow the dispositive rupture to have its full effect, preferring to always provide some kind of connection to accompany the reader comfortably from one dispositive unit to the next to

avoid the danger of “la pulvérisation dispositive” (527). The first aspect of this claim fails to take into account that the poetical functions that Dionne has identified as being possible to effect through manipulation of the dispositive structural system can also be fulfilled by solely narrative means, or through a combination of narrative and dispositive means. The second aspect of this claim fails to appreciate eighteenth-century authors’ response to the desires of their audience, who expect to be guided from one pleasing fragment to the next with a minimum of jarring discontinuities, except in cases where the author is able to exploit such abrupt transitions to achieve a particular effect. I would also like to take note of Dionne’s observation that the classical novelistic dispositive system is “extravagant” (*dépensier*), not parsimoniously efficient, rather allowing itself to insert various fragments into the stream of the text, which sometimes compete with the novel’s disposition in creating a structure for organizing the text (526). I argue that the “extravagant” character of the *ancien régime* dispositive structural system comes from the greater independence of the narrative structural system, and the resulting alternation between mutual support and dynamic tension between the two systems. The present analysis begins to address one of the lacunae that Dionne notes in his own work, namely an over-emphasis on the practical aspects of the dispositive function to the detriment of its esthetic aspects. He admits that his work is primarily motivated by a descriptive ambition, rather than an analytical one, which would have perhaps required a more complete definition of the esthetic function of disposition (528-529). My work, then, can be seen as beginning to outline this definition, and to achieve that goal it has been necessary to push back against some of Dionne’s assertions while acknowledging their

value. Dionne further notes that it might have been possible to identify “des parallèles entre la vision du monde de certains auteurs, de certaines époques, et leurs pratiques dispositives,” but that such an effort might have produced little of value (529-530). Further synchronic research might make it possible to better understand the role of dispositive structure in supporting the early eighteenth century’s questioning of the model posed by the *nouvelle historique*, a process to which resolutely unfinished works such as Marivaux’s *Vie de Marianne* also contributed.<sup>17</sup>

## Findings

### *Methods*

To guide our thoughts regarding the part–whole dynamic in Prévost’s body of work, we might ask questions about the work of other major prolific authors who have made frequent use of part–whole structures in their novels. For instance, we might wonder what similarities and differences there are between Alexandre Dumas’s *Trois Mousquetaires* trilogy, on the one hand, and Prévost’s *Le Philosophe anglais, ou histoire de M. Cleveland*, on the other. The units that make up Dumas’s multi-volume work were not planned together in advance, and were at first presented as three independent novels, with the second two being the sequels of the first, after which they were presented as the three “parts” of a single work. Like Dumas, Prévost composed the parts that make up his *Cleveland* without an initial plan (Escola, “Longeur”). And, again like Dumas, the whole “work” can be separated into independent “novels” according to at least some scholars

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<sup>17</sup> See Christophe Martin, “Le roman et son double : délégation romanesque et composition échelonnée dans *La Vie de Marianne*” (*MaLiCE, le Magazine des Littératures et des Cultures à l’ère numérique*, no. 5, Jan. 2015).



(e.g. Pelckmans, “Récit”; Sgard “Préface”), although these don't exactly correspond to the division by volumes or by installments. Although this comparison between Prévost and Dumas shows some ways in which we might begin to change our thinking about Prévost and about novelistic disposition, any comparisons I may make in my dissertation between Prévost's work and that of later authors will necessarily be limited by the pragmatic constraints of my project: my intention is not to break new ground in Dumas scholarship, for example, but only to make what use I can of what has been done in that field already. Moreover, the comparison is complicated by the fact that although Prévost's novels were not planned out in advance to the same degree, or in the same way, as those of Dumas, this lack did not prevent Prévost from composing his novel artistically, as I will demonstrate.

The connection between punctuation, paragraphs, pagination, and disposition is a way to begin considering the interaction between narrative structure and dispositive structure. Dionne notes that the establishment of the paragraph as a practice appropriate for use in novels, not just in more serious texts like legal or scientific treatises, demonstrates a general acceptance of the idea that novels also contained “logical” units worthy of demarcation (261). The development of modern punctuation is also entangled with the rise of the chapter (251-259). The points of articulation that I have identified as part of the narrative structural system sometimes coincide with dispositive unit boundaries. However, in the cases where they do not they almost always coincide with a paragraph or page break, or at the very least with some punctuation. Accordingly, it may be possible to observe and evaluate the continuum from the aspects of disposition that

allow it to participate in the constitution of a work and those that continue to make it work as a contingent aspect of the work.<sup>18</sup> Dionne notes that the novel contains a fundamentally linear text that privileges the instrumental aspects of the page over its organizational capabilities, unlike dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other genres structured around smaller self-contained units (263). However, even though the author usually has no control over pagination, the simple fact of the granularization effected by the placement of text onto pages also allows for a granularization of the narrative that those pages contain, and this coexistence of authorial intention and the lack thereof within the page itself as a unit of text shows it to be a site of the continuum between dispositive structure and narrative structure.<sup>19</sup> My task, then, is to begin creating a typology of

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<sup>18</sup> Dionne notes the difficulty of categorizing dispositive structure as a completely “derived” generic trait or as a “direct” one, especially given that the reader is primarily aware of the derived aspects of a novel’s disposition to the extent that they experience its influence on determining the work’s genre (276). Dionne cites the example of the picaresque novel, posing the question of whether it is the genre’s itinerant structure that determines the division into chapters, which would not have been necessary had the genre placed less consistent emphasis on the variety of its episodes, or whether the division into chapters solidifies the itinerant structure as an essential feature of the genre, which might not have been as notable, and which therefore might not have been identified as a “direct” feature of the genre if presented in a different dispositive structural configuration (276). Dionne’s failure to realize the paradox of this question is all the more striking given that Dionne cites Chartier’s observation that the primordial picaresque novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, was divided into chapters by the editors, not the author (320 n.), a fact that would tend to support the latter view. Dionne also fails to note explicitly that the link between the direct and derived aspects of dispositive structure in the novel comes from the novel’s narrative structure, which is in some ways independent of the dispositive structure, and in some ways dependent on it—either in cooperation with it or in competition with or reaction to it.

<sup>19</sup> While in general nineteenth-century novelistic conventions tend to camouflage “narrative” ruptures (and to a lesser extent the “thematic” ones) that do not coincide with the more frequent dispositive ruptures, Dionne’s discussion of the role of running titles in Stendhal’s *Le Rouge et le Noir* points to the pseudo-dispositive function of the page. Stendhal sometimes uses multiple running titles within a single dispositive unit, or maintains a single running title beyond the frontiers of one or more dispositive units, and can even return after gaps (269). The possibility of creating a superimposed dispositive unit or extending a dispositive unit beyond its nominal boundaries is very similar to phenomena I have observed in my detailed analysis of narrative structure in Prévost’s novels, such as the possibility of a narrative unit extending beyond the boundaries of the narrative unit in which it begins, or of being interrupted by smaller inserted narrative units and then resuming after they end. In fact, it is precisely the loose correspondence between the change of running title, which can only occur with a new page, and the fuzzy boundaries between

markers of narrative structure and of the various possible interactions between these markers and those that indicate dispositive structure. Sometimes the two systems work together, and at other times they are in tension with each other, while at yet other times they operate more-or-less independently of each other. Because my typology will be based on observations gleaned from a single-author corpus, it is necessarily limited and provisional, but I do define some general principles that will be applicable to situations that arise in the work of other authors, as well as to other fictional narrative media, with more or less modification.

To a certain degree, my analysis treats the paragraph as a dispositive unit, since for pragmatic reasons I have tended to situate the narrative transitions I have identified at paragraph breaks. However, this is merely for the purpose of facilitating my analysis, not because I believe that the paragraph breaks are necessary for the narrative structural transition to occur. In fact, I have identified instances of narrative transition that occur mid-paragraph. And although in these situations I have tended to situate the precise moment of transition at a sentence boundary, this was once again purely for ease of reference. Just as the dispositive structure that Dionne has described occupies the surface between text and paratext, the narrative structure exists both in conjunction with and separately from the text that both supports it and is shaped by it. This means that to a

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narrative units that is worth noting here: while it is almost always possible to identify a precise paragraph or punctuation mark as the point of transition between one narrative unit and the next, true narrative transition, like real-world transitions, are gradual, yet text is inherently granular, being composed, even at its smallest level of composition, of distinct units: letters, which themselves can be divided into strokes, which could be divided into molecules of ink... At a certain point it becomes necessary to draw the line so as not to necessitate becoming an expert on particle physics in order to be able to analyze the structure of a novel.

certain degree it is impossible to locate the precise location in the text where one narrative unit ends and the next begins. I have also attempted to demonstrate this difficulty by mobilizing a rather fine-grained analytical apparatus, in which I acknowledge more levels of division than Dionne does in the system of dispositive structure that he describes. By not engaging more deeply with the interaction between narrative and dispositive structural systems, Dionne glosses over the potential significance of novelists' decisions to make use of an event that has the potential to serve as a ruptural *topos* as the location of a dispositive boundary. Even if one admits that not all novelists take equal amounts of care to choose which potentially rupture-inducing events to use as locations for dispositive boundaries, it is important to analyze the effect of the conjunctions, as they do exist, on the reader's developing understanding of the work as it is being constructed. In non-capitular *ancien régime* novels, the independence of the narrative structure is more apparent than in capitular novels of the same period, or than in later novels that adopt the ever-increasingly standard option of capitular dispositive structure. And while it is true that meals and other conventionally omitted scenes, such as meals, can serve as "pretexts" for concluding a part of a periodic novel (503, cf. Philip Stewart *Imitation and Illusion* 50-52), my analysis shows that even less significant ruptural *topoi* at dispositive boundaries do retain their efficaciousness: even if the major narrative transition occurs before or after the dispositive boundary, the highly charged moment of the dispositive boundary retains its power.

## *Chapter Summaries*

### Part I: When the Whole Has Wholes in It

In the first part of my dissertation I begin my investigation of the differences between modern and *ancien régime* attitudes toward the part–whole relationship by studying the interaction between narrative and dispositive structure in works by Prévost that contain independent or semi-independent textual entities like *Manon Lescaut*, which I will call “pseudoworks.” This is a logical starting point given that Prévost’s general reputation is based on *Manon Lescaut*, which is now considered an independent novel despite having been originally published as part of the much longer *Mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité qui s’est retiré du monde*, which also happens to be Prévost’s first successful novel. I pursue this inquiry along two axes, each of which is the subject of a separate chapter.

The first chapter (“When the Whole is in Pieces”) will examine the segmentary esthetic in the most prototypical and best-known example of a novel by Prévost that contains a pseudowork, namely *Mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité*, which was the original “host” work in which *Manon Lescaut* appeared as a pseudowork. Each of these two texts has earned status as an independent work in its own right, but this independence is not uncomplicated. Indeed, despite reaching an apparent conclusion at the end of six volumes, *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité* can never truly be considered complete without the inclusion of *Manon Lescaut*, because the latter was originally published as an additional installment of the former, and *Manon Lescaut* cannot be considered entirely complete without being integrated into the larger work of which it is a part. Significant work has been devoted to exploring the connections between these two

texts,<sup>20</sup> so my primary focus will be the interactions between narrative and dispositive structure within the novel, which is the underlying phenomenon that makes it possible for such connections to come into being. In particular, I will demonstrate how this interaction creates a “segmentary esthetic” that allows Prévost to provide a pleasurable reading experience to his audience within the constraints of his medium as it was practiced at the time, by increasing the variety of the subject matter and capitalizing on the narrative tension and suspense provided by dispositive boundaries, while at the same time minimizing potentially distracting transitions. While perhaps influenced by baroque or picaresque novels this esthetic is, I argue, primarily a product of *ancien régime* novelistic production and distribution.

Having explored the structural foundations that make it possible for pseudoworks to contribute to the esthetic pleasure of a text, in the second chapter (“When the Parts Nearly Overtake the Whole”) I will focus on the role that pseudoworks themselves play in defining the part-whole dynamic in Prévost’s novels. Prévost’s longer works often incorporate shorter encapsulated narratives, which are sometimes provided with their own titles, and our understanding of these may benefit from the illumination that the examples taken from the shorter works can provide. To this end, part of my task will be to investigate the blurry frontier between the “micro-narratives” of which many narratives consist, and the shorter “works” in question here. I will begin by briefly comparing the differing relationships that exist between *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* and its two principal pseudoworks: *Manon Lescaut* and the “Histoire du marquis de

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<sup>20</sup> See Chetro De Carolis: “Entre la partie et le tout: le double statut de *Manon Lescaut*.” Escola et al. 41-50.

Rosambert.” Both relationships contribute to the reader’s understanding of the protagonist’s evolution, and both contribute to the fragmentary esthetic. It will also be useful to compare these two examples with another prominent use of the technique by Prévost in his *Campagnes philosophiques*, which has already been the object of some study.<sup>21</sup> However, the main focus of this chapter will be to examine Prévost’s use of pseudoworks more directly by studying his most extreme use of the technique, which appears in the *Voyages du capitaine Robert Lade*. Specifically, I intend to use the concept of intertextuality as a lens for understanding Prévost’s use of excerpts from authentic sources in this unusual work, which is so extensive that it threatens to overwhelm the “main” text that ostensibly serves as a framework for supporting them. By presenting authentic texts under invented identities, Prévost creates a web of intertextual relationships that provides ready-made significance for a work that would otherwise have no context.

## Part II: When the Whole Has a Hole in it

Having described the relationship between narrative-dispositive interaction and the fragmentary esthetic, as well as the role of pseudoworks in the creation of that esthetic, in the second part of my dissertation I will turn my attention toward novels whose publication histories deviate from the patterns addressed in the first part, due to unusually long interruptions of publication and interventions by authors other than Prévost. Before the nineteenth century it was difficult for readers to know when

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<sup>21</sup> Oudart, Jean. “L’Histoire dans les *Campagnes philosophiques*.” *Cahiers Prévost d’Exiles* 4 (1987): 89-127.

publication of a novel had ceased definitively. This difficulty arose in part due to the fact that, prior to the generalization of regular serialization at relatively short intervals in the nineteenth century, novels often appeared in installments separated by intervals ranging from months to years, most often on a roughly annual basis. This somewhat irregular and unpredictable rhythm of publication meant that no tangible difference could distinguish a potential whole from a fragment, and that at any point in its publication a novel could metamorphose from the former to the latter. Promises of installments to come could never guarantee a novel's continued publication, and when the promised installments did appear it was not always at the stated time. Accordingly, readers could not know whether a delay indicated only that the author or publisher had been unable to keep up with the projected schedule but still planned to continue publication, or whether the delay was in fact a permanent cessation of publication. Moreover, any novel, finished or unfinished, could be continued at any time, either by the original author or by an authorized or unauthorized successor. Because of this protean capability, "unfinished" novels might someday become "finished" novels by virtue of a continuation that would provide the novel with a conclusion, while, conversely, "finished" novels could turn out to have been "unfinished" after all, because a continuation would show that their initial conclusions had been merely provisional. In the face of the ease with which a work could move about on the completion spectrum, it appears that the idea of "completion" has little meaning with respect to the *ancien régime* novel despite French classicism's professed devotion to the ancient aesthetic principle of unity, in particular as embodied by the *nouvelle historique*. Marivaux's manipulation of narrative-dispositive tension challenges this



principle by questioning unity of plot and interest as foundations for narration.<sup>22</sup>

Prévost's works do not challenge this unity as directly as Marivaux's but do in some ways constitute a return to the esthetic norms of the seventeenth-century's "grand roman," against which Lafayette and other practitioners of the *nouvelle historique* were reacting.

This part of the dissertation presents a logical development of my investigation, given that Prévost's first successful novel, *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, followed a rhythm of publication typical of the norms of the period, and that the other work addressed in the first part, *Voyages de Robert Lade*, only consisted of a single installment. Once again, I will explore this avenue of inquiry in two directions, each of which will be the subject of a separate chapter. I will explore the effects of long publication interruptions on the relationship between a novel's narrative structure and its dispositive structure in my third chapter ("When Two Halves Surround a Hole") by studying Prévost's second major success, *Le Philosophe anglais, ou l'histoire de Monsieur Cleveland, fils naturel de Cromwell*. While Prévost's first successful novel was published in roughly regular installments, publication of his second major success was interrupted for a period of several years, effectively producing two "super-installments." In fact, *Cleveland* exhibits both of the above-mentioned publication variations, because during its long publication hiatus the publisher hired a second author to complete the novel. The relationships between the resulting apocryphal continuation and Prévost's

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<sup>22</sup> See Christophe Martin, *ibid.*

own eventual continuation have been studied,<sup>23</sup> and while applying the concept of dispositive structure to this interaction might yield interesting results, my treatment of the novel will focus on the interaction between narrative and dispositive structure in Prévost's text considered as a whole. To address the phenomenon of continuation by a second author, in my fourth chapter ("When the Second Part Redefines the Whole") I will examine a work that exhibits a more clear-cut example of the phenomenon than can be observed in *Cleveland*, namely *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*. Prévost did not continue this lesser-known novel after publishing the first installment, though it was later continued by Éléazar de Mauvillon, who also modified the portion of the text that had been previously published by Prévost.

### Part III: When the Whole Story Has Been Told

Having shown how interactions between narrative and dispositive structure do not meet our modern expectations in some of Prévost's novels whose dispositive structures appear particularly unusual to us as modern readers, I turn my attention to works by Prévost whose dispositive structures more closely resemble those of modern novels to demonstrate that narrative and dispositive structure interact differently than we might expect them to even in these works. It is particularly interesting to study these novels given the history of Prévost's reputation as an author, given that they were published within a relatively short span of time, do not contain independent "works" within themselves, and do not reach the "epic" scale of Prévost's longer novels. Given that

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<sup>23</sup> See Philip Stewart, "Sur la conclusion du *Cleveland* de Prévost : L'influence de la suite apocryphe," and R. A. Francis, "Prévost's *Cleveland* and its anonymous continuation."

Prévost first became famous for two extremely long novels, then infamous in the later eighteenth century and in the nineteenth for the same lengthy works, and finally recuperated in the twentieth century on the strength of a short work that began as an installment of the long work that first established his reputation, Prévost serves as an interesting test case for changing attitudes regarding the interaction between narrative and dispositive structure in novels.

In my fifth chapter (“When the Whole is More Than the Sum of its Parts”) I will examine the case of *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de Malte, ou Histoire de la jeunesse du commandeur de \*\*\**, a relatively short novel consisting of a single installment that resembles a modern novel except that rather than using the modern chapter as its basic dispositive unit, it is divided into two volumes and four books. This dispositive scheme stands in dynamic contrast to the novel’s basic narrative structure, which is based on the irregular rhythm of the protagonist’s sea voyages. By studying the interaction between these two structural schemes in a self-contained work, I will demonstrate that even in a novel by Prévost that bears a strong formal resemblance to those of today, a structural mechanism can be observed that challenges our modern ideas about how narrative and dispositive structure ought to cooperate in novels. In my conclusion, I will summarize my findings and briefly suggest how the phenomena I have observed in more seemingly strange novels can be observed even in a novel such as *Histoire d’une Grecque moderne*, which lacks the salient narrative structural schema provided by the protagonist’s sea voyages in *La Jeunesse du commandeur*. Finally, I will argue that the persistence of the narrative–dispositive tension in a work that closely

resembles a modern novel suggests that this tension continues to operate in novels whose dispositive and narrative structures seem at first glance to be identical. While the tension may be more pronounced or more productive in serialized works or in modern multi-installment works, my research points to the possibility of a new technique for analyzing narrative structure in all modern works of narrative fiction.

## Part I: When the Whole Has Wholes in It

### Chapter 1: When the Whole is in Pieces: Dispositive Structure, Narrative Structure, and the Segmentary Esthetic in *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*

#### Disposition, Narration, and the Identity of a Work

While at first glance the referential relationship between novels and their titles may seem rather straightforward, the eighteenth-century practice of publication by installments reveals a fundamental flaw in this referentiality to which modern readers are blinded by the comparatively greater material stability of more recent novels. While today's scholars now recognize the importance of giving sufficient attention to the various states and versions that make up the work's publication history when preparing a scholarly edition, they still accept the core assumption of their predecessors who believed in the possibility of reconstructing an "ideal" text: namely, that when one names a literary work one designates a single textual entity, and that any such entity *can* be defined. However, despite the nuances that genetic criticism can bring to such a definition, this assumption supposes a single unified authorial vision of the work's "identity," i.e. the referent corresponding to the title, and this notion is particularly problematic in the case of novels published in installments. Marc Escola calls such novels works "qui s'écrivent dans l'ignorance de leur fin," or "fictions périodiques," and rightly points out that the final state of such novels cannot determine prior intermediate stages, and that novels written in this fashion are thus composed according to a "principe d'économie prospective" rather than according to a "principe de causalité régressive" ("Le clou de

Tchékhov”). While Escola focuses on authorial strategies for dealing with an unknowable ending, it is also possible to look for signs of the “identity” of the work in the process of being constructed. Escola’s principal observation is that when the end is unknown, the whole cannot have authority over its constituent parts; rather each new part brings additional constraints that will have to be taken into account by all subsequent parts. Escola has called for an inventory of “figures” appropriate to this method of composition, but those who respond to this call risk exaggerating the level of ignorance of their endings under which authors of periodical fictions worked. My intention, then, is to participate in this effort by analyzing how the text presents each successive part as contributing to the construction of a “whole” work. While it makes sense that the text’s depiction of its own “identity” as a work would occur at moments when the author must respond to the constraints of periodical fiction, I show here that it also occurs at other points in the narrative, and constitutes a full-fledged compositional technique worth examining on its own, and one that responds to the esthetic expectations of its intended audience.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Although no global evaluation of the part-whole dynamic in Prévost’s work yet exists, scholars have paid some attention to the division of Prévost’s novels into installments (e.g. Escola, “Longueur de Cleveland” dans *Cleveland de Prévost*, ed. Sermain. 181-203), but usually they look no further than the implications of such division for the genesis of the work (e.g. Sgard, *Prévost romancier*). An exception is Chetro De Carolis’ recent article “Entre la partie et le tout: le double statut de *Manon Lescaut*”, which points the way toward the kind of criticism I would like to do, in that it uses divisions in a text by Prévost to question our assumptions about his work. Specifically, De Carolis argues that although we now generally consider *Manon Lescaut* either as an independent novel or as part of the much longer *Mémoires*, it has never truly been *either*, having always been *both* simultaneously.

*Disposition and Narration as Simultaneously Operating Independent Systems Subtending the Structure of a Text as a "Work"*

Evolving modes of production and attending changes in esthetic norms have left modern readers and critics unaware that novels depend on two separate structural systems. Accordingly, when faced with a novel whose narrative and dispositive systems do not operate in unison, their perception of the novel is likely to be at odds with that of its intended audience because they are the unconscious heirs of a point of view that considers unison of the two systems the only valid way to construct a novel. Due to changes in the book trade, the nineteenth-century saw an increase in novelists' ability to compose or plan novels in their entirety prior to publication.<sup>25</sup> This development encouraged the development of an esthetic of cohesion based on the assumption that a novel's "identity" should be consistent throughout the text. Such an esthetic favors a logical and apparent relationship between dispositive structure and narrative structure.<sup>26</sup> The product of such an esthetic taken to its ultimate conclusion is a relationship in which no translation or conversion need be applied to a unit of one system in order to find its counterpart in the other, which is to say: *identity*, the mathematical relationship of the unit to itself. The result is, in effect, perfect unison between the dispositive and narrative structures of works operating under this esthetic.

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<sup>25</sup> Of course this was not always true of novels initially published as serialized *feuilletons* in newspapers.

<sup>26</sup> Novelists like Zola and Balzac thought of their work as being demonstrations of scientific thought experiments, tools for acquiring knowledge about the world, and therefore apt to be summarized in a scientific principle. Even authors such as Hugo, who had no such scientific ambitions, produced works whose "identities" can be expressed in a sentence. Through an extremely reductive reading, *Notre Dame de Paris* can be understood as an explanation for the presence of a certain carving on a wall of the eponymous cathedral. Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* demonstrates the phenomenon of "mémoire involontaire." The works of novelist-philosophers such as Camus and Sartre expose the authors' philosophies, as with absurdism in *L'Étranger* and existentialism in *La Nausée*.

However, while these two systems never cease to exist independently of each other even if they do cease to be distinguishable from each other, the two systems are more likely to be distinct and their units of the two systems less likely to be co-extensive in the work of Prévost and other eighteenth-century novelists. The dynamic relationship between these two systems makes it possible for the underlying narrative to extend across dispositive boundaries while continuing to provide readers with an evolving idea of the text's "identity" as a whole work, which is necessary for the audience to be able to enjoy all of the text's constituent parts. In this way a characteristic of eighteenth-century novels that the next century's novelists saw as proof of their predecessors' inability to manipulate the genre reveals itself to be a major element of its success according to the esthetic criteria of the time.

The textual signs of the work's "identity" are visible at points of interaction between two systems that organize the novel's underlying structure: one dispositive and one narrative. The dispositive structural system, consisting of installments, volumes, books, and chapters—will be familiar to readers accustomed to the conventional vocabulary of novelistic composition. Moreover, a novel's disposition is apparent on even the most cursory examination: thanks to typographical conventions one need not comprehend the plot or even read a single word of the text to know when one dispositive unit ends and the next begins. Nevertheless, while the existence of these dispositive units is an objective fact, notwithstanding a certain amount of variation between editions, any attempt to identify a structural system within the narrative must necessarily involve a certain amount of subjectivity. Nevertheless, the narration clearly progresses according to



a rhythm, and the variations of this rhythm can be divided into units whose boundaries are present in the text.

Here, I analyze the interaction between these two systems in the novel that first established Prévost's reputation, entitled *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde* to demonstrate how the referent that corresponds to the work's title evolves over the course of the novel. Together, these two systems encourage readers to organize their thoughts about the work as a whole—even if only on a subconscious level—while allowing them to focus separately on each of the individual elements as it presents itself. And while the picture of the “whole” that arises from this interaction evolves in such a way as to even be self-contradictory at times, these contradictions do not only stem from the need to respond to the ever-increasing constraints imposed by previously-published installments. Each point in the novel's progression can be best appreciated when perceived as participating in a particular vision of the work as a whole, even if these visions do not always harmonize with each other.

#### *Dual Structure and the Segmentary Esthetic*

Two systems of structural organization operate in Prévost's *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*—one dispositive and one narrative. The dispositive system is more readily discernible.<sup>27</sup> The narrative system is based on units not as obvious; however, the

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<sup>27</sup> In opposition to the ellipsis, which is itself a tripartite entity that assures a smooth transition between dispositive units (Dionne specifies chapters), the “fracture” created by the “coupure” is “deeper” or more “marked” (510). Dionne continues to insist on the transitional nature of the “coupure,” in which the element of closure “interrompt un développement, et prépare le passage à autre chose—une autre action, une autre branche, un autre fil dans la trame dévidée du roman,” in which the “blank” space is no longer rendered legible by what precedes and follows it, and in which the resumption of narration is not determined by what preceded it but constitutes a new departure (510). These elements of narrative

text does indicate the boundaries between these units, albeit in a less obvious, less concrete way. Sometimes the text indicates them by means of various names, such as *aventure*, *récit*, *relation*, and *histoire*. Because of this terminological instability, it will be easier here to refer to major narrative units, narrative subunits, episodes, and—occasionally—segments and sections.<sup>28</sup> Both systems aid readers in organizing their thoughts about the work as a whole while allowing them to focus separately on each of the individual elements as it presents itself. In this way, both systems create what can be called a “segmentary esthetic,” which marshals a variety of techniques for enhancing the novel’s appeal by increasing narrative variety without distracting the reader with jarring transitions.

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transition can also occur in isolation from dispositive boundaries, and it is important to distinguish between narrative–dispositive conjunctions that reinforce each other and those that are merely coincident, or which exhibit a reduced reinforcement effect. Interestingly, what Dionne says about the “coupure” comes close to much of what I would like to say about the ends of dispositive installments: “Elle doit allier la fermeture et la possibilité d’une ouverture, le sentiment d’un achèvement et le pressentiment d’une reprise” (510). Dionne cites the end of book four of the *Mémoires* (511). I argue, however, that this possibility is latent in all dispositive conclusions during the *ancien régime* to a certain extent, if not explicitly present. Dionne’s discussion of Renoncour’s double retirement: “Motif clausulaire, le *topos* de la retraite devient rupturale lorsque le roman rebondit, selon la logique additive du XVIIIe siècle. [...] le repos théoriquement conclusif de Renoncour est troublé à deux reprises [...]” (513). Dionne also cites book two of the *Mémoires* as an example of the relatively rarer use of liberation as a concluding *topos* (514). Once again, the ability of the “coupure” to transform from a definitive ending into a division between parts of a whole complicates our understanding of how the dispositive structural system functions, but I argue that it should alter our understanding of the dispositive system at all transitional points, not only at the ends of installments. A key to understanding this comes from paying attention to Dionne’s discussion of a fine distinction between the two interruptions of Renoncour’s retirement, the first of which takes place within the diegesis while the second occurs only at the level of narration: “À proprement parler, ce dernier cas ne suspend donc pas la retraite du héros, mais il l’empêche certainement d’agir comme un *topos* tout à fait clausulaire” (513, n.). This distinction may at first appear to be of little significance, but it shows the instability of the function of the *topoi* that Dionne has identified as being associated with certain functional elements of the dispositive structural system.

<sup>28</sup> Some units from both systems take on a level of independence from the main body of the novel that qualifies them as “pseudo-works,” and it will be necessary to address their role in *Mémoires* and other novels by Prévost below.

### Characteristics of the Segmentary Esthetic

One central aspect of the segmentary esthetic is that it allows the simultaneous presence and blurring of boundaries between segments. The result is a narrative structure which is not immediately discernible to the casual reader, but which nevertheless immerses the reader into the world of the novel. This esthetic arises from the nature of the book trade in the eighteenth century. In the eighteenth century the costs of publication were too high to publish long novels in their entirety, given the risk of failure. Rather, if a book sold well, it was in the interest of both publisher and author to capitalize on that success by continuing it. Publication in installments required authors to continually preserve the possibility of future continuation. Achieving this goal required the dispositive and narrative structures to function independently of each other, because if the two systems operated in unison then the end of any given installment would either have to be the end of the narrative or would have to explicitly call for a continuation that might never come. Prévost manipulates the interplay between narrative and dispositive structures in such a way that the reader retains the esthetic pleasures of suspense, anticipation, and satisfaction that come from dispositive boundaries while simultaneously nurturing a narrative with potential for long-term continuation. The reader is drawn from one narrative unit to the next with a minimum of discontinuity despite the multiplicity of subplots and interpolated narrations, and in a way that provides readers with the localized esthetic pleasures of the text without diminishing its future potential.

The segmentary esthetic is outlined in the “Lettre de l’éditeur” that appears at the very beginning of the novel. After explaining that he acquired “cet ouvrage” from a retired “illustre aventurier” now living in an abbey, the editor alerts the reader that “[o]n

verra dans les *divers événements* de sa vie, de *nouveaux exemples* de l'inconstance de la fortune" (9). The terms "divers événements" and "nouveaux exemples" both suggest that in the text to come episodes are to be more important than overarching plot. The episodes are presented as being important only to the degree that they contribute to an overall demonstration of the protagonist's exceptional character. For, as the editor reminds us, "lorsqu'on a passé *successivement* par tous les *degrés* du bonheur et de l'adversité, [...] on a fait ses preuves, pour ainsi dire, et ce mélange distingue véritablement les caractères héroïques" (9 emphasis added). What better way to prove the variety of a hero's life experience than to offer up a collection of representative stories about the successive stages of his career? This reformulation of narrative esthetics suggests that, as Sgard argued, the unity of the *Mémoires* derives from its characters, not from its plot.<sup>29</sup>

However, focusing solely on moral unity does not account for the dynamic tension between the text's narrative and its disposition, and that tension is what drives the work forward, enabling it to provide a stage for showcasing Renoncour's character. The novel's morality may or may not be its purpose for existing, but the force that ties the text together comes from the narrative-dispositive contrast. However, the aim of this segmentary esthetic is not purely pedagogical; rather, the editor reminds the reader that "Si l'on trouve dans cette histoire quelques *aventures* surprenantes, on doit se souvenir que c'est ce qui les rend dignes d'être communiquées au public" (9 emphasis added). The

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<sup>29</sup> Sgard posits that Prévost's effort to repair the work's chronological discrepancies "montre qu'il était très attaché à l'unité de son roman et à la parenté spirituelle qui unit tous ses personnages," noting that ultimately "[c]ette unité morale est à ses yeux beaucoup plus importante que l'unité chronologique" (*Œuvres* v. 8 17).

editor credits the episodic focus of the text for its ability to interest the reader and its right to consideration.

### Wholeness and the Segmentary Esthetic

The presence of the term *ouvrage* in this introductory letter illustrates how the segmentary esthetic functions in multi-installment works by allowing for the incorporation of independent dispositive units into a “whole” composed of a coherent, if not always “unified,” narrative structure. Modern criticism balks at the word in this context, betraying its enduring debt to Aristotle, because to the modern reader, an *ouvrage* is something finished, as opposed to the *manuscrit*, which is unfinished—or at least unpublished.<sup>30</sup> Modern ideas of completeness cannot allow a creative work that is simultaneously finished and continuable—something that can stand being continued either was never complete in the first place, or should not have been continued, and in either case the result is most likely to be a substandard work that should be viewed with

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<sup>30</sup> Sgard refers to the first volume of the *Mémoires* as “l’œuvre par laquelle [Prévost] va s’affirmer et achever de se libérer” (63, emphasis added). Although one could justify using the word *œuvre* to describe the first dispositional unit of the *Mémoires* if one believed that Prévost wrote that text with the intention for it to stand alone as a “work” without continuation, such a belief ignores critical differences between the artistic conventions of the eighteenth century and those of the twentieth and twenty-first regarding what constitutes a “finished” work. According to modern esthetic conventions, a “true author” would never continue a work once it was finished, because to do so would suggest imperfection of artistic vision requiring later correction. Even in the case of such exceptions as *Un Amour de Swann*, which is both an independent work and part of a larger work, the division of the larger work into smaller components is only tolerable because Proust is assumed to have planned the entirety of *À la recherche du temps perdu* in advance. In fact, this assumption is the point of departure for Genette’s seminal work in *Figures*. This attitude is reminiscent of Hugo’s preface to the 1832 edition of *Notre Dame de Paris*, in which he makes a point of assuring the reader that the additional chapters of that expanded edition are not *new* (“nouveaux”), and therefore extraneous and/or inferior, but merely *unpublished* (“inédits”), and therefore essential elements of the work that simply had to be omitted at the time of the initial publication for practical reasons. Second, it assumes that authors and readers of the eighteenth century regarded a “finished” novel as something that *should not and could not* be continued. In other words, if Prévost had considered the first *tome* of the *Mémoires* to be an “œuvre”, he would not have thought it appropriate to continue it, at least until he realized that it wasn’t actually finished.

suspicion. Yet, while Prévost could not have known at the time of the first installment's publication that the *Mémoires* would eventually grow to fill six volumes in three installments (or, counting *Manon Lescaut*, seven and four, respectively), the conventions of his time precluded him from counting out the possibility of some kind of continuation. Therefore, we can see that while by modern standards *ouvrage* would not have been precisely the right word to apply to the first installment of the *Mémoires*, Prévost was right to use it according to contemporary standards, even though the text it refers to eventually became an element of a larger work. At the same time, the initial *ouvrage* retains a measure of its independence in a way not entirely possible within modern literary paradigms, which require a unit of text to present itself from its inception either as an independent work or as a constitutive element of a larger entity to be completed later. The first installment of the *Mémoires*, however, never entirely loses the independence that it had at the time of its first publication, and should therefore be treated both as an independent entity and as an integral part of a larger work.<sup>31</sup>

This is not to say that, even according to eighteenth-century norms, the continuation of the novel invalidates the first installment as an “*ouvrage*.” Rather, the initial *ouvrage* retains a measure of its independence in a way not entirely possible within

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<sup>31</sup> Dionne cites *Manon Lescaut* as an example of “*affranchissement opéral*,” which occurs when a continuation gains independence from its source work (81), and sees the difference between the internal dispositive structure of the first six volumes of the *Mémoires*, which are divided into books, and that of *Manon Lescaut*, which is divided into two parts, as a sign of “*tout ce qui sépare cette coda analeptique et digressive de la suite narrative que forme par ailleurs le roman*” (289). This observation, while acute, fails to fully appreciate the participation of *Manon Lescaut* in a dispositive structural system that already involved an “independent” work that had become part of a larger work, namely the first installment of the *Mémoires*, which were originally a complete novel.

modern literary paradigms,<sup>32</sup> which generally expect a unit of text to present itself from its inception either as an independent work or as a constitutive element of a larger entity to be completed later, even at the risk of beginning a work that never reaches completion. The first installment of the *Mémoires*, however, never entirely loses the independence that it had at the time of its first publication, and should therefore be treated both as an independent entity and as an integral part of a larger work.<sup>33</sup> Thus, although one might at first be tempted to question whether what we learn about the segmentary esthetic from the liminal text that precedes the first installment of the *Mémoires* can apply to the rest of the novel—given that Prévost could not have known at the time of publication whether he would have the opportunity to write any further installments, and that the text of the first installment seems quite complete on its own—the nature of the eighteenth-century publishing industry makes it clear that the segmentary esthetic is necessarily applicable to any part of a novel, whether or not it was part of the “whole” envisioned from the start. To understand how the segmentary esthetic functions it will be necessary to examine the interaction between the novel’s narrative structure and its dispositive structure. First I will explore each installment’s role as a unit within the novel’s dispositive and narrative structures, then I will examine the dispositive and narrative structures of each installment. Proceeding in this manner will result in a better understanding of the ways in which the

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<sup>32</sup> Even within “sub-literary” genres each individual novel is usually presented as just that: an independent work. The same is generally true of each part of a trilogy or other multi-novel series consisting of a handful of books. True, some authors working in these genres will occasionally publish “parts” of a single “novel” in installments, but in such cases each “part” generally has its own title and is accompanied by most or all of the paratextual and epitextual trappings of an independent work.

<sup>33</sup> Each installment possesses its own degrees of independence and dependence relative to the work as whole.

two structural systems work together to fuel the novel's progress through a fluctuating dynamic of tension and reinforcement.

### Characteristics of the Narrative and Dispositive Structural Systems

I will now review the terminology I have chosen to use for describing the relationships between the narrative and dispositive structures that both result from and perpetuate the segmentary esthetic. Both structural systems consist of several types of hierarchically related units. The units of the dispositive system will be familiar to almost anyone who has ever read a novel, and this familiarity makes it easy to understand how they relate to one another. At the first level of the hierarchy there is the *installment*, which refers to whatever part of a work was published at a given time. An installment may be divided into several *volumes*, which occupy the second level of the hierarchy. Volumes, in turn, can contain multiple *books*, which constitute the hierarchy's third level. Not every novel—whether published today or in the eighteenth century—incorporates every type of dispositive unit.<sup>34</sup> Notably, most of Prévost's works do not make use of the

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<sup>34</sup> While this typology is not intended to be exhaustive, other potentially significant categories of dispositive units could include chapter sections or paragraphs. It is also important to note that there some modes of segmentation are more or less visible or objective than others. The example of the paragraph begins to show the blurred line that separates disposition from typography, which are neither entirely separate, as disposition manifests itself through typography, nor entirely coextensive, as not every typographical element of a text necessarily forms part of the dispositive system. Dionne notes that the dispositive system coexists with modes of segmentation that exist within the text itself, namely punctuation, paragraphs, running titles, and pagination (250-70). However, even here he remains in the realm of the visible, the objective—resisting, perhaps, the temptation to cross over into subject evaluation of the structure of the narrative itself, when considered separately from the dispositive system. While this way of studying the text is problematic, from an objective perspective, given the subjective nature of the task of identifying the precise moments of transition between narrative units and the criteria for attributing independence to this or that unit, that is precisely the point of my project: to demonstrate that narrative structure and dispositive structure are not necessarily synonymous, especially in the case of *ancien régime* novels. In fact, Dionne's examination of the more fine-grained segmental features of the text itself, which cannot be classified as part of the dispositive system, points to the need to perform the kind of analysis I am attempting here. When every page, every paragraph, every sentence, and—why not—every word is a potential dispositive unit, the distinction between the dispositive system and the narrative system begins to



dispositive unit that is most familiar of all to modern audiences, the chapter, with the exception of his first novel, *Les Aventures de Pomponius, chevalier romain*.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, in some cases units may rank differently than they do in the hierarchy presented here. Whatever the precise constellation of unit-types involved, and whatever their exact hierarchical relationships to each other, the principles involved remain the same.

The units of the narrative structural system units are less familiar to novel-readers than those of the dispositive system. This lack of familiarity comes from the lack of a consistent set of names for the levels of the hierarchy within which they exist. Although the narrative units of the *Mémoires* and other eighteenth-century novels are occasionally referred to by names such as *aventure*, *récit*, *relation*, and *histoire*, these names do not consistently refer to any single analytically useful category of narrative structural units, and most such units are never explicitly referred to in this way.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, these names cannot serve as a basis for defining the narrative structural unit hierarchy. To

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degrade. It is perhaps better to see the two systems as two extremes of a continuum; it is possible to see them interacting with each other as if they were separate, but they also merge in the middle. All of this is true because even though disposition is a fundamentally material phenomenon, it exists to serve narration (or at least it is inseparable from narration when it exists in texts that contain narrative), and narration is a fundamentally mental phenomenon; whatever its medium, it must take on a mental representation in order to be a narration (and, in fact, there are two principal mental representations here: that of the author/teller, and that of the reader/audience).

<sup>35</sup> This is true of most novels written before the nineteenth century. For a detailed account of how the chapter became the dominant dispositive unit, see Ugo Dionne's *La Voie aux chapitres*.

<sup>36</sup> At the other end of the spectrum from the narrative units that are never referred to by name, there are two sections of the novel that receive full-fledged titles. Titles allow these parts of the text to function as structural units in both the narrative system and the dispositive system, and confer on them a level of independence from the main body of the novel that qualifies these units as "pseudo-works." Given the special nature of pseudo-works I will examine their role in the *Mémoires* and Prévost's other novels in the next section.

avoid confusion, therefore, I will refer to the three levels of narrative structural units I have identified as follows: the first level is composed of *major narrative units*, the second level contains *narrative subunits*, and the third level consists of *narrative episodes*.<sup>37</sup> To minimize the influence of subjective criteria, I identified these units using several specific textual elements that I determined were signals of narrative unit boundaries: 1) direct self-segmentation, which occurs when the narrator explicitly divides his story into multiple parts; 2) indirect self-segmentation, which occurs when the textual element indicating the division between units is not presented for that purpose, as when a character relates all or part of the narrative to another character; 3) narratorial meta-commentary, which occurs when the main narrator makes a comment on his own narration, and when any character makes a comment on their own or someone else's intra-diegetic narration;<sup>38</sup> 4) interpolated narratives, which can also form part of the novel's narrative structure by marking the beginning or end of a narrative unit.

### Locating Internal and External Frontiers in the *Mémoires*

Before analyzing the connections between structure and identity in an eighteenth-century novel such as the *Mémoires*, it is necessary to establish the boundaries of the

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<sup>37</sup> While conducting my detailed analysis of the narrative structure of the *Mémoires* I employed another unit, which I dubbed the *narrative segment* (see appendix). This additional level of subdivision did enrich my analysis, as it allowed me to confirm the coherence of certain internally-segmented narrative episodes, but this level of the narrative structural hierarchy proved most useful as a tool for laying the groundwork of more far-reaching analysis, so it will not figure in the present analysis.

<sup>38</sup> Narratorial metacommentary is more likely to identify a narrative structural boundary when it consists of terms like *scène*, *épisode*, *voyage*, or *aventure*, which often refer to substantial portions of the narrative, and less likely to do so when it consists of terms like *dispute* or *conversation*, which frequently designate more ephemeral portions of the narrative. However, the inevitable role of subjective evaluation becomes clear in light of the fact that extremely brief "scenes" often carry no structural significance, yet can constitute narrative boundaries if they inaugurate or mark a significant transition in the development of the narrative structure.

work in question, but doing so reveals the complexity of such works' identities, which can be defined in several ways, none of which can ultimately be considered solely authoritative. One approach is to identify the work's "definitive" form: the state it occupied at the moment when the author and any other contributors had ceased adding to it and modifying it. This approach can lead to new insights into an author's artistic concerns, in particular because it facilitates comparison between multiple works. However, it is also important to study the complex techniques within individual works, which are more evident when attention is paid to the articulations between various states of those works.

Although the kind of anachronistic imagining that allowed previous generations of scholars, critics, and editors to "reconstruct" the "ideal" form of a work has become less and less acceptable over the past century, and although the modern scholarly community generally recognizes the importance of the formal multiplicity of novels published in installments and in various editions, modern attempts to preserve the record of a work's evolution over the course of its publication by presenting variants must still necessarily favor one version of the text over another. It is necessary to choose a baseline text, usually on the basis of which one best represents the author's vision. While this kind of editorial decision is unavoidable, it represents a largely unconscious acceptance of the unitary esthetic, which requires that works adopt a definitive form to be eligible for criticism. Rather, the "whole" work in whose construction the text of a novel such as the *Mémoires* presents itself as participating changes over the course of its publication, both

for reasons related to its periodicity and for unrelated compositional reasons.<sup>39</sup> However, even in cases where a “definitive” form is identifiable, it does not invalidate the prior intermediate forms assumed by the work during its process of creation and publication, which should be considered as valid as the final form.

*External Boundary Test Case: Manon Lescaut*

There are at least three factors that influence how the *Mémoires* and *Manon Lescaut* establish their independence from, and their dependence on, each other: authorship, length, and plot. First, both works can claim independence on the basis of contributing to Prévost’s status as an author. Prior to the nineteenth century Prévost was known as “l’auteur des *Mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité*,” while from the nineteenth century on he was known as the author of *Manon Lescaut*. Sharing the same author also brings the works together. While Prévost was known as the author of the *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité*, the “whole” work consisted of the *Mémoires* and “another” text by the same author, namely *Manon Lescaut*. Once Prévost ceased to be remembered this way, the definition of the “whole” work became somewhat recursive, since it consisted of *Manon Lescaut* and another text by “the author of *Manon Lescaut*,” of which *Manon Lescaut* was a part.

Second, both works can claim independence due to factors depending on their length. The shorter length of *Manon Lescaut* makes it easier to read within a relatively

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<sup>39</sup> A work’s material form can even continue to evolve after its original life as an evolving work of art ends, as editors and publishers can intervene in this process at any point, even after such works reach their “final” form, as I intend to show in a later portion of my dissertation in which I will study how the disposition of Prévost’s works has been treated in posthumous editions.

short period of time, which adds to the impression of a unified “work.” The longer length of the *Mémoires* places it within a strong tradition of long “works,” most notably including *L’Astrée* and other “baroque” novels. Moreover, Tome VI of the *Mémoires* concludes with no apparent need or even possibility for continuation. However, the two texts’ disparity of length also affects their ability to come together to form a whole, because the *Mémoires* are more easily able to incorporate *Manon Lescaut* than a shorter work would be, and *Manon Lescaut* is more readily able to integrate itself into the *Mémoires* than a longer work would be.

Third, both works can be seen as either independent or linked on the level of plot. With its unified plot, *Manon Lescaut* can stand alone quite easily. However, at the end of each of its installments, the narrative of the *Mémoires* is sufficiently “complete” to stand on its own. Because *Manon Lescaut* has no reason to exist without the *Mémoires*, its narrative only takes on its “full” significance within the context of the broader world of the *Mémoires*. Similarly, in addition to serving as the frame narrator, the marquis is an active participant in the story of *Manon Lescaut*. The disjointed plot of the *Mémoires* easily accepts intercalated narrations, so *Manon Lescaut* can be seen as “simply” one more, although it is somewhat different, since it comes at the end and has no end-frame. The main plot of *Manon Lescaut* has a clear beginning, middle and end, but it remains tied to the larger story of the *Mémoires* through the figure of the Marquis de Renoncour, whose frame narration provides the context for Des Grieux’s story. Thus, although *Manon Lescaut* is more “unified” than the *Mémoires*, the former is in some ways more incomplete without the latter than vice versa.

*Internal Boundary Test Case: The First Installment of the Mémoires*

In the introduction to the 1995 republication of his edition of the initial installment of the *Mémoires*, Jean Sgard asserts that installment's status as an independent work, arguing that, "réunis en un volume et pourvus d'une 'Table générale des matières', les deux petits tomes de 1728 constituaient assurément un roman complet" (8). It is unclear just what Sgard means here by "roman complet." Nevertheless, the two criteria he names may provide some insight. The inclusion of both "tomes" of the first installment in a single physical volume suggests that one of the requirements for constituting a "roman complet" is physical unity. However, the fact that novels had long been published in several volumes without losing their status as "works" and continued to do so shows that physical unity is at most an enhancing but unnecessary characteristic of a "roman complet." The presence of a "table générale des matières" also enhances a novel's "completeness" by insisting on the work's conceptual wholeness, mainly in narrative terms, as shown by the preponderance of plot-related information, to the extent that the entry for the protagonist, entitled "Le marquis de.....", amounts to nothing less than a summary of the entire narrative, divided into larger sections by paragraph indentations, and into smaller sections by numbers indicating the page on which each given episode can be found. However, the lack of such tables in many if not most eighteenth-century novels shows that the presence of a table was not necessary for a work to be considered "complete." Furthermore, Sgard claimed independent status not only for the 1728 installment, but for both of the two-volume installments that followed, as well as for the final volume, *Manon Lescaut*, with the result being that "on voit se superposer en fait quatre romans" (8). Sgard creates something of a hierarchy among the four

“novels” he identified. Indeed, Sgard was only willing to ascribe “*unité organique*” to the first installment—i.e. the one he was republishing—and to *Manon Lescaut*, which had a tradition of independent publication going back to Prévost’s lifetime. Faced with Sgard’s editorial *modus operandi*, one might ask how useful it truly is to differentiate these three categories: 1) a long, questionably-unified “novel” such as *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, made up of units of varying levels of coherence that can themselves be called “novels”, 2) a short, questionably-unified “novel” such as the unit formed by tomes III-IV or V-VI of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, and 3) a short, unified “novel” such as *Manon Lescaut* or tomes I-II of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*. Perhaps each of the possible ways to classify the work(s) gives a different interpretation? We should analyze eighteenth-century novels on each level to see how contemporary readers could have understood the works differently depending on which way they saw them, whether or not they were consciously aware of it.

Upon further consideration it becomes clear that Sgard’s four-novel scheme—which constitutes a radical disassociation of the parts that form the ungainly “whole” of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*—does not harmonize with the novel’s publication history. The publication took place in something of an overlapping fashion, with the first edition appearing in 1728 with tomes I-II, followed by a “Suite” consisting of tomes III-IV in 1729; this first edition was followed by a Dutch one that appeared in 1730, in which the status of “Suite” only applies to tomes V-VI; these piecemeal editions were followed by two complete ones, one (probably counterfeit) that puts all seven tomes on an equal footing, and an authorized one that began with a revised edition of *Manon Lescaut*,

followed by a revised edition of tomes I-VI (Sgard, “Note sur l’établissement du texte” *Œuvres de Prévost*, v. 1, 5-7).<sup>40</sup> Given the uncertainty regarding what should be called *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, and what should be called the *Suite des mémoires et aventures*, if “unité organique” cannot serve as the sole standard for determining how to divide the seven tomes into independent “novels,” then it seems just as unwise to reject the definition of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* that includes all seven tomes, as it does not to consider each of the “sub-novels” on its own, despite any potential inequality of their independence.<sup>41</sup> Rather, every possible valid schema for dividing the novel into

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<sup>40</sup> Jean Sgard appears to assume that from the point of view of the diegesis the text was all written at more or less the same time, and as he interprets the text to determine when the composition occurred, he discovers conflicting evidence. Thus, if Renoncour states at the beginning of the second installment that he was 53 years old when the treaty of Rastadt was signed in 1715, it means that he was born in 1662; and if Julie was born the year after Renoncour, i.e. 1663, and she was 16 years old when she died, she must have died in 1679; all of this detective work leads to the conclusion that when Renoncour says at the very beginning of his memoirs that it has been over thirty years since his sister's death, then he must have written his memoirs around 1710 (Sgard v. 8 13-14). However, other textual clues suggest conflicting timelines. For instance, if Selima's death occurred during the reign of Pope Clement XI, which lasted from 1700 to 1721, and if it has been fourteen years since her death when Renoncour writes his memoirs, then he must be writing sometime between 1715 and 1720 (Sgard v. 8 14). Alternatively, if Renoncour's niece Nadine began her novitiate at the beginning of the winter following the sentencing of Paparel in June of 1716 at the height of the Mississippi bubble, then her novitiate would have concluded at the end of 1717, which means that the sum of the remaining temporal indications situate the Renoncour's writing in 1719 (Sgard v. 8 14). However accurate his deductions, Sgard is more interested in determining when *Prévost* wrote the *Mémoires*, than in determining when *Renoncour* wrote his memoirs. Thus, although Sgard notes that the mention of Renoncour's death in the “Lettre de l'Éditeur” that precedes the third installment indicates that the last two volumes are posthumous (Sgard v. 8 14), he fails to take into account how the way Renoncour describes his attitude toward writing his memoirs should influence the internal chronology of their production.

<sup>41</sup> Nothing in text of the first installment suggests that at the moment of completing that portion of his memoirs, Renoncour envisaged continuing them. And although it is true, as Sgard notes, that there is no time in the chronology for the three years that Renoncour claims to have spent in retirement between his daughter's marriage, which cannot have taken place earlier than 1715, and his emergence from retirement, which cannot happen later than 1715, Sgard fails to note that there must have been three periods of writing: one during Renoncour's initial retirement (the “three years” of 1715), and two during his second and final retirement. Otherwise, the reference Renoncour makes at the beginning of the third installment to the success of the first two parts of his memoirs—“On m'apprend que le public a fait un accueil favorable aux deux premières parties de mon histoire” (229)—would make no sense. The second installment must have been written after the first because the first contains no indication of a continuation to follow, which means that it was composed some time between 1715 and 1728, most likely in 1719, which is when Sgard situates the entire composition of the *Mémoires*.



parts should receive due consideration, not for the purpose of determining which schema is the most “true,” but rather because each has a lesson to offer modern readers about what the work(s) could have meant to Prévost’s eighteenth-century readers, lessons which can, in turn, teach us about how we experience narration today. Among the possible effects the novel’s manner of publication may have had on how contemporary readers experienced it as a “work,” one very important one may have been a decrease in attention paid to the coherence of the various parts. If different sections could lay equal claim to the title of “suite,” then perhaps—despite the classical obsession with unity—it made less sense to worry about whether the narrative hangs together as a unified whole than it did to experience each part on its own terms, and then to decide whether the overall gestalt was effective, whether aesthetically, didactically, or in some other way.

## Installments of Publication as Wholes and Parts

### *Instability of Relationships Between Installments*

Because an eighteenth-century reader might come across a novel at any point in its evolution, it is crucial to understand the role that the installments play in creating the evolving “whole” that constitutes the “identity” of *Mémoires*. Each installment must offer sufficient narrative tension and resolution within itself to satisfy its reader, but must also leave room for future continuation by indicating its role within a “whole” whose “identity” it is helping to construct, which can vary throughout the novel’s publication. At first glance the “whole” of the *Mémoires* appears to consist of three installments and *Manon Lescaut*, but the status of these installments as dispositive units is not simple, as the publication of each installment redefines the relationship of the other parts in relation

to a newly-defined entity. At one end of the spectrum, there is the first installment, which began as an independent work and later evolved into a unit within a larger work, as mentioned above. At the other end, there is *Manon Lescaut*, which was initially presented as part of the larger work, but later came to be seen as an independent work. Between these two extremes, there are the second and third installments, which were always integrated into the larger work and which never achieved the same degree of autonomy as *Manon Lescaut*, although they did lose a degree of independence after being incorporated into collective editions of the “completed” work. In early editions, shifting designations of the novel’s dispositive elements make it difficult to give a definitive answer to the question of what should be considered the *work* and what should count as its *continuation*.<sup>42</sup> This ambiguity is only partially lifted by the 1756 edition of *Mémoires*, generally seen as authoritative because Prévost reviewed the text of his novel while preparing it to be published in collective form.

The 1756 edition presents the second and third installments of the *Mémoires* as parts of a larger entity, thanks to a dispositive apparatus that specifies the relationship of whole to part implied by the disposition of earlier editions through continuous numbering of volumes and books and uniform titles for the title pages and running title.

Nevertheless, the revised edition maintains elements of interaction between the novel’s

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<sup>42</sup> In early editions (e.g. Gabriel Martin, Paris, 1729) the main title page of the second installment presents its contents as the “suite des mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité qui s’est retiré du monde,” while the secondary title page gives the name “suite des mémoires du marquis de \*\*\*,” which also appears throughout the installment as a running title. At least one early edition of the third installment presents itself as the “suite et conclusion des mémoires du marquis de \*\*\*,” although this is more of a subtitle, as the main title page still bears the full title, “suite des mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité qui s’est retiré du monde;” to further complicate matters, this edition contains a false-title page bearing “Mémoires du marquis de \*\*\*,” which also appears as the running title in the header.

dispositive and narrative structures that preserve the independent “identities” of these later installments to a significant degree. Each installment can be taken as an independent entity, distinct from the other two installments, and as one of two components forming a single unit distinct from the first installment. The “identity” of the second and third installments as constituent parts of a single entity comes from the fact that they have much more in common with each other, in terms of narrative, than they do with the first installment. If encompassing an entire career is largely what makes the first installment into an independent “whole,” then by that standard the second and third installments must be seen as complementary elements of such a “whole” because together they account for the entirety of Renoncour’s second career, in which he serves as young Rosemont’s tutor. The two installments’ independence from each other is largely a product of disposition, not of narrative, although both structural systems play a role in creating the relationship between these installments.<sup>43</sup> The interplay between narrative structure and dispositive structure can be observed both within individual installments and in the relationships

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<sup>43</sup> By one possible definition, all seven volumes, including *Manon Lescaut*, should be counted equally as part of the *Mémoires*. However, the first two volumes, published as one installment in 1728, originally stood on their own, and were followed by a “suite,” which could be seen as solidifying the independence of the first installment while simultaneously linking it to a separate yet inextricably linked continuation. The third installment provides yet another way to conceptualize the novel: if, according to the *Bibliothèque raisonnée des ouvrages des savants de l’Europe* of April 1731, the “Suite des Mémoires d’un homme de qualité qui s’est retiré du monde” contained *three* volumes (Harris 166), then that would mean that the four volumes of the first two installments should be considered as constituting the *Mémoires*, while the three volumes constituted by the third installment and *Manon Lescaut* should be considered the “suite” of the main body of the novel. The numbering of the books in the second and third installments also serves to blur the distinction between “work,” “continuation,” and “sequel.” Although the “definitive” collective edition of 1756 numbers the books consecutively throughout, each installment initially had its own numbering. Furthermore, not even all collective editions follow the 1756 version; the edition of 1731 (“Amsterdam, aux dépens de la compagnie”) labels the two volumes of the third installment as if they were part of a larger work, but numbers the books within them as if it were independent, starting with one, rather than continuing the numbering from previous volumes.

between installments, and examining it will allow us to perceive signs of the text's evolving "identity" as a work.

Although the identity of the first installment was retroactively modified by the publication of subsequent installments, the text of 1728 was originally presented to readers as self-sufficient, meaning that the referent of the title was "the story of a certain nobleman's career from childhood to retirement." However, even if, as this conception of the text's identity as a "work" would indicate, Prévost did have a particular conclusion in mind, it does not necessarily follow either that the text does not operate according to prospective economy, but neither should it be judged according to its adherence to reverse causality. Rather, there is a discrepancy between *Mémoires*'s narrative and dispositive structures that produces an evolution in the text's identity as a work as the narration progresses, and this evolution demonstrates the pleasures of the segmentary esthetic. The dominant dispositive feature of the first installment of the *Mémoires* is its division into two volumes, and while that boundary can be used to conceptualize the text's identity as a work, it does not correspond to the most significant boundary of the narrative structure. Using the dispositive system as sole guide, it is possible to identify a "European" period, corresponding to the first volume, and an "Asian" period, corresponding to the second one. The first volume can also be seen as corresponding to "Renoncour's adolescence," in which case the second volume would correspond to "Renoncour's romantic difficulties." Geography and plot developments would seem to

support this kind of viewpoint, but only so far.<sup>44</sup> The events of the first volume take place in Europe, while much of the second volume takes place in Turkey. Furthermore, the first volume ends with Renoncour's capture by Turkish forces, while the second volume begins with his emergence from the womblike space of a dungeon cell. However, geographical consistency is not maintained throughout the second volume, parts of which take place in Europe.<sup>45</sup> And while Renoncour's transition from freedom to slavery does

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<sup>44</sup> Geographical shifts often provide the basis for the dispositive structure of travel novels, with the most extreme form being a correspondence between each individual chapter and an island visited during that chapter (although Dionne fails to note that while a preponderance of such correspondences suffice to make it the basis of the dispositive structure, it would be the very moments of lack of correspondence that would be the most enlightening as to the overall trajectory of the novel, as they would allow a critic to distinguish the narrative structure from the dispositive structure, and draw conclusions about the novel's overall message by confronting the two structures), although in more philosophical novels there can be a combination or concurrence of ideological shifts represented by the protagonist's various traveling companions or by different situations that the protagonist must confront alone (330-33). Dionne also discusses a type of novel that he terms "la narration utopique," in which dispositive structure frequently underlines the three major phases of a utopic voyage: the "preutopic phase," the "utopic phase," and the "postutopic phase" (340). As an example, he mentions *l'Histoire des Sévarambes*, but while there is indeed a rough correspondence between certain elements of the novel's narrative structure and its dispositive structure, it would be interesting to examine the points of tension between the two structures, notably the tension between the "postutopic phase" and the novel's final volume: "Le cinquième volume, plus composite, participe à la fois des dimensions historique et culturelle, avant de raconter le retour de Siden en Europe, dans une dernière séquence brève et *inachevée*" (341, emphasis added). The uncertainty of dispositive boundaries in *ancien régime* novels and the attendant "fragmentary esthetic" help to explain both the lack of perfect coincidence between the three narrative phases Dionne names and the novel's dispositive structure as well as the unfinished quality of the final part.

<sup>45</sup> Sgard recognizes a tripartite structure consisting of "trois histoires qui composent le premier tome des *Mémoires et aventures*—histoires de Renoncour, de Rosambert, et d'une jeune inconnue recueillie dans la rue" (65). For Sgard, each story represents a different possible manifestation of "la même malédiction poursuivant des héros innocents", that of the father of Renoncour, whose guilt or innocence remains uncertain; that of Rosambert, a lover who transforms himself into a martyr by deciding to join the monastery at La Trappe when his romantic life ends tragically; and, finally, that of "une jeune inconnue recueillie dans la rue" whose tale allows Prévost to explore "enfin la destinée de l'héroïne et le dernier aspect de la malédiction" (65). Aside from Sgard's unfortunate reduction of all of female experience to the status of a "last aspect" without which a narration would be incomplete, Sgard's attempt to discern a tripartite parallel structure leads him to commit certain inaccuracies. Notably, it is unclear what plot material Sgard has in mind when he refers to the first story. The only character mentioned is Renoncour's father, but in fact there are two fathers and two stories: does Sgard mean the father of the "homme de qualité", or his grandfather? The desire for underlying unity returns in Sgard's efforts to discern structure. Thus, even though he has already posited a three-level parallel structure for the first volume of the *Mémoires*, he goes on to argue that "[l]'histoire de Renoncour s'est donc scindée : à la légende familiale se sont substitués les thèmes du moine tragique et de la femme séduite" (66). Thus, what appear to be three

roughly coincide with the transition from one volume to the next, that concurrence is not in itself proof of a difference *of kind* between this and other dispositive transitions that would dictate that the most prominent dispositive boundary of the first installment should be located here rather than elsewhere. Similarly, while the first volume does place a lot of emphasis on Renoncour's transition into adulthood, it also tells the story of Renoncour's father, and recounts a significant portion of Renoncour's adult life. And while much of the second volume is in fact devoted Renoncour's tragic love story, that story is not all

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separate stories are in fact one story that gives birth to two alternate versions of itself that are contained within it. This way of understanding Prévost's work allows Sgard to agree with some criticisms of Prévost without renouncing all claims to artistic merit on behalf of the novelist. Prévost's detractors might argue that Prévost seems not to have been able to make up his mind as to what novel he wanted to write, or they might disdain him as a writer who couldn't afford to hold back material that wasn't suited to the work at hand, because financial hardship drove him to publish everything possible. However, although it might seem that Prévost's work on the first volume of the *Mémoires* leads him to simultaneously undertake "trois romans différents", Sgard can rest assured in the knowledge that in the end there is only one novel being written, that the novel being written is one that expresses the inner truth of the novelist, and that any apparent lack of control over the course of the novel or its structure stems only from the novelist's imperfect self-knowledge. In fact, by recounting three versions of the "same" plot, Prévost demonstrates "un progrès de l'analyse" (66). What could be seen as a sign of inferior workmanship becomes the signature stroke of burgeoning artistic inspiration. While a tripartite structure focused on three central deaths could seem repetitive—"[I]es trois destinées rapidement ébauchées par Prévost, sont également maudites et mènent aussi vite à un dénouement tragique" (68)—, and although one might think that the reason for this repetitiveness was that "la tristesse dont l'auteur s'entretient dans sa solitude est telle qu'elle ne paraît pouvoir se nourrir que de l'évocation du deuil" (68), Sgard would argue that "un cheminement est visible dans la façon dont il explique ces destinées" (68). This "cheminement" consists of Prévost's path to the realization that the central question of his work is that of "sensibilité." This "vocation d'amour et de souffrances", whether it derives from "la nature des passions", from "l'obstacle social", or from "l'absurdité de la vie", in Sgard's eyes, is Prévost's "domaine" (69). The first volume of the *Mémoires*, then, is in the end not much more than a mechanism that enabled Prévost to identify the area of endeavor for his future writing. Not that it was a matter of choice, but rather Prévost was himself "destined" to seek unendingly the answer to the unanswerable question of what is the place of "sensibilité" in the world. Having found the subject of his work, Prévost had only to invent a form that could contain it (Sgard 69). Only at this point does Prévost seem to realize, according to Sgard's theory, that the plot of his novel makes no sense as he has begun to lay it out, given the clear direction provided by his new principal topic, the investigation of "sensibilité." While Prévost appears to have planned for Rosambert and Renoncour to restart their careers together, the new purpose of the novel seems not to have synchronized well with that plan (69). Sgard notes that "[a]u début du Livre III, il [...] abandonne [c]e projet", paying due attention to the dispositive transition (69). However, for Sgard, what is important about the role of dispositive technique here is merely that it provides a convenient place for him to locate Prévost's switch to the new plan, which requires some smoothing over: "la fin de son tome I représente donc un raccord. Il découvre la contradiction qui existait depuis le début de son livre entre une formule romanesque surannée et la nature des sentiments qu'il veut exprimer" (69).

that occupies the second volume. Identifying dispositive units with parts of the narrative is valid because it shows how the dispositive system operates on the reader's perception of the work, but to assume that the dispositive system is all that defines the narrative is to ignore the presence of the deeper narrative structure.

Despite the earlier editions' somewhat ambiguous disposition, the second and third installments of the *Mémoires* would appear, judging by the disposition of the "definitive" 1756 edition, to be completely dependent elements of a larger whole. And while it is true that they are inextricably linked with the first installment, they possess a significant degree of independence, both as separate entities, each distinct from the other two installments, and as two components of a single unit distinct from the first installment. The second and third installments have much more in common with each other than they do with the first installment, and if encompassing an entire career is largely what makes the first installment into an independent "whole," then by that standard the second and third installments must be seen as complementary elements that together account for the whole of Renoncour's second career, in which he serves as young Rosemont's tutor. However, the presentation of the installments within the diegesis contradicts the unity of this bipartite "whole," which can be deduced by searching through the text for clues to aid in reconstructing the diegetical timeline of the composition of the *Mémoires*.<sup>46</sup> Rather than attempting to prove or disprove the overall

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<sup>46</sup> Renoncour reports in order for him to begin the second installment it was necessary for his friends to urge him to consider the public's positive reaction "aux deux premières parties de mon histoire" as "un motif qui doit me porter à *reprendre* la plume, et à *continuer* l'ouvrage" (229 emphasis added). This statement implies that even though there is a greater degree of narrative cohesion between the second and third installments than exists between the first and the second ones, Renoncour must have composed the

unity of the three installments taken together as a “work,” here I show how Prévost was able to manipulate the dynamic tension between disposition and narration that resulted from the publication norms of his day in ways that serve his characters’ evolution.

*Narratorial Evolution as Structural Principle in the First Installment*

Dispositive–Narrative Tension as a Sign of and Impetus for Character Development

The narrative structure of the first installment consists of two major narrative units, which are determined by Renoncour’s evolution *as a narrator*, not changes in his status *as a character*, which, it can be argued, do in fact determine the boundary between the installment’s two volumes. In the first major narrative unit, Renoncour narrates a story that is not his own, while in the second he becomes the narrator of his own adventures. The first major narrative unit tells the story of Renoncour’s family, setting the stage for Renoncour’s personal misfortunes as an individual. These misfortunes create the necessary conditions for Renoncour to become the “héros de roman” that he becomes in the second major narrative unit, in which he sets out to seek his fortune through military service. The coincidence of the most prominent dispositive boundary of the volume with the beginning of Renoncour’s life as a slave provides the reader the pleasurable experience of an important turning point in the plot, while allowing Prévost to situate the true turning point earlier in terms of narrative structure. The lack of

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first two installments by November 1729, when the second installment was published, but not the third, because it was the success of *both* installments that moved his friends to encourage him to *begin* writing again, to *continue* his memoirs. This means that Renoncour must have composed the third installment, roughly, sometime during the last year or so of his life. If Renoncour was dead when the third installment was published in April of 1731, presumably he must have died long enough previously for his text to be set and printed, and he couldn’t have begun until enough time had passed after the publication of the second installment for its success to become apparent, which places the composition of the third installment some time in 1730, and not, as Sgard calculates, in 1722 at age 60 (v. 8 52).



correspondence between narrative and dispositive units is a feature of the segmentary esthetic that brings the two systems into dynamic tension with each other, thus providing the true motive force behind the work's forward momentum.

This literary misdirection recalls that of stage magicians, who direct their audience's attention toward an intriguing distraction to prevent them from learning how the trick is done: in both cases esthetic enjoyment would be spoiled by full comprehension of the hidden mechanics, although the magic-show spectator is perhaps more aware that something of the kind is going on in than the novel-reader. Thus there is positive value in increasing suspense by situating dramatic moments at dispositive boundaries, and yet dispositive boundaries need not coincide with transitional moments in the narrative structure to be effective. It is the relationship between narration and disposition that confers on dispositive boundaries the ability to provoke an esthetic response in readers, but that relationship need not be as strong as modern readers have come to expect. Dispositive structure increases the reader's enjoyment by providing the *impression* of progress by means of localized tension and resolution, while narrative structure lays a foundation for long-term, open-ended narrative development.

#### Dispositive–Narrative Tension as Product and Source of the Segmentary Esthetic

The segmentary esthetic allows for a text's identity as a work to evolve as the text progresses, and the dynamic tension between structural systems that fuels this process comes from formal differences between dispositive transitions and narrative structural transitions. Dispositive boundaries are conspicuous and abrupt, consisting of physical or visual separations between units of text, while narrative unit boundaries are visually inconspicuous except for cases in which they coincide with dispositive boundaries. These

characteristics make dispositive transitions well-suited to creating and resolving suspense, while narrative transitions facilitate more nuanced plot development both within a given textual installment and as a foundation for any eventual continuation. These differences explain why the first installment's disposition and its narrative structure suggest conflicting ways of understanding the text's identity. Signaling the boundary between the installment's two major narrative units with a clean break characteristic of the dispositive structural system with its typographical obviousness would tie the dispositive resolution of the installment to the progression of Renoncour's evolution as a narrator. Instead, that evolution is accompanied by a gradual transition possible only within a narrative framework whose units are just as undeniably present as those of the dispositive system, but whose boundaries are much subtler.

Thus, while at the novel's outset it is clear that Renoncour is not the protagonist, as the first volume approaches its conclusion it becomes just as clear that Renoncour has become the protagonist. And yet, although the fact of Renoncour's transition is undeniable, it is difficult to locate precisely. Furthermore, the shift is not binary but rather graduated with stages of change leading up to the moment of transition and continuing afterward. This "camouflage" comes from manipulation of the narrative structure: the first major narrative unit, in which Renoncour is not the protagonist, is itself composed of two subunits; and although there is a qualitative change in Renoncour's status as narrator between the first and second subunits when he takes an active role in the events of the narration, it is still his father's story, not his own. After this first step, Renoncour approaches protagonist status through a gradual progression of narrative units, each

corresponding to a greater degree of independence for Renoncour, as more detailed analysis of the progression will show. This kind of camouflage allows Prévost to manipulate the identity of his text in ways that contribute to the maintenance of a viable narrative—such as transferring the focus of the narration from the narrator’s family history to the life of the narrator himself—without making those manipulations the main focus of the narration.

A series of overlapping narrative and dispositive units mold the text’s evolving identity, bringing Renoncour to the point of narrating his own adventures in such a way that the plot is neither overly predictable because of a one-to-one correspondence with the disposition, nor entirely unpredictable due to a complete divorce between the two structures. In the first narrative subunit Renoncour explains that his family comes from a noble house who had to choose between loyalty to France and to Spain, and goes on to tell the story of how his father came to be disinherited for not complying with his father’s wishes regarding his choice of spouse. Thus, at the beginning of the first narrative subunit we find Renoncour narrating events in which neither he nor his immediate family play any part, but he soon begins to turn his attention to events increasingly close to himself, first involving his father, mother and grandfather, then himself and his sister. The second narrative subunit recounts the tragic series of events that lead to the deaths of nearly all of Renoncour’s family members and his father’s retirement, and then goes on to relate Renoncour’s adjustment to life on his own. Thus, Renoncour takes an increasingly active role in the events he narrates in the second narrative subunit, but he only comes into his own as a full-fledged protagonist when he enters military service at the beginning of the

second major narrative unit. The division between these two subunits is reflected in Renoncour's need to justify his decision to begin his memoirs with a story that is not his own, and his doing so prefigures the division between first and second major narrative units: "Comme ce fils est mon père, il est nécessaire de m'étendre un peu sur ce qui le regarde, parce que les aventures de sa vie ont été la source de toutes les miennes" (13). This explanation creates a clear narrative distinction between Renoncour's own story and his father's story, which he refers to as "ce qui le regarde" and "les aventures de sa vie" (13). These "aventures" are the core of the first major narrative unit, in contrast to Renoncour's own adventures—"toutes les miennes"—which are the focus of the second major unit (13). The graduated and camouflaged nature of the dividing line marked by narratorial transformation is harder to grasp than the fact of the two units' separateness: the father's *aventures* cannot be said to have ended completely until he becomes a monk, rendering his retirement definite. Renoncour becomes an active agent in the events of his narration as early as the second narrative subunit, when his father sends him as an emissary to his estranged grandfather, but his own adventures cannot be said to have truly begun when he ceases acting as his father's agent, even though that is the point at which he nominally takes on the role of protagonist, and is therefore the beginning of the second major narrative unit. In this way, the two major narrative units of the first installment are interlocked: as the first ends, the narratorial transformation that marks the transition has already begun, yet as the second begins that transition has yet to conclude.

Narrative Structure vs. Dispositive Structure in the First Major Narrative Unit:  
Renoncour's Metamorphosis from Passive Subject to Active Protagonist

The seemingly straightforward bipartite narrative structure I have proposed based on Renoncour's transformation as a narrator is, however, obscured by the attending dispositive boundaries, as the segmentary esthetic demands. This phenomenon can be observed by comparing the first book and the first narrative subunit, which at first appear to correspond to each other roughly, but which are revealed to be out of sync with each other on closer examination. The first narrative subunit relates Renoncour's family history and his father's ill-fortuned love affair (13-19), while the first book further includes Renoncour's efforts to reconcile his estranged father and grandfather, which are thwarted by the latter's unexpected death (13-26). Before the second book begins, the narrative structure has already undergone the first of a series of transitions that lead gradually from the first major narrative unit to the second. The moment of transition comes when Renoncour becomes an agent in his father's *aventures*, effectively taking responsibility for them but without fully assuming the role of protagonist. This transfer of agency takes place just after Renoncour's father tells the story of how he came to be estranged from his family to M. Puget, the friend and benefactor who assisted him after his disgrace, and is a clear example of indirect self-segmentation:

Un jour qu'ils étaient à la promenade, et que cet honnête homme lui eut demandé le sujet de cette profonde tristesse où il le voyait souvent, il ne fit pas difficulté de lui raconter *son aventure*, sans prendre d'autre précaution que de lui cacher son nom et le lieu de sa naissance. Il ne lui déguisa pas même l'embarras où il appréhendait de tomber, par rapport à sa petite famille, ni tout ce qu'il envisageait du côté de l'avenir. (17 emphasis added)

By telling his story to another character, the father initiates the conclusion of the subunit

in which he acts as main protagonist, and by using the term *aventure*, Renoncour, as narrator, confers a significant degree of distinctness on the narrative unit in question. Soon after this summation, Renoncour's father tells his son the story of how he came to be estranged from his own father: "Ensuite il nous raconta l'*histoire* de son amour, de sa fuite et de son mariage, la colère du comte son père, les suites qu'elles avait eues, et tout ce que j'ai rapporté jusqu'ici dans ces Mémoires" (19 emphasis added). This is the point where the family backstory and the story of Renoncour's father merge. After passing on the family history to his son, Renoncour's father deputizes him as his proxy for attempting to bring about reconciliation between himself and his own estranged father. After this point, Renoncour's father takes a back seat in the narrative, and Renoncour himself becomes the main agent of the narrative, although he continues to act on his father's behalf for some time.

Yet while the first major formal change in narration, and therefore the next evolution of the text's identity, does not appear until after the second book is fully under way, the end of the first book does coincide with a dramatic point in the plot, following a climactic series of tragedies. First, the overly joyous prospect of reuniting with his son overcomes Renoncour's grandfather, who dies immediately after Renoncour and his sister, Julie, convince him to reconcile with their father, but before he has an opportunity to alter his will to reflect his change of heart (22). Second, highwaymen kill Julie as she and Renoncour are on their way home to relay the news (24). Third, the news of Julie's murder provokes the death of their (conveniently) already-ill mother (26). Despite such apparently conclusive signs of narrative closure at the end of the first book, the text's

identity only shifts from “the story of Renoncour’s father” to “Renoncour’s story” after the second book is under way, after the succession of tragic events leads Renoncour’s father to retire to a monastery, because only with his retirement does Renoncour even begin to take on the role of independent protagonist (27). However, Renoncour does not fully assume his new role until later. His father’s absence from the scene of active life frees Renoncour to form his own attachments. He quickly becomes fast friends with the first person of his social stature who seeks him out, the marquis de Rosambert, whose own story occupies most of the second book. The interruption afforded by this “Histoire” further camouflages Renoncour’s shift from agent-narrator to protagonist-narrator. He assumes this status fully only in the second major narrative unit, when he begins to recount his assumption of the responsibilities of an active life, mainly in military service.

This initial stage of Renoncour’s development takes place in the first major narrative unit’s second narrative subunit, in which Renoncour replaces his father as the main agent during the remainder of the family drama (19-51). This subunit consists of four episodes, which work together to camouflage lack of coordination between the text’s first significant dispositive transition (between the first and second books) and its first significant narrative transition (between the first and second subunits). And just as the beginning and end-point of Renoncour’s transformation into a protagonist reveal the contours of the first and second major narrative units, each of the four intermediate stages of the transformation corresponds to a new narrative episode. In the first episode, Renoncour begins to act as his father’s agent, and thus begins to take an active role in the events of his narration. In the second episode he starts to allude to future protagonist

status. In the third episode, Renoncour is no longer his father's agent, but shares protagonist status with his friend. In the fourth episode, Renoncour is the sole protagonist but has to tie up loose ends of father's story before striking out on his own.

The first narrative episode brings Renoncour greater responsibility for the events of his narration, as shown by his newfound ability to delegate responsibility when he sees fit (19-23). The episode recounts Renoncour's attempt to reconcile his father and grandfather and its ultimate failure due to the grandfather's sudden death, and is built around an internal instance of indirect self-segmentation that occurs when their estranged grandfather asks to hear about what happened to his son since their separation: "[I]l voulut que nous lui fissions le récit de tout ce qui était arrivé à mon père depuis leur funeste division" (21). This statement implies that the identity of the narrative that is being constructed here consists of three parts: first, the events prior to the estrangement of Renoncour's father and grandfather; second, the events after the estrangement but prior to the arrival of Renoncour and Julie at their grandfather's estate; and, third, everything after that. In his role as narrator, Renoncour underlines this boundary when, speaking of his grandfather's younger child from his second marriage, he refers to this episode in a way that suggests it should be considered as separate from what is to follow: "Cet enfant, par un mouvement de sympathie naturelle, prit tant d'amitié pour moi qu'il ne pouvait me quitter un moment. J'en conçus aussi beaucoup pour lui ; et l'on verra, *dans la suite de cette histoire*, combien son affection me devint avantageuse" (21, emphasis added). The word "suite" could mean either a contiguous continuation or a separate unit that continues an earlier one. That ambiguity is at work here: no visible



boundary separates the portion of the narrative to which “la suite de cette histoire” is the continuation from the “suite” itself, and it is not even clear exactly what is meant by “cette histoire,” whether the whole work, the entirety of the preceding narration, or only the portion of the story in which Renoncour’s family members play a part.<sup>47</sup> Given that Prévost could not have known whether he would ever be called on to write any further installments of the *Mémoires*, each of these possibilities would have been potentially relevant, depending on the eventual future course of the work. Renoncour’s friendship with his uncle does become useful to him at the end of the first installment, which fulfills the requirements of the prolepsis; but although the prolepsis does not become directly relevant in later installments, here the possibility that it *could* have is more significant than whether it did or not. This is a perfect example of the course eighteenth-century novelists had to steer between laying the foundations for possible future installments and providing a text narratively satisfying in itself.

The burgeoning independence that comes with Renoncour’s evolving status as narrator becomes even clearer in the second narrative episode when, in the aftermath of the death of his grandfather, Renoncour begins to allude to his future unhappiness. While he is still telling a story about what he did to further his father’s goals, not his own, he is starting to reveal how the narrative will eventually come to focus on himself. The episode

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<sup>47</sup> The first edition of the dictionary of the académie française (1694) gives the following definition: “Suite [...] signifie aussi, Continuation. La suite d’un livre. la suite de l’Eneïde. la suite de l’Astrée. la suite de l’histoire Romaine.” The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1740) gives the following definition: “Suite, Se dit quelquefois absolument, De ce qui suit, de ce qui est après. Pour bien entendre ce passage, il faut lire la suite. Le commencement de cette histoire m’a ennuyé, on dit que la suite est plus intéressante. En parlant De certains ouvrages d’esprit, il signifie, Continuation, ce qui est ajouté à un ouvrage pour le continuer. La suite de l’Astrée. La suite de Don Quichotte. La suite des Annales de Baronius.” (Gallica. Web. 22 Jan. 2013.)

begins with Renoncour's journey home with his sister, whose death from injuries sustained during an encounter with highwaymen causes their mother to die of grief and their father to retire to a monastery, after which Renoncour leads a somewhat aimless, solitary existence in Paris (23-29). This episode is marked off by proleptic narratorial meta-commentary that also demonstrates Renoncour's changing narratorial status. This evolution is at work in the narrator's relation of his and his sister's ominous inability to keep their conversation to less weighty matters after his sister begins, inexplicably, to reflect on the transient nature of human existence during their journey:

Hélas ! n'était-ce pas un présage du malheur qui nous menaçait ? Et si le plus cruel de tous les destins ne m'eût pas rendu aveugle, au moment de ma perte, n'y aurais-je pas assez fait d'attention pour la prévenir ? Mais il était arrêté que je serais un jour le plus infortuné de tous les hommes, et je touchais à l'instant où mes malheurs devaient commencer. (23)

Although Renoncour refers at first to the “malheur qui *nous* menaçait,” thus grouping himself together with his sister, he then isolates himself from her, referring to his individual destiny.<sup>48</sup> This shift foreshadows his approaching transition from being the agent-narrator of a drama that includes his family to being the protagonist-narrator of a tale that is his alone. Put in terms of the identity of the work, here the text is transitioning from being the story of Renoncour's *father's* “malheurs” to being the story of Renoncour's *own* “malheurs.”

The third narrative episode reflects the segmentary esthetic by initiating the final stage of Renoncour's transition into full protagonist–narrator status only to postpone it

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<sup>48</sup> Sgard notes that this is “le premier exemple des annonces tragiques qui rythment les premiers romans de Prévost” (v. 8 23). The *rhythm* Sgard mentions is more important than he seems to acknowledge.

almost immediately by means of an interpolated narrative. Although he is no longer his father's agent, he has not yet taken full responsibility for his own life: shares protagonist status with friend, but friend's story supersedes Renoncour's share of the partnership. The episode relates Renoncour's arousal out of his melancholy by his encounter with Rosambert, who becomes his great friend (29-48)—this section also includes the “Histoire du comte de Rosambert” (30-46). The segmentation corresponding to this episode occurs when, as Renoncour later learns, Rosemont inquires about him to one of his servants after being taken by his appearance. Although not a full-fledged instance of even indirect self-segmentation, the transition from one narrative episode to another is accompanied by a retelling of sorts: “Il me dit que, quelque estime qu’il eût conçu pour moi sur ma seule figure, il l’aurait peut-être conservée sans me la témoigner ; mais qu’ayant demandé quelque éclaircissement à un de mes domestiques sur ma naissance, et sur la tristesse dont je lui avais paru possédé, il n’avait pu résister à l’envie de me connaître” (29-30). Just exactly what the servant told is unknowable, but it must have included enough narrative details to confirm the recognition of a kindred spirit. The narrative identity implicit here has three parts, beginning with Renoncour's family origins, continuing with the story of how Renoncour came to be “possessed” by the “tristesse” that attracts Rosambert's attention, and concluding with the rest of Renoncour's adventures.

This kind of segmentation indicates Renoncour's assumption of protagonist status, but the initial postponement of his life-story proper and the delay before his father's definitive retirement keep the transition incomplete, thus effecting an

interlocking transition similar to the one between the first and second major narrative units. The episode ends with Renoncour's proleptic statement explaining his intention of joining Rosambert at the end of his father's novitiate in order to pursue advancement through foreign military service: "La fortune en disposa autrement. Je ne le revis que plusieurs années après notre séparation, comme je le rapporterai dans le cours de ces Mémoires" (48). This reflexive observation points to an imminent transition that will finally put Renoncour fully at the helm of both his own life and in charge of narrating his own adventures for the first time. However, the transition into the portion of the narrative in which Renoncour is both narrator and protagonist is further obscured by the transitions between the narrative units before and after the "Histoire du comte de Rosambert." The transition between the third and fourth narrative episodes does not coincide with the boundary between the second and third books; rather, the third narrative episode extends several paragraphs into the third book. Thus, although the third narrative episode is mostly occupied by Rosambert's narration, that narration concludes with the end of the second book, the narrative of Rosambert's life continues into the second book, and his interactions with Renoncour, which form the frame narrative of Rosambert's life story, continue even farther, and the third episode, whose subject those interactions provide, only ends after the third book is well underway.

The fourth episode finds Renoncour on the brink of assuming full protagonist status by taking full responsibility for his own life. Rosemont's departure leaves him alone to deal with the consequences of his father's decision to become a monk, including near-total exclusion from his family fortune as a result of the machinations of his

grandfather's second wife, a state of affairs that leaves him no option but foreign military service (48-51). What is important to keep in mind while tracing the segmentary esthetic is determining how Prévost conducted this narrative development: keeping the reader's interest, advancing the plot sufficiently, and, most important, not closing off too many possible futures. The segmentation that sets this episode apart consists of a reflection on verisimilitude by the prior of the monastery where Renoncour's father has decided to take his vows: tell stories, including that of St. Bruno, not represented directly in the text and existing outside the world of the diegesis. This discussion serves as a preamble to the direct narration of another tale, this time from within the world of the diegesis: the story relates the legal troubles of a rich widow's son and the miraculous return from the dead of the father of one of the characters, which prevents injustice due to a legal technicality, which is what is just about to happen to Renoncour (49). Although the fourth episode, by continuing the narration of Renoncour's active life begun in the second, could be seen as forming a single narrative unit interrupted by the "Histoire du comte de Rosambert," it is formally set apart by the Prior's reflection on verisimilitude and the accompanying tale, which bring the reader's attention to the mechanics of the narrative, thereby creating a meaningful division in the narration.

The use of summary as a textual sign of the work's evolving identity is evident at the conclusion of this episode, when Renoncour as narrator reflects on the predicament in which he found himself as a young man. The episode concludes with a summary that places Renoncour's most recent misfortunes into relationship both with the narrative structure of the text, by referring to his earlier misfortunes, and with the text's dispositive

structure, by mentioning the recent pseudowork: “La mort tragique de ma sœur, la perte de ma mère, la retraite de mon père, le récit des aventures du comte de Rosambert ; tout cela joint ensemble m’avait inspiré je ne sais quel dégoût de la vie, et un véritable mépris pour tous les biens qui dépendent de la fortune” (51). This summary treats the preceding separate events as a single entity composed of four segments, but the “whole” thus presented elides the entire backstory of Renoncour’s family history as well as his childhood. By redefining the horizon of origin of the preceding narrative, Prévost puts the emphasis on the coming narrative transition as a significant one in a way that suggests the beginning of a new major narrative unit, in which Renoncour will finally gain full independence as the sole protagonist of his narration.

The new major narrative unit begins with Renoncour’s reflection on the state of his affairs following the disappearance of all his means of supporting himself. Lacking the ambition necessary to distinguish himself abroad, he comes to the conclusion that he will eventually have to retire to a monastery like his father, and determines to do so voluntarily before outside circumstances force him to do it: “Je concluais donc qu’après avoir perdu tous mes biens, le mieux était de sacrifier à Dieu ma liberté .... Faisons-nous un mérite de notre choix, tandis qu’il peut être volontaire : car enfin, après bien des mouvements et des agitations, il en faudra revenir là” (52). This conclusion has implications for the text’s identity, because it invites the reader to view the remainder of the *Mémoires* in its entirety, or at least its first installment, through the lens of a bipartite division hinging on the distinction between Renoncour’s acting on behalf of his family, on one hand, and on his own behalf, on the other. If he has already made the correct

deduction regarding his ultimate destiny, then everything that follows is a postponement of that destiny, and it matters little whether he postpones it voluntarily, e.g. through military service, or involuntarily, e.g. by enslavement. This proleptic meta-commentary, open-ended and non-specific as it may be, highlights the operation of a segmentary esthetic: rather than cobbling together everything he had in response to publishing necessities, Prévost uses what he has to create a text that has a certain effect on its audience. Rather than a second-rate novelist who kept his options open because he was *unable* to plot out the entire tale in advance, Prévost is a skillful artist who creates an open-ended plot with room for a compelling cast of characters undergoing a range of experiences that continue to interest readers.

Dispositive Structure vs. Narrative Structure in the Second Major Narrative Unit:  
Renoncour's (First) Career as a Circular Trajectory

As the second major narrative unit begins and as the end of the first volume approaches, the dynamic and yet camouflaged interrelationship between the narrative and dispositive structures comes into full effect. Taken together, the four narrative episodes described above form a gradual transition leading to Renoncour's definitive assumption of protagonist status, but without drawing the reader's attention away from the concurrent dispositive transitions. This gradual transition leads seamlessly into the the first subunit of the novel's second major narrative unit, which relates Renoncour's brief attempt to lead a career in the military, which ends when he begins a new phase of his life, as a slave. Renoncour's efforts to establish a military career lead him to England and Austria, and the episodes relating his adventures there demonstrate how the segmentary esthetic allows the novel to benefit from the suspense provided by dispositive boundaries while

uncoupling the narrative progress from those boundaries. The gentleness of the graduated transitions between narrative units is heightened when they are not synchronized with nearby dispositive transitions. Indirect self-segmentation effects the transitions between the episodes of the subunit relating Renoncour's quest for his fortune.

The first of these episodes covers Renoncour's military service in England as part of William of Orange's invasion (52-55). The episode begins when the prince of Thurn und Taxis, a distant relative of Renoncour, passes through a village near where Renoncour is staying: "Il entendit parler de mon malheur. Peut-être lui fit-on un portrait avantageux de ma personne. Quoi qu'il en soit, il eut la générosité de s'intéresser à ma fortune" (52). While it is not Renoncour himself who does the telling, this new phase of the narrative is marked by a boundary between what had gone before, i.e. "mon malheur," and what is to come, i.e. "ma fortune," with the emphasis clearly settled now on Renoncour himself, as suggested by the evocation of the "portrait avantageux de ma personne" that gains the prince's attention (52). This is similar to the way Rosambert comes into Renoncour's life, but with a clear emphasis on Renoncour's new independent life. King James asks Renoncour, who has been assigned to the detail guarding the king, to explain his reasons for serving the forces working against him, given France's lack of animosity toward the Jacobite party: "Il voulut savoir par quel accident je me trouvais en Angleterre, & dans le poste que j'occupais. Je lui racontai toute mon histoire : il l'écouta attentivement, et m'en parut touché" (54). This request provides Renoncour an opportunity to sum up his adventures, and it is the first occasion when Renoncour himself recounts his own story, signaling a new level of autonomy. In this way, indirect self-



segmentation indicates the identity of the work within which this subunit plays its part: everything that has come before Renoncour's entrance into military service constitutes Renoncour's "histoire," but it also serves as a preamble to the new course his life has recently taken as he has taken active control of his own life for his own sake.

The second and third episodes relate how, having been forced to abandon his post in England in order to aid King James in his escape, Renoncour seeks new military employment in Austria (56-57). Here, we see the identity of the work as the sum of two parts: one relating past events that took place in France, and one relating current and future events that take place outside of France. Renoncour is eventually successful, but not until after dinner-table conversation provides him an opportunity to tell his story to the count of Vieneratz: "Comme je relevais [les agréments de la France et de Paris] par de grands éloges, ils me demandèrent comment j'avais pu m'éloigner d'un Pays que je paraissais si fort estimer. Je leur appris le motif de mon voyage, c'est-à-dire l'envie de servir l'Empereur contre les Infidèles" (57). Although this rehearsal of his motivation for coming to Austria does not constitute a complete retelling of the foregoing part of the narrative, Renoncour's decision to begin his account at the point when he left France identifies that moment as a transitional point in the novel's narrative structure. It also demonstrates that Renoncour is sufficiently established in his status as protagonist by this point to determine what portion of his life-story to communicate to people he encounters in the course of his adventures. The episode concludes with the story of a "drinking duel" witnessed by Renoncour, leading to the following proleptic vow by Renoncour: "Je formai intérieurement la sincère résolution d'éviter toute ma vie ces honteuses débauches,

et je dois à ce spectacle la sobriété avec laquelle j'ai toujours vécu depuis" (58). Thus the episode relating Renoncour's time in Austria begins with indirect self-segmentation, and ends with a boundary-forming exemplary story. While the opening boundary of the episode put the coming narrative into a specific relationship with the previous narration, the implications of the concluding boundary for the identity of the text as a work are broad but vague, because Renoncour's future sobriety or lack thereof is unlikely to be of any substantial narrative significance unless he falls prey to alcoholism. While Renoncour's sobriety does not come up again in the novel, the vague prolepsis of this narrative transition is appropriate a moment of gathering momentum for a narrative excursion that will ultimately lead back to its starting point, and is therefore a faithful indicator of the future evolution of the novel's narrative structure.

The dramatic quality of the next major dispositive transition, which divides the two volumes of the first installment, does not coincide with a narrative transition, and should not necessarily be taken as a sign of the text's identity as a work. The first volume ends when Renoncour is enslaved after having been taken prisoner by the enemy during his first battle; more precisely, the exact moment of transition occurs when Renoncour is imprisoned at the home of his new master, Elid Ibezu (61). Enslavement is certainly a dramatic event that initiates a significant transition in his life, and as such it is worthy of occupying the highly visible spot provided by the dispositive transition between the first and second volumes. It is important to note that no narrative unit of any kind concludes at the end of the first volume, which heightens the suspense attendant upon Renoncour's capture. The narrative subunit that recounts Renoncour's participation in the campaign

against the Turks extends from the third book into the fourth book, straddling the boundary between the first volume and the second. As the new volume begins Renoncour is still a prisoner without rights, but that status begins to change when his master, Elid Ibezu, solicits his life story from him: “Il voulut savoir mon nom, mon âge, ma condition et le lieu de ma naissance” (64). While these questions do not precisely indicate that Renoncour narrated any portion of the events previously recounted in the novel, they do constitute an instance of narrative relay, as Renoncour must presumably have told at least some of the preceding narrative in his response. Furthermore, these questions show that Renoncour has now fully taken on his role as protagonist, as the information relates to him alone and not to his family. Renoncour’s new master then orders better treatment for him, making him an integrated, albeit enslaved, member of Turkish society. This shift marks a change in Renoncour’s opinion of Turks, and a turning point in the structure of the narrative:

Cette politesse et cette bonté me surprirent dans un Turc. J’avais de cette nation les idées qu’on en a communément, c’est-à-dire que je les regardais comme les plus barbares et les plus impitoyables de tous les hommes. J’ai reconnu encore mieux, *dans la suite*, la fausseté de cette opinion. (64 emphasis added).

Renoncour’s reference to the continuation of his narrative further signals the narrative transition taking place here. As the narrative structure of the text continues to evolve, it follows Renoncour’s increasing autonomy, as indicated by the three times Renoncour retells his story to a new authority figure, first to King James, then to the count of Vieneratz, and finally to Elid Ibezu. In each instance, Renoncour focuses increasingly on himself alone, rather than on his family, or on the future, in which he is to act solely on

his own behalf, rather than on the past, when he was an agent of his family, showing that the narrative structure is building toward a point when he will finally be the sole protagonist of the events of his narration.

The second subunit, which covers the time Renoncour spends in Turkey as a slave, can only truly be said to have begun once Renoncour has given an account of himself to his new master.<sup>49</sup> After Renoncour falls in love with his master's daughter and manages to win his freedom, the third subunit begins. This subunit consists of Renoncour's return to the physical and emotional point of departure where the second major narrative unit began, and occupies the remainder of the installment, forming a counterpart to Renoncour's gradual transition into active life as an independent agent. Renoncour returns to France and falls back on the desire to renounce the world that his father's retirement inspired in him at the end of the first major narrative unit. The subunit contains five narrative episodes, each of which advances Renoncour's dual return without drawing the reader's attention by employing different techniques of the segmentary

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<sup>49</sup> It contains two episodes; in the first episode, Renoncour recounts his adjustment to his new life as a slave, and his first encounter with his master's daughter Selima, his great love and future wife (64-73). The second episode relates Renoncour's and Amulem's mutual assistance in each other's amorous endeavors (73-80). This episode begins as Renoncour recruits Amulem's assistance in achieving his goal of uniting with Amulem's sister, Selima: "Amulem entra par hasard dans la chambre où j'étais, et voyant ma tristesse, il en voulut savoir la cause. Je ne lui cachai rien." (73). From this comment it can be inferred that what Renoncour tells Amulem is equivalent to the content of the entirety of the second subunit up until this point, i.e. everything that happened after Renoncour was recognized as a gentleman and was given access to Elid Ibezu's harem, which is how he met and fell in love with Selima. The episode ends with Renoncour's report to Selima of Amulem's allowing her to marry Renoncour: "Je remerciai mille fois Amulem, et je fis à Selima le *récit* de cet entretien, qui la mit au comble de la joie." (80 emphasis added). Thus, the episode itself is defined by an instance of indirect self-segmentation at its conclusion, while it begins with another such instance, but one that retroactively defines the narrative subunit that is about to end.

esthetic.<sup>50</sup> These episodes interact in such a way as to prevent the reader from focusing on the subunit's role within the narrative structure while maximizing the reader's esthetic pleasure. The contrast between how narrative units function as elements of larger wholes and how they function as entities in their own right demonstrates that the segmentary esthetic depends on interactions between different structural levels. The compositional techniques that create the segmentary esthetic makes the path of Renoncour's physical and emotional return unpredictable, thus preserving its ability to retain its interest for the reader despite the ultimate predictability of the destination.

The first episode accomplishes the initial physical component of Renoncour's return by bringing him and Selima to Italy. This episode straddles the dispositive boundary between the fourth and fifth books, thus increasing the suspense of Renoncour's departure from Turkey with Selima. It also begins with a variation on indirect self-segmentation: Renoncour is obliged to give an account of himself in order to leave Turkey, but he gives a false one: "Je me fis passer [...] pour un marchand qui s'en allait en Italie pour son commerce" (81). In hiding his origins when telling his story, Renoncour effectively erases a portion of his past, thus inaugurating a new phase in his life and a new major narrative unit. This episode crystallizes around a nucleus of self-segmentation that occurs when, upon hearing that his old friend Rosambert is in Italy and has become a monk,<sup>51</sup> Renoncour pays a visit to the Cardinal de Janson, who has come to

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<sup>50</sup> The revised edition of 1753 ends with an added lengthy interpolated narrative that is long enough to be considered a sixth episode, but which does not alter the analysis.

<sup>51</sup> And while Sgard sees Prévost's choice to have Renoncour set off on his own rather than accompany Rosambert as a "change of plans" at the end of the first volume, Renoncour's encounter with his old friend while journeying home from Turkey shows that Rosambert was still available to play a role in the novel.

visit the count, and ends up recounting his adventures, which, as narrator, Renoncour summarizes in the form of a list:

Je satisfis la curiosité de monsieur le cardinal, en lui faisant un *récit* abrégé de mes aventures, depuis que je m'étais séparé du comte de Rosambert. Je lui racontai les dangers que j'avais essuyés en Angleterre et en Allemagne, le long esclavage où je m'étais vu réduit, et la manière dont j'avais été délivré. Je n'oubliai point mes amours avec Selima, et le bonheur que j'avais de la posséder tranquillement. (85 emphasis added)

Finally, the episode concludes with a suspenseful *aventure* recounting the local Grand Duke's attempt to abduct Selima. The use of the term *aventure* shows how the segmentary esthetic operates narrative transition without making the structure of the narrative obvious, since the duke was attracted to Selima at the very beginning of the episode, and his attempted abduction is an escalation of his earlier attempts to seduce her. Thus, Renoncour's comment about the end of the *aventure* also signals the end of the entire episode, but without drawing the reader's attention to the episode itself.

The second episode reports the marriage of Renoncour to Selima and the birth of their daughter Julie. During Selima's pregnancy Renoncour circulates in Rome's high society to acquire interesting tales with which to entertain his housebound wife, two of which Renoncour deems worthy of inclusion in his memoirs. The first story is that of an ecclesiastical financial functionary named Murini, who was unjustly deprived of his fortune (89-90). The other story is the story of an amorous abbot (90-91). In addition to these two representative ones, Renoncour includes another story, of which he himself is

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What is important is not whether or not Prévost initially intended his novel to take the course it did, but how it gets to where it ends up going. Rosambert's reappearance also underscores the inappropriateness of the Turkish-European bipartite conception of *Mémoires*, as the resurfacing of an important character from the so-called "European" section within the "Asian" section belies the division along such lines.

the focus: “Pendant que je me divertissais ainsi à raconter à Selima les aventures d’autrui, il m’en arriva une qui faillit me jeter dans un embarras des plus désagréables” (91). The story involves Renoncour’s interactions with a magician-cum-doctor, or “opérateur,” who convinces Renoncour to employ one of his remedies during Selima’s childbirth, seemingly with positive effect. However, when the “opérateur” comes under the scrutiny of the Inquisition, Renoncour barely escapes the same fate through the offices of his friend, Cardinal Janson (92-93). Only then does Renoncour inform the reader that “[l]a suite de cette histoire m’a empêché de dire que c’était une fille dont Selima m’avait fait père” (93). The breathless quality of the narration makes different parts that each have their own coherence run into each other—for example, what to make of the fact that a major plot point, i.e. the gender of Renoncour’s child, is included only as an afterthought following the segment during which it should have been reported, and that this very segment is included on the same footing as two mere exemplary stories? As a unit within the installment’s narrative structure, this episode contributes to the creation of a gradual transition from Turkey back to France: Renoncour must lose everything if he is to have reason to return to his earlier desire to retire from the world. When analyzed as an entity unto itself, the episode provides the esthetic pleasure of variety without jarring transitions by means of the progression of stories—from two that are seemingly unrelated to Renoncour to a third in which Renoncour plays a key role. Rather than evidence of Prévost’s seemingly ad-hoc esthetics or of his alleged attempts to unify his disparate text, these strategies provide an interesting way to enter gently into what would otherwise be a

brutal transition from the apogee of Renoncour's happiness to his moment of greatest despair.

In the third episode, Renoncour and Selima stay at a villa in the Roman countryside while Selima recovers from giving birth, providing Renoncour an opportunity to enjoy familial bliss briefly, making it all the more devastating when that bliss is taken away from him in the following episode. Renoncour implies as much when he attributes the worries on behalf of his wife inspired in him by the decision to return as soon as possible to France to share his familial joy with his father: "C'est ainsi que la providence me préparait insensiblement à tous les maux cruels qui m'étaient encore réservés" (93). The bulk of the episode, though, focuses not on family life, but on Renoncour's amateur archeological efforts, which lead to a pseudo-supernatural tale that takes on a literally hair-raising aspect when Renoncour unintentionally ignites the contents of a mysterious chest he encounters in a crypt of indeterminate historical origin, accidentally burning off much of his hair. The juxtaposition of domestic joy and quasi-paranormal suspense turns an episode whose main narrative structural function is to provide a moment of stasis into a compelling *aventure* in its own right.

When the couple return to Rome in the fourth episode, Selima suddenly dies of fever, which provokes the initial emotional component of Renoncour's return to his earlier desire to renounce the world. Renoncour's reaction to Selima's death is to "entomb" himself in a house that he converts into a memorial to his lost wife. But before Selima dies, Renoncour sets apart the episode that is about to begin by means of vague



intimations of the tragedy to come, and an appeal to the reader's own sense of narrative structure:

Mon lecteur s'aperçoit assez de ce qu'il doit attendre dans la *suite* de cette histoire. Ceux qui n'aiment point que leur tranquillité soit troublée, même par la compassion, ou ceux qui craignent d'être trop attendris par un *récit* douloureux, doivent interrompre ici leur lecture. (96 emphasis added)

With this proleptic meta-commentary, Renoncour separates the fourth episode, which combines real grief with an artificial tomb, from the third episode, which juxtaposed familial happiness with a real, albeit quasi-supernatural, tomb. The episode describes in detail how Renoncour transforms an entire house into a mausoleum for Selima's exhumed heart and provides a schematic account of the year Renoncour spends "entombed" there. Eventually Renoncour emerges from his self-imposed living death when his uncle coaxes him into agreeing to return to France. The episode begins to conclude with indirect self-segmentation when Renoncour's uncle and his old valet, Scoti, bring Renoncour up to date on what has happened since he was taken captive. The episode's capstone comes in the form of a story about a man named Peretti, who, like Renoncour, entombed himself alive after the death of his beloved (100). Each of these techniques makes this episode more compelling than it might have been were it to have consisted of nothing more than an account of the events that occurred during Renoncour's entombment, which is a relatively lengthy period of time overwhelmingly characterized by stasis. In this way, despite its relative uneventfulness, the fourth episode represents an important stage in Renoncour's return to the beginning of the second major narrative unit. Here we see another sign of the text's evolving identity as a work, since the narrative is now presented as being composed of two parts, the first comprising the

events prior to Renoncour's enslavement, and the second comprising those that came afterward.

The physical and emotional components of Renoncour's return come to their resolution in the fifth episode, which sees Renoncour's return to France at his uncle's urging, his father's death, and his daughter's marriage. Renoncour returns to the familial chateau, completing the physical component of Renoncour's return to the point of stasis he abandoned temporarily when he left France to seek military employment at the beginning of the second major narrative unit, but before he can complete the emotional component of his return by retiring, he has to settle his family's affairs. This interim state continues for quite some time: "J'y passais pendant quelques années une vie solitaire et pleine de langueur" (101). His father's death both closes a chapter of his life and initiates the last stage of Renoncour's emotional return by inspiring in him the desire to join both his father and his dead wife in the afterlife. However, it takes his daughter's establishment in a stable marriage for him to feel comfortable renouncing the world. In early editions, this marriage is enough for Renoncour to allow himself to act on his "plus chère inclination" by retiring to a monastery, at which point the novel ends (102). In the revised edition of 1753, however, Renoncour seems to require a bit more motivation to take decisive action, and he reports that it was an "événement fort extraordinaire" that "mit le sceau à ma résolution" (103). The event in question gives rise to an interpolated narrative recounting Renoncour's involvement with an ex-consul who, having brought two concubines back to France with him, must choose which one to marry: the one who has given him two children, who would otherwise be illegitimate in the eyes of French

law, or the one he truly loves. Together, the ex-consul's retelling of his own tale and Renoncour's involvement in the affair are long enough to constitute an independent episode (103-14). In both versions of the text, the segmentary esthetic ensures that this episode can serve as the final stage of Renoncour's return to the stasis from which he departed at the beginning of the second major unit despite the fact that little of note takes place in Renoncour's own life during the last few years before his "definitive" retirement.

### Adding Parts to a Whole that is Already Complete, Yet Never Was

#### *The Second Installment as a Site of Narrative and Dispositive Interface: The Cycle Begins Again with Renoncour's Second Career*

Because the first installment was originally an independent "whole," and the publication of the second and third installments revealed it to be part of a larger whole, or transformed it into one, it is essential that we analyze the interplay of narrative and dispositive structure in the second and third installments to understand how these textual entities relate to each other in terms of their identities as parts of a whole work. Because each installment was composed at a different point in the diegetical timeline, each can be seen as a "whole," that is, as an independent unit within the narrative structural system with a separate role as an element within the dispositive system. Furthermore, the second and third installments can be taken together as forming a narrative "whole" because together they cover all of Renoncour's second career.

#### The Provisional Wholeness of the First Installment

The first step toward understanding how the relationship between the three installments is represented in the text, and how this relationship creates an evolving textual identity, is to analyze the apparent wholeness of the first installment. The first

installment covers Renoncour's life from his childhood until his initial retirement, and although he ends up coming out of retirement, it is the fact that it embraces the "whole" of the protagonist's active life that, to a large extent, provides the first installment with the sense of completeness it projects. Renoncour considers his retirement to a monastery merely as a period during which to await his death, and that sentiment is evident in both versions of the ending of this installment. However, differences in the two presentations of the sentiment indicate how Prévost negotiated the tension between completion and continuation. The text of the first edition (1728) concludes as follows:

N'ayant plus rien à prétendre ni à désirer au monde, je me déterminai à le quitter entièrement, pour achever ma triste vie dans la retraite. Les Pères ... à qui je m'adressai, consentirent à me recevoir dans une de leurs abbayes, où la libéralité du comte fournit à mon entretien par une honnête pension. J'y attends *tous les jours le bienheureux moment* qui me réunira avec tout ce que la cruelle mort m'a ravi ; et je n'en sors que deux fois chaque année, pour aller voir mon cher comte, et ma chère fille, dans leurs terres. (451 emphasis added)

This version suggests that Renoncour spends his time in a state of constant expectation, awaiting his death, which he believes could come at any moment. At the same time, the detail regarding his biannual excursions from the monastery implies that his abandonment of the secular world is not complete, that he remains open to that part of it that merits the attention of an "homme de qualité," i.e. familial ties and the obligations of gratitude, even though respecting these attachments gives occasion for social pleasure not materially different from the pleasure that one could derive from social interaction not sanctioned by the high standards Renoncour has set for himself by deciding to retire to a monastery. In the revised edition of 1756 we read the following:

[N]'ayant plus rien [...] à prétendre ni à désirer au monde, je me déterminai à le quitter entièrement pour achever ma triste vie dans la retraite. Les personnes à qui je m'adressai consentirent à me recevoir dans une de leurs abbayes, où la libéralité de mon oncle fournit à mon entretien. J'y attends, *avec plus d'impatience que de crainte, l'heureux jour* qui doit me réunir avec ce que la cruelle mort m'a ravi. (114)

The omission of Renoncour's twice-yearly excursions from the abbey would seem at first to lessen the above-mentioned underlying openness to that which is right in the world, but in fact the modified statement of Renoncour's impatience achieves the same effect. No longer does he await his death *moment by moment*, but rather *day by day*, which implies a less minute attention to the approach of his death. The emphasis on Renoncour's attenuated impatience, coupled with the omission of his visits to his family, both renders his decision to become the young Rosemont's tutor more plausible, and highlights the significance of his decision to leave the abbey to do so—if he never leaves the abbey, to do so for an extended period of time would entail quite a sacrifice on his part. Yet, while the narrative “wholeness” afforded by encompassing the entire active life of its subject does indeed make of the first installment of the *Mémoires* an independent work, equally important is its more complex structure, thrown into relief with the publication of the second installment.<sup>52</sup> The first installment itself is built on a framework composed of two overlapping and intersecting armatures, one narrative and one dispositive, and this dual structure both contributes to the sense of “completeness” that allows the installment to function as an independent unit within the novel's overall narrative structure and works against it to lay the groundwork for possible future

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<sup>52</sup> In his edition of the 1728 version of the *Mémoires*, Jean Sgard has argued only the first installment of *Mémoires* possesses true unity: “Cette unité, c'est celle d'une vie” (8).

expansion, thus complicating its status as an independent unit in the narrative structural system.

The Productive Paradox of the Infinite Circle as a Model for the Narration of a Life:  
Simultaneously Always-Already Complete and Always-Already Incomplete

The ability of one career to be grafted onto another, as when the story of Renoncour's second career extends the boundaries of his *Mémoires*, does complicate the "wholeness" of the first installment, which initially presented itself as complete, but it should also complicate our perception of the second career, which initially seems incomplete without the first one, but which, in light of the uncertainty of all human endeavors, appears just as "complete" as the first, given that true completion, like true perfection, is not attainable in this world, at least within the context of the worldview embraced by the narrator. Although the first installment of the *Mémoires* did initially constitute a self-sufficient work, it was just as subject to the vicissitudes of human nature as any other endeavor: "Non, les hommes ne forment point de desseins qui ne soient sujets à changer, ni de résolutions qui ne puissent être ébranlées" (115). The same inconstancy to which Renoncour attributes his decision to abandon the tranquility of his retirement for the upheavals of worldly life are also at the origin of the second installment of his memoirs, as shown by his reaction when asked to serve as the tutor of a duke's son: "Quoi ! vous voulez qu'à l'âge où je suis, j'aille parcourir tous les royaumes de l'Europe, et fournir, par *mes aventures*, la matière d'un nouveau roman ?" (117 emphasis added). The most consistent aspect of both life and publication, then, is its mutability, and it is this feature that allowed for the *Mémoires* and other novels of the period to conform to the desires of the reading public, at once satisfying the desire for closure in works of

prose fiction, and enabling future extension of the narrative while minimizing the appearance of discontinuity.

This feature of the segmentary esthetic points more to a difference between current and past ideas about what constitutes a literary work than to actual differences between literary works of the past and those of the present. For instance, were Henry Miller to have written his novels during the eighteenth century, they would likely have been presented as integral parts of a single work, rather than as separate works forming a series. If Miller had been able to complete the projected fourth volume of *The Rosy Crucifixion*, it would not only have ceased to be a “trilogy,” but would have reunited with the beginning of Miller’s earlier novels, *Tropic of Cancer* and *Tropic of Capricorn*. Indeed, what we would now call a “prequel” would have been recast as a previously unpublished earlier section of the same work, just as later editions of the first installment of the *Mémoires* include an explanation of how they came to end with the story of the ex-consul, while earlier editions did not. Thus we can infer that the tension between the unity of a multi-installment work such as *Mémoires* and the independence of its composing parts was evident to authors and audiences of the eighteenth century, and that the segmentary esthetic allowed them to enjoy these works despite their inherent disjointedness.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> More recently, authors and audiences generally resolve this issue by perceiving groups of novels that focus on the same characters as series of independent works, rather than as components of a larger single work—with some notable exceptions, e.g. Roger Martin du Gard’s *Les Thibault*, a “novel cycle” or “saga” containing eight volumes, each of which has its own title, but which nevertheless were conceived of as forming a single work; or any of the works known as “roman-fleuve,” such as *Les Hommes de bonne volonté* by Jules Romains or Romain Rolland’s *Jean-Christophe*.

The Segmentary Esthetic in Action at the Transition Between the First and Second Installments: Renoncour's First Career as Both Whole and Part

Manipulation of the interaction between dispositive and narrative structure is what makes it possible to create a work that is at once whole and incomplete while simultaneously containing within itself “wholes” that are also both complete and incomplete. This function of the segmentary esthetic is evident in the text surrounding the transition between the first and second installments, both at the end of the first installment, as mentioned above, and in the “avant-propos” that appears at the beginning of the second installment. This liminal text is an intriguing site of dispositive–narrative intersection, being simultaneously a narrative unit, a dispositive unit, and an integral component of a dispositive boundary. The second installment begins with an *avant-propos* in which Renoncour explains how he came to have more adventures to write about after having renounced the world definitively, or so he thought (115-17). The *avant-propos* serves as a dispositive unit in its own right due to typographical marking, but it also sets out the dispositive relationship between what came before and what is to come after. The new installment exploits the dispositive instability of eighteenth-century prose fiction, which rendered any apparently “complete” work susceptible to continuation. Contrasting statements by Renoncour about the first and second installments of his memoirs underscore this protean capability. Renoncour first explains that his decision to write the first installment was part of a general detachment from the secular world:

Si je rappelais quelquefois *mes aventures passées*, c'était pour me confirmer dans la haine du monde, en considérant le peu de solidité de ses biens les plus flatteurs. J'avais même écrit, dans cette vue, *l'histoire de ma vie* ; et je ne la relisais jamais sans me sentir enflammé d'un nouvel amour



pour la solitude, et sans bénir le ciel qui avait soutenu ma constance parmi tant d'adversités. (115 emphasis added)

Referring to the first installment of his memoirs as “l’histoire de ma vie” suggests it constitutes a finished work—both “histoire” and “vie” suggest completion and wholeness—while preserving its fragmentary structure—the term “aventures” suggests an aggregate of discrete elements. In his role as narrator, Renoncour signals the first dispositive unit that fully belongs to the new installment in a parallel but opposite fashion in the following disclamatory paragraph:

Je laisse aux géographes, et à ceux qui ne voyagent que par curiosité, le soin de donner au public la description des pays qu’ils ont parcourus. L’*histoire* que j’écris n’est composée que *d’actions et de sentiments*. J’entreprends de rapporter ce que j’ai fait, et non ce que j’ai vu. Les cœurs sensibles, les esprits raisonnables, tous ceux, en un mot, qui, sans suivre une philosophie trop sévère, ont du goût pour la vertu, la sagesse et la vérité, pourront trouver quelque plaisir dans la lecture de *cet ouvrage*. (119 emphasis added)

Here Renoncour uses the word *histoire* just as he did in the first installment’s *avant-propos*. However, he uses it ambiguously—the term could designate either the new installment or the work as a whole. This ambiguity fuels the dispositive–narrative tension: if “histoire” refers to the installment alone then disposition and narrative are linked, but if it refers to the whole then disposition is less primary than narrative; in the end, neither way of looking at it is completely true and yet both provide valuable insight into the work’s structure. Similarly, just as the impression of unity provided by the term *histoire* was counterbalanced by the fragmentary quality of the term *aventures* in the earlier description of the first installment, here the second installment is described as consisting of “actions” and “sentiments,” which terms hint that the coming narrative will

be more composite than unified in nature—the implication being that this will render it more attractive to its potential audience and more interesting to read.

Dispositive-Narrative Tension at Moments of Transition Between Installments: The “Avant-Propos” as a Narrative Unit.

While as a dispositive unit the “avant-propos” bridges the gap between the world of the diegesis and the world of the reader, as a narrative unit it brings the reader up to date on the events of Renoncour’s life since the end of those recounted in the first installment; most important, it begins to effect Renoncour’s second major transition as narrator. Just as the transition between the first and second major narrative units came about through Renoncour’s change in status from agent-narrator to protagonist-narrator, the transition between the second and third major narrative units—which also happens to coincide with the transition between the first and second installments—is the result of a further evolution of Renoncour’s status as narrator, which now combines aspects of both protagonist and agent. Throughout the remainder of the novel, Renoncour remains the protagonist of his own retirement drama while simultaneously taking on the role of agent in Rosemont’s bildungsroman.

Like many of the narrative units in the first installment, this one crystallizes around a nucleus formed by an instance of Renoncour telling his life story. The narration takes place when the prior of the monastery where he has been spending his retirement presses him to entertain a visiting anonymous duke with tales of his birth and adventures: “Le père prieur crut me faire plaisir en tournant la conversation sur ma naissance et sur mes aventures” (115-16). Taken as a narrative unit, the *avant-propos* exists in a liminal state—neither fully belonging to the new continuation nor completely part of the prior

narrative—and creates a neutral space in which Renoncour can accomplish the first half of a handover that Rosemont completes with him at the beginning of the following narrative unit by narrating his life story one more time. The boundaries between the third, fourth, and fifth major units ultimately derive from this fusion of narratives: after Rosemont's initial submission to Renoncour's authority, each successive level of reclaimed authority initiates a corresponding level of divorce between narrative units. These important narrative boundaries are not always reflected in the disposition, and that unpredictability provides the work an added dimension of esthetic interest.

The narrative structural transition between the second and third major narrative units is not complete until the finalization of the union between Renoncour's concluded narrative, which served as the subject of the first installment, and Rosemont's nascent narrative, which will serve as the subject of the new installment. Rosemont effects this by narrating his life story to Renoncour:

Lorsque je me trouvais seul avec le marquis de Rosemont, je m'attachai d'abord à acquérir une parfaite connaissance de son caractère et de ses inclinations. ... Je l'engageai sensiblement à *me raconter quelles avaient été ses occupations jusqu'à sa dix-huitième année où il entra alors*. ... Ce qui me rassurait ... dans le marquis, c'est qu'avec une vivacité extrême ... il avait du moins un fond de raison, qui lui faisait goûter une réflexion solide. J'affectais d'en mêler quelques-unes à son récit, et je voyais que loin d'en être embarrassé, il y ajoutait les siennes, en homme qui est déjà accoutumé à penser. (119 emphasis added)

This scene resembles instances of indirect self-segmentation by means of narrative handoff in the first installment—in particular Renoncour's father's transfer of agency and narrative authority to his son by telling him the story of his past. In both situations, a new phase of the narrative is inaugurated by the punctuation that this kind of narration

supplies. However, this instance differs from the scene with Renoncour's father in that primary agency within the narrative does not transfer from the person narrating his life story to the narratee, nor does the narrator's mantle shift from the shoulders of one character to the other. In essence, Renoncour accepts responsibility for the narration of Rosemont's life story from this moment forward, and even accepts ultimate responsibility for the course of that story; as Rosemont's tutor he will allow his ward to act freely only up to a certain point, at which he, Renoncour, will step in to exercise the authority that Rosemont cedes to him in this moment of indirect self-segmentation.

This process marks a division between what came before in Rosemont's life from what is to come, which will provide the material of the narrative unit to come; it constitutes a retrospective narrative division despite the absence of the prior narrative material from the text presented to the reader. Renoncour initiates a corresponding prospective demarcation of the coming major narrative unit while setting out the details of his assumption of Rosemont's narrative responsibility and life agency. The unexpected combination of reversal and parallel that the beginning of this new major narrative unit shares with the transition between the two major narrative units of the first installment highlights the hybrid nature of eighteenth-century novels, in which unity and disjunction are not mutually exclusive. Although the division into installments is fundamentally dispositive in nature, further analysis will demonstrate that it is not wholly devoid of narrative significance.

Despite assuming ultimate responsibility for both the narration of Rosemont's life, and direction of its future course, Renoncour remains committed to fostering an

egalitarian feeling between himself and his pupil. Renoncour credits the equal footing he established between himself and the future duke with the publication of the text at hand:

Je lui disais souvent [...] qu'il fallait que nous vécussions en amis ou en frères [...]. Il me répondit qu'il [...] m'honorerait encore comme un père. [...] C'est par une suite des mêmes sentiments que dans l'élévation où il se retrouve aujourd'hui par la mort du duc son père, il me permet d'écrire librement *les aventures de notre voyage*. (119-20 emphasis added)

Although it is not clear whether Renoncour is referring here to both the second and third installments, or just the second, in either case the textual entity in question gains a significant degree of autonomy by being referred to as “*les aventures de notre voyage*.”

Although the term “*aventure*” can refer to both positive and negative events, the only specific indication of what the content of the unit is to consist of is negative:

Il consent même que pour le plaisir ou l'utilité du public, je raconte *les fautes où l'ardeur de la jeunesse le fit tomber*. Elles ne peuvent lui être qu'honorables ; car outre qu'elles sont de la nature de celles qu'on a reprochées à tous les *héros*, il est si beau de les avoir su reconnaître et d'avoir toujours combattu pour les éviter, qu'il y a une espèce de gloire à en faire un aveu libre et sincère. (120 emphasis added)

This focus on the negative highlights the spiritual kinship between the two men, and attributes Rosemont's role as an “*héros*” to his personality rather than his exalted station in society. The consequences of Renoncour's and Rosemont's unusual tutor–pupil relationship all point to the complex nature of the relationship between the first and second installments. After the transition Renoncour retains a foot on both sides of two important dividing lines: the one separating protagonist-narrator and agent-narrator and the one separating retirement and active life. Renoncour's hybrid status mirrors the structure of the *Mémoires* as a whole, both narrator and novel uniting seemingly incompatible entities within themselves. That both Renoncour and the text of his

narration are able to accommodate multiple potentially independent “wholes” within themselves is the result of the segmentary esthetic, which relies on the fact that there is never a one-to-one correspondence between narrative and dispositive units to create gradual, camouflaged transitions.

The use of the term “voyage” is interesting, with regard to the coexistence of multiple semi-independent entities within *Mémoires*, because although the referent of the term would at first seem to be composed of the second and third installments, because their shared narrative content makes them complementary parts of a “whole” within the larger “whole” of the *Mémoires*, only a portion of the second and third installments is occupied by the account of the Grand Tour itinerary that he and the young Rosemont follow. Moreover, not only is the term “voyage” inapt to describe the entirety of the second and third installments, it also cannot refer to the second installment alone, as the tour clearly extends into the third installment. Seen through the lens of the segmentary esthetic, this imprecision could be seen as a lapse on Prévost’s part, as if he had intended for the voyage to last for the rest of the work. In fact, as will become clear below, the journey does not proceed as initially planned, and as a result its boundaries are not entirely clear; rather, the transition out of the traveling phase and into the remainder of the text is gradual and camouflaged. What is ultimately most essential to the novel’s narrative structure is the evolving power dynamic of tutor and tutee that governs the relationship between Renoncour and Rosemont, which in turn creates the framework that connects the second and third installments to each other and to the first installment without denying the independence of any one of the three.

*The Segmentary Esthetic in Interactions Between Books and Major Narrative Units in the Second Installment: Two Intertwining Lives*

Beyond its role in the larger narrative and dispositive structure of the novel, in particular its relationship to the first installment—explored above—and its relationship to the third installment—to be examined below—the second installment presents significant interest due to the tension between narrative and dispositive structure internally. In my discussion of the first installment, my exploration of the complex relationship between the dispositive and narrative structures established a major contribution of the segmentary esthetic, namely that it enables novelists to provide readers esthetic pleasure without limiting their own artistic freedom by manipulating narrative and disposition independently of each other within the context of a single installment. Because of the second installment's narrative and dispositive connections to the third installment, I will now analyze how the relationship between major narrative units and books contributes to the evolving textual identities of installments.

This analysis will establish another contribution of the segmentary esthetic, namely, that it affords novelists greater artistic freedom in works published in installments. Such structural complexity, increased by the varied relations of whole and part, underlies the segmentary esthetic that characterizes *Mémoires*, and whose features I will now trace in the dispositive and narrative mismatches found in the relations of book six and the third major narrative unit, and the seventh and eighth books and the fourth major narrative unit. These structural mismatches show that the question of whether *Mémoires* is “unified” or not is more difficult to answer than it might appear at first. If the major narrative units reflect important plot developments, then the fact that they are

sometimes split between installments that were not necessarily written together is significant. While boundaries between the major units derive from the most significant and formally distinguishing features of the narration, dispositive transitions usually correspond to less-important narrative developments and generally have little to do with the formal qualities of the narration. There must be some kind of possible connection between parts of a narrative that is neither wholly “necessary” nor entirely improvised, and the segmentary esthetic makes this kind of connection possible.

The Evolving Identity of the Work in the Third Major Narrative Unit: Transforming the Unity of a Life into Part of a Multisegment Whole

The evolving identity of the text as a work is clearly in evidence in the third major narrative unit of *Mémoires*, which is the first major narrative unit of the second installment, which begins with the fusion of Rosemont’s and Renoncour’s narratives. What had previously been the story of Renoncour’s career transforms into the story of how Renoncour came out of retirement to take care of Rosemont’s education. In addition, because we know that Rosemont eventually takes his proper place in society and that Renoncour returns to retirement, this is a circular construction similar to the second major narrative unit. It recounts the traveling pair’s Grand Tour up until the point when Rosemont meets his first love interest, Diana de Velez, which provokes the young marquis’ first significant development as an independent individual separate from his tutor’s guidance (119-39). Although this major narrative unit corresponds approximately to the sixth book, that correspondence is significantly limited in several ways: first, by the extension of the major narrative unit beyond the boundaries of the sixth book into the seventh; second, by the division of the third major narrative unit into two narrative



subunits; and finally, by the presence of a narrative structural boundary within the body of the sixth book. The boundaries of the sixth book are nevertheless rooted in the narrative, and their rootedness enables them to tap into the dispositive structural system's ability to provide the impression of momentum. The book relates Renoncour's voyage with the young Rosemont to Spain and the first two to three weeks of their sojourn in Madrid, during which they associate mostly with the bourgeoisie. The transition between the sixth and seventh books corresponds to the pair's attendance at the King's chapel, signifying a change of condition from "common" to "noble" when Renoncour decides that the young marquis has had enough experience of Madrid incognito (135). Yet this kind of narrative–dispositive correspondence does not extend as deep as the structural level of the narrative.

While attendance at the king's chapel is a moderately significant event, and also coincides with the beginning of the traveling duo's transition out of the bourgeois incognito phase of their travels. For both reasons, it makes for an interesting dispositive transition, but it remains insufficiently significant to constitute the beginning of a new narrative unit. On the contrary, attending services at the king's chapel is one of several events that make up the last of five narrative episodes that make up the second narrative subunit of the novel's third major narrative unit. The progression of narrative units is based on the evolving relationship between Renoncour and Rosemont, not on the plot *per se*. The first subunit contains an account of the journey from France to Spain, during which Rosemont does not resist his tutor's authority at all. The second subunit—the last of the third major narrative unit—relates the bourgeois phase of the duo's sojourn in

Spain, and the beginnings of Rosemont's assertions of independence, which begin to gather more steam as the fourth major unit begins.

The relation between narrative and dispositive units is equally complex in books seven and eight, which, roughly speaking, constitute the fourth major narrative unit. This fourth major narrative unit consists of an account of Rosemont's relationship with his new mistress, Diana de Velez (139-79). The transition between the third and fourth major units echoes the structure of the first installment, in which the transition from the first major narrative unit to the second hinged on the young protagonist's entrance into adult life. Just as the narrative structure of the first installment reflected Renoncour's increasing responsibility for his own actions, the narrative units of the second installment reflect Rosemont's increasing resistance to his tutor's authority. Whereas before falling in love, Rosemont had never knowingly gone against Renoncour's wishes, his entrance into adult life corresponds with the birth of his love for Diana, which incites him to oppose his tutor's will with ever-increasing vigor. This major narrative unit corresponds roughly to the seventh and eighth books taken together, but as with the fourth major unit the correspondence is imperfect: the major unit encompasses most of both books but not all of either. The seventh book relates Rosemont's first experiences at a royal court and the beginning of his first love; the transition between the seventh and eighth books coincides with a transitional moment in his affair, when he requests paternal permission to marry his paramour despite their social inequality (154). This transition marks the end of the first narrative subunit of the fourth major narrative unit, and the eighth book continues with the sudden arrival of an old schoolmate of Rosemont's named Brissant, who

provides the young marquis with assistance and encouragement in advancing his amorous intrigue (155-83). Although the beginning of the eighth book coincides with a narratively significant event, namely the appearance of Brissant, the narrative transition corresponding to that event is a relatively minor one; it separates the fourth major unit's first subunit, relating the first phase of Rosemont's relationship with Diana (139-54), from its second subunit, Brissant's backstory (155-60). Furthermore, the second narrative subunit itself serves as a narrative structural buffer, as it separates the first phase of Rosemont's relationship with Diana, in which Rosemont resists growing temptation to stray from his tutor's guidance, from the second phase of that relationship, in which in which the young marquis starts to overtly defy his tutor's authority (139-54, 160-78).

*Narrative–Dispositive Interaction at the Diegetic–Metadiegetic Interface as Manifested by Transitions Between Installments*

The relationship between the installments is a textual manifestation of the vicissitudes of publication. It is important to recall that installments ultimately belong to the dispositive structural system, but that they interact with the narrative structural system in ways that are both shaped by the vicissitudes of publication and subject to the author's control. The installments are published at specific times in both the diegetic universe and in the world of the reader, just as the text was written at specific times by both the fictional author, Renoncour, and the real-world author, Prévost. Although the second and third installments can be seen as forming a semi-independent entity—i.e. Renoncour's second career—that when combined with another semi-independent entity—i.e. Renoncour's first career—forms the “whole” of the main body of the *Mémoires*, the

work's dispositive structure as well as elements from within the diegesis contest the idea of the *Mémoires* as a bipartite entity.

The Origin of the Second and Third Installments as Presented Within the Diegesis Through Narratorial Meta-Commentary and Pseudo-Editorial Commentary

The mere fact that the novel was published in three installments rather than two brings the bipartite conception of the work into question, as do certain remarks made by Renoncour regarding how he wrote, edited, and published his memoirs. Since Jean Sgard's trailblazing efforts, using clues of this type to better understand the genesis of Prévost's work has played an important role in Prévost scholarship, but they have yet to be employed in clarifying the relationship between the novel's three installments. When discussing the relationships between installments, we face a difficulty similar to one Prévost must have encountered in the process of writing and publishing his novel: how to reconcile the place of installments in the diegetical world with the facts of their publication in the world of the reader. The dispositive–narrative structural interface provides the answer in both cases, as becomes apparent in the case of the relationships between the second and third installment and between the second two installments together and the first installment.

Jean Sgard appears to assume that from the point of view of the diegesis the text was all written at more or less the same time, but as he interprets the text to determine when the composition occurred, he discovers conflicting evidence, and he uses this evidence to argue in favor of Prévost's work being unified not in plot but in theme. However accurate his deductions, Sgard is more interested in determining when *Prévost* wrote the *Mémoires*, than in determining when *Renoncour* wrote his memoirs. Thus,

although Sgard notes that the mention of Renoncour's death in the “Lettre de l’Éditeur” that precedes the third installment indicates that the last two volumes are posthumous (Sgard v. 8 14), he fails to take into account how the way Renoncour describes his attitude toward writing his memoirs should influence our understanding of the chronology of their origin within the diegesis. For instance, nothing in the text of the first installment suggests that at the moment of completing that portion of his memoirs, Renoncour envisaged continuing them.

Moreover, although it is true, as Sgard notes, that there is no time in the chronology for the three years that Renoncour claims to have spent in retirement between his daughter's marriage, which cannot have taken place earlier than 1715, and his emergence from retirement, which cannot happen later than 1715, Sgard fails to note that there must have been three periods of writing: one during Renoncour's initial retirement (the “three years” of 1715), and two during his second and final retirement. Otherwise, the reference Renoncour makes at the beginning of the third installment to the success of the first two parts of his memoirs—“On m’apprend que le public a fait un accueil favorable aux deux premières parties de mon histoire” (229)—would make no sense. The second installment must have been written after the first because the first contains no indication of a continuation to follow, which means that it was composed some time between 1715 and 1728, most likely in 1719, which is when Sgard situates the entire composition of the *Mémoires*.

While the third and fourth installments both deal with Renoncour’s second career, in which he serves as Rosemont’s tutor, which means that there is more narrative

continuity across the boundary between the third and the fourth installments than between the first installment, which recounts Renoncour's first career, and the second which begins the story of his second, Renoncour must nevertheless have composed the third installment separately from the second. As he states, his friends urged him to consider the public's positive reaction "aux deux premières parties de mon histoire" as "un motif qui doit me porter à *reprendre* la plume, et à *continuer* l'ouvrage" (229 emphasis added). This statement implies that Renoncour had composed the first two installments by November 1729, when the second installment was published, but not the third, because it was the success of *both* installments that moved his friends to encourage him to *begin* writing again, to *continue* his memoirs. This means that Renoncour must have composed the third installment, roughly, sometime during the last year or so of his life. If Renoncour was dead when the third installment was published in April of 1731, presumably he must have died long enough previously for his text to be set and printed, and he couldn't have begun until enough time had passed after the publication of the second installment for its success to become apparent, which places the composition of the third installment some time in 1730. While the installments have a real presence in both the diegetical world and the world of the reader, we can better understand the novel as a creative work if we distinguish the *presence* of an installment from its function within the dispositive and narrative structural systems.

#### Narrative–Dispositive Interaction as an Element of the Internal Paratext at the Transition Between the Second and Third Installments

The origin of the third installment, as presented within the diegesis, and therefore its relationship to the second installment, is complex. Apparently, Renoncour must have

written the text that was eventually published as the third installment after the publication of the second installment, since the success of the latter was part of his friends' encouragement to continue writing (as discussed above): "On m'apprend que le Public a fait un accueil favorable aux deux premières parties de mon Histoire. [...] Mes Amis veulent me le faire regarder comme un motif, qui doit me porter à reprendre la plume, et à continuer l'ouvrage." (229). However, given the narrative continuity of the two installments (which will be analyzed below), why explain the gap? In the end, Renoncour was convinced to prepare the third installment, presumably for the purpose of publication, despite his fear of the danger it could pose for a "lecteur inconsidéré."<sup>54</sup> Although it is clear that Renoncour cannot have begun preparing the manuscript of the third installment before the publication of the second, his reference to a "journal" complicates matters somewhat. The "journal" is presumably an unedited text written at the time of the events in question. The existence of this journal and Renoncour's statement about preparing the manuscript are not enough, even taken together, to be certain that the published text is a "finished" work. It is impossible to know how far Renoncour got in the process of preparing his manuscript. The only certain thing, as far as can be determined from the text of the 1756 edition, is that he must also have thought better of his decision to publish the third installment some time after writing his

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<sup>54</sup> Renoncour emphasizes how close he came to destroying his writing to protect such readers: "Cette pensée a fait tant d'impression sur moi, qu'il s'en est peu fallu, dans certains moments, que je n'aie jeté au feu le *Journal de mes derniers voyages*, et que je ne me sois ainsi délivré de toutes les instances qu'on m'a faites de les donner au Public. Cependant, j'ai souffert, à la fin, qu'elles aient prévalu sur mes scrupules. [...] J'ai cru devoir rendre ce petit compte au public, de la disposition où je me trouve en commençant de mettre en ordre *cette dernière partie de mes Mémoires*. Je lui demande la continuation de son indulgence pour le reste de mes aventures." (229 emphasis added).

description of his intentions regarding the continuation of his memoirs, since the third installment is presented as posthumous.

However, earlier editions suggest that Renoncour had finished the revision before his death. In those editions, he concludes his memoirs by explaining that the unwanted notoriety he received from the publication of the two previous parts had led him to the decision not to publish the third one during his lifetime:

Il ne me reste à ajouter à ces Mémoires qu'un souhait en faveur de mon ouvrage; puisse-t-il être lu du public avec des vues aussi innocentes que les miennes sont en écrivant ! Je ne le destine point à être imprimé avant ma mort. La publication des deux premières parties n'a que trop inspiré l'envie de me connaître ; et soit curiosité, soit compassion pour mes infortunes, elle m'a attiré la visite de quantité de personnes étrangères. Je ne veux plus que cette curiosité se réveille. d'ailleurs je doute que cette dernière partie puisse être imprimée en France avec l'approbation des inquisiteurs de la presse." (477)

The absence of this explanation in Renoncour's own words from later editions is somewhat puzzling, as it leaves the responsibility for explaining the third installment's delay to the editor, as seen in the introductory letter. This modification somewhat reduces the emphasis on the delay between the installments, which may serve the purpose of increasing the reader's impression of the unity of the *Mémoires* at its conclusion, when a reader's final estimation of the work is perhaps most likely to be shaped. The segmentary esthetic would suggest that purpose of this insistence on the discontinuity between the installments is to heighten the esthetic pleasure of crossing a major dispositive boundary. We can recognize Prévost's efforts to heighten that pleasure as an element of the segmentary esthetic, rather than as signs of an ad-hoc poetics. Now, such a recognition need not mean that we consider the transition between the first and second installments to



be “necessary” by the modern definition. Rather we must interrogate our very conception of what the very idea of artistic “necessity” means in the first place.

*Dynamic Structural Tension in the Third Installment: Transitioning from Protection of Possible Continuation to Fostering Provisional Conclusion*

Minimizing Dispositive Disjunction: The Beginning of the Third Installment as an Element of an Important Nexus of Narrative Structural Transition

The third installment of *Mémoires* begins with a liminal text, as do both the first and second installments, and in it we can see the interface between the installment's diegetical role and its function in the dispositive-narrative structural matrix. However, the *lettre de l'éditeur* that prefaces the third installment has less to do with narrative structure than with dispositive structure—in contrast to the *avant-propos* that precedes the second installment, which constitutes an independent unit in both structural systems. Because the significant dispositive disjunction that comes with a break between two installments needs to be grounded within the diegetical framework of the *Mémoires*, the editor begins by explaining the delay. The explanation itself is ingenious, but while it accounts for the gap between the second and third installments it obscures the narrative continuity that lies beneath the dispositive discontinuity.<sup>55</sup> The third installment takes up the narrative thread

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<sup>55</sup> It reads as follows: “La mort de M. le marquis de..., l’illustre sujet de ces Mémoires, me procure la liberté d’en donner *la dernière partie* au public. Il l’a tenue renfermée sous la clef jusqu’à la fin de sa vie [...]. Je n’ai pu m’empêcher, plusieurs fois, de lui reprocher agréablement le scrupule qui lui faisait dérober *la conclusion de son ouvrage* au public, après avoir souffert que *les deux premières parties* fussent imprimées il y a deux ans. Il se défendait par deux raisons : la première était la différence qu’il prétendait trouver entre *ce dernier ouvrage* et *les premiers* : je suis excusable, disait-il, de m’être montré moi-même à découvert, et d’avoir révélé mes malheurs et mes faiblesses ; mais le serais-je de mettre au jour les irrégularités de la conduite d’autrui ? [...] Monsieur le marquis ajoutait à cette raison qu’il avait sujet de se repentir de la complaisance qui l’avait fait consentir à l’édition de *ses deux premiers volumes* ; elle lui avait attiré une multitude de visites et de compliments [...]. Quelque force que ces deux raisons pussent avoir par rapport à lui, la seconde tombe par sa mort, et l’autre ne fait pas sur mon esprit autant d’impression qu’elle en faisait sur le sien. Je lui passe le principe sur lequel il raisonnait, étant persuadé, comme lui, qu’il y a des fautes qu’on ne peut révéler innocemment, parce que leur manifestation entraîne le scandale : mais je ne

exactly where it left off at the end of the second installment. It appears that there is a strong editorial desire to emphasize the separateness of the three parts of the *Mémoires*, but without undermining the unity of the work as a whole. Because of the deep narrative continuity between the second and third installments, the editor must heighten the disjunction in order to explain the gap in publication. The transition between installments is very interesting for this reason, because of the coincidence of a relatively minor narrative transition—between two subunits of the same major unit—and a major dispositive transition—between two separate installments. As the end of the second installment approaches, Renoncour alludes to continued publication:

La bonne grâce de Memiscès & sa beauté furent admirées de tout le monde. Monsieur le duc de... qui s'aperçut lui-même de la tendre amitié que le marquis lui portait, loua son bon goût dans cet attachement. On en verra *les suites* dans la dernière *partie* de nos voyages, si les faits particuliers dont elle sera remplie me permettent de la donner au public. Je finirai *celle-ci* par le triste accident qui vint empoisonner notre satisfaction au moment que nous y pensions le moins, et qui me força encore une fois de reconnaître que ce n'est point dans ce misérable monde qu'il faut espérer des plaisirs purs et solides. (218 emphasis added)

This hedging is important because it simultaneously lays the groundwork for sequels and provides a means for maintaining the fiction of the text's provenance should those sequels never materialize: rather than causing the reader to suspect that the sequels fail to materialize because of lack of demand or some other factor relating to the pragmatic

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saurais mettre dans ce rang les aventures de mylady R..., de mylady Ar..., de M. Law, de la princesse de R..., etc. Il me semble au contraire que l'exemple d'une mauvaise conduite peut devenir utile ; les vices de cette nature servent pour ainsi dire de fanal à la vertu [...]. [¶] Je m'imagine donc qu'en imprimant cette *Suite des Mémoires*, on fera un présent agréable et avantageux au Public. On y trouvera plus de variété, que dans *les deux Parties précédentes*. Le stile n'en est pas moins vif, ni moins soutenu. La morale y est aussi pure et plus fréquente, les sentiments aussi tendres, et le fond de la narration aussi intéressant." (227 emphasis added)

realities of the book trade, it remains possible to keep the causes within the world of the diegesis. By speaking of both *suites*, meaning *consequences* in this instance, and the upcoming *partie* in the same breath, Renoncour also furthers the false conflation, in the mind of the reader, of the narrative structure and the dispositive structure by implying that the causal momentum of the narrative moves in lockstep with its publication schedule. This discrepancy allows the dispositive division to heighten the reader's anticipation without making the narrative progression predictable, as it would be if it were always synchronized with the novel's dispositive structure.

The dynamic tension between the beginning of the fifth major unit and the boundary between the second and third installments indicates another important structural nexus. In this major narrative unit, which comprises four subunits and bridges the dispositive boundary between the second and third installments, Rosemont becomes increasingly independent as he recovers from his first love affair, with Diana de Velez, and the progression of his second love affair, which happens to be with Renoncour's niece, inspires him to defy his tutor's authority more and more. There are several levels of near-correspondence between narrative and dispositive units at work. Starting with the widest scale, there is the rough correspondence between the entire fifth major unit and the third installment. However, this correspondence is rendered imperfect by the fact that the fifth major unit begins significantly prior to the third installment (179, 227). Because of this mismatch it is impossible to dismiss Rosemont's new relationship as a mere pretext for extending the memoirs by a third installment, because the plot that comes to dominate the new installment begins at the end of the second one.

At one finer level of structural detail there is a near correspondence between the fifth major unit's first subunit and the ninth book (which has the same boundaries as the fourth volume). This near correspondence is complicated by the fact that the first subunit begins prior to the beginning of the ninth book (179, 185) and ends before the ninth book does (209, 225). This interaction creates a localized alloy of the narrative and dispositive structures: just as the fifth major unit cannot be seen as the product of a radical shift between the second and third installments because it begins slightly before the dispositive frontier that divides the two, the ninth book cannot be seen as a transitional unit disconnected from the previous narrative material because the narrative unit that occupies most of its pages begins before its starting dispositive boundary and because it contains the beginning of a narrative unit that extends beyond its conclusion into the next installment. Thus, while the frontiers of the ninth book are not arbitrary—the book begins when Renoncour and Rosemont leave Madrid to travel to Lisbon and ends with the sudden death of Renoncour's uncle—it does not itself constitute a coherent narrative unit. The moments of transition that define the book's frontiers are relatively minor, and the intervening material belongs to two separate narrative subunits. The first relates Rosemont's initial recovery from the heartache of his first love's tragic death, while the second relates the transformation of that recovery into a new love affair. Moreover, the boundaries of these subunits employ narrative segmentation techniques whereas the dispositive units in question do not.

The segmentary esthetic is in evidence in the first narrative episode of the first narrative subunit of the fifth major narrative unit, which recounts the efforts of

Renoncour and the rest of Rosemont's social circle in Madrid to bring the young marquis back from the brink of despair, and then to return him to his normal self. The episode culminates with Renoncour's attempt to cheer up his young ward by taking him to visit a monastery, many of whose residents turn out to be caricatures of various monastic stereotypes (180-82). The second episode recounts the following phase of Rosemont's recovery, which requires leaving Spain for the next stop along Rosemont's "Grand Tour" itinerary (183-88). This episode is anchored by a single narrative element that stands for the whole of the journey from Madrid to Lisbon by virtue of its dissimilarity from the unremarkable character of the rest of the voyage. Similarly, the transitions into and out of the story of the Portuguese prince show signs of the segmentary esthetic: the introduction to the following narrative subunit, in which Rosemont falls in love with Nadine—namely Rosemont's unexplained visual attraction to a putatively male Turk, Memiscès, who turns out to be Renoncour's niece (198)—precedes the last episode of the previous one, in which the Portuguese prince tells his story. Thus, the final episode of one subunit and the initial episode of the following unit are interlocked.

Thematic Alternation as Narrative Structure: Rosemont's Independence and Renoncour's Ineffectiveness Increase in Parallel in the Fifth Major Narrative Unit

The trend of Rosemont's increasing independence becomes even more pronounced with the fifth major unit's second subunit, which recounts the beginnings of Rosemont's love affair with Nadine, and the attendant covert stirrings of independence in the young man (179-359).<sup>56</sup> Using Rosemont's love relationships as a basis for

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<sup>56</sup> This subunit consists of two main parts: the first part begins when Rosemont first meets Nadine, disguised as a young man under the name Memiscès, and continues until Renoncour and Rosemont leave

determination, one could argue that this narrative subunit lasts all the way to the end of the third installment, because Rosemont's relationship with Nadine does not reach an equilibrium until that point. However, based on spatial transitions and quantitative analysis the English period of Rosemont's travels could also be seen as an independent major unit.<sup>57</sup> However, comparative analysis of the narrative and dispositive structural boundaries in this portion of the text reveals that the voyage to England must ultimately be counted as an episode within the story of Rosemont's love for Nadine, rather than as a major unit of its own. While in England, Rosemont remains significantly affected by his separation from Nadine, and aspects of their relationship left in suspense during his absence begin to resolve themselves upon his return. Ultimately, the structure of the fifth major narrative unit is ultimately based on a thematic alternation between units. At first, the alternation is between the episodes that chiefly concern the development of Rosemont's love for Nadine, and those that advance the sightseeing plot.<sup>58</sup> As Rosemont

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for England (210-30); the second part, which covers the time Renoncour and Rosemont spend in England (230-74), is itself composed of three segments, comprising a London segment (231-52), a Tunbridge segment (252-62), and a countryside segment (263-68); the English section also includes short introductory and concluding sections (229-30, 268-74).

<sup>57</sup> This portion of the novel was even published in a stand-alone scholarly edition: Roberston, Mysie E. I., ed. *Mémoires et aventures [sic] d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde, Tome V: Séjour en Angleterre*. 2nd ed. Paris: Champion, 1934.

<sup>58</sup> The first episode of this subunit covers the period during which both Renoncour and Rosemont know Nadine only as a young man named Memiscès, the identity she has assumed for safety during travel (210-13). Renoncour's discovery of his family connection with Memiscès, which he prefaces with a disclaimer on verisimilitude (212-13), brings on the second episode, which consists of a period of familial contentment that ends only with the unexpected death of Renoncour's uncle (213-25). This episode is marked off at the beginning by the story of Amulem's life since Renoncour's departure from Turkey (216-18), and, in the 1756 edition, at the end, by the story behind the tragic fate of Renoncour's uncle (218-25). The third episode of the second subunit concludes the subunit's mainland segment (229-30). The episode is extremely brief, as its main purpose is to provide a transition from the first part of the subunit, which took place on the mainland, to the second part, which will unfold on the Island of Great Britain. Indeed, were it not for the intervention of the dispositive boundary between the installments, this episode could more

and his tutor both become more comfortable in English society, the latter begins to return to his old, sentimental ways, eventually becoming romantically involved with an Englishwoman despite his protestations of being insensitive to amorous passions, at which point the second love plot becomes part of the system of thematic alternation that drives the simultaneous progress of the plot and the underlying narrative evolution that ultimately brings the novel to its conclusion.

This more complex alternation is evident in the in the contrast between the sixth, seventh, and eighth episodes of this subunit. The sixth episode covers two simultaneous developments: the initial phase of Renoncour's intrigue with Lady R..., and the second phase of Rosemont's intrigue with Nadine, during which Renoncour finds out that Rosemont has uncovered the true identity of "Memiscès." The episode begins with Renoncour learning the backstory of the noblewoman with whom he is soon to become romantically entangled despite his best intentions, after which he returns to his lodgings to find the young marquis busily writing what turns out to be only the latest in a series of love letters that he has been secretly sending to Nadine since his arrival in London (233). It is clear that Rosemont has reached new levels of disobedience, as he has not only kept his letters secret from his tutor, but has disguised their addressee by enclosing them inside letters to the warden of Renoncour's daughter's estate, where Nadine has been staying; he has even kept his knowledge of Nadine's true identity secret from Renoncour's daughter by addressing the true letters to "M. Memiscès" (235). The episode

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properly have been considered part of the previous section or even the previous episode itself—the addition of the uncle's story in later editions fortifies this boundary, however, by providing stronger segmentation.

ends with the covert departure of Lady R..., who leaves England to take refuge with Renoncour's daughter in France (233-40).<sup>59</sup> The seventh episode marks a return to political matters and concludes with a discussion between tutor and tutee about methods for maintaining one's integrity as a courtier (242). In the eighth episode, Renoncour gives his tutee an opportunity to confess his illicit love, which he fails to do. The attentive reader will note the irony, given the recent lengthy discussion about integrity and Renoncour's unwillingness to admit to himself or anyone else that he has once again allowed himself to become vulnerable to amorous influence.

The alternating narrative structure continues as a new phase in the relationship between Renoncour and Rosemont begins in the third subunit, in which the pupil begins to rebel openly against his tutor, as physical proximity between the two men and the women with whom they are romantically involved begins to force Renoncour to abandon his old behind-the-scenes methods of controlling Rosemont in favor of more concrete action. As was the case in the previous subunit, the two love plots enter new phases at the same time. In the first episode, we read about the beginning of the third phase of the love affair between Rosemont and Nadine and the second phase of Renoncour's intrigue with

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<sup>59</sup> Renoncour refers to his intrigue with Lady R... as an *histoire* on two occasions as the end of this part of the episode approaches. First, when making a moral disclaimer before the climax of affair: "Avant que d'achever le *récit* de cette étrange *histoire*, je dois prévenir le lecteur sur quelques circonstances qui pourront l'étonner" (236 emphasis added). Second, after Lady R... leaves for France, Renoncour visits the French ambassador, who got him involved in the first place by suggesting to Lady R... that she ask him for help, the ambassador "souhaita d'être informé de toutes les circonstances de cette *histoire*" (240 emphasis added). This narrative transfer initiates the beginning of the next episode, whose beginning is underscored by the spread of the story: "Cette *nouvelle* ne tarda point à devenir publique" (240 emphasis added). The transition is also marked by prolepsis: "La *suite* de cette *aventure* se développera, avant la fin de ces Mémoires." (240 emphasis added).



Lady R... (274-78).<sup>60</sup> In the third episode, Renoncour attempts to use covert methods to manage Rosemont's behavior, but his efforts are frustrated when Rosemont kills one of Nadine's suitors in a duel (282-83). The two men then take refuge in a monastery, where Renoncour tells Rosemont the story of his family. This important instance of narrative segmentation begins to bring the end of the narrative into sight by recalling the beginning, while simultaneously revealing that the young man is more independent now than ever: "Son esprit s'était si formé dans nos voyages que je crus devoir m'expliquer avec lui, comme j'aurais fait avec une personne d'un âge plus avancé" (285). The fourth episode continues to bring the beginning of Renoncour's narrative into relationship with its approaching end when Renoncour recounts the misfortunes of his life to Lady R... to explain why he is unable to marry her (290).<sup>61</sup> Renoncour's and Rosemont's amorous intrigues become intertwined in the sixth episode when Lady R... takes an interest in Rosemont's relationship with Nadine, leading to her own tragic death and Renoncour's departure from the service of Rosemont's father, the duke (295-316).<sup>62</sup> Thus we can see that although the narrative structure of this subunit retains the pattern of alternation, it

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<sup>60</sup> Before this new phase can fully develop, the second episode begins: the Duke of Orléans summons Renoncour to Paris to report on his travels to England, although he also manages to make some social calls, including, notably, the melancholy Portuguese prince with whom he and Rosemont had travelled previously (278-81).

<sup>61</sup> The fifth episode recounts the time Renoncour spends in Paris with Amulem to satisfy his brother-in-law's desire to spend some time in Paris before returning definitively to Turkey (291).

<sup>62</sup> The seventh episode relates Renoncour's efforts to deal with his daughter's extortion through threat of arson (316). The eighth episode recounts Rosemont's elopement with Nadine, accompanied by his Nadine's brother Muleid and his lover Thérèse (317-29). The dispersal of the group ends both the episode and the book: "Cette jeune créature avait à peine seize ans. Son père l'avait abandonnée, comme j'ai dit, à sa destinée. Je ne sais si cette indifférence sera approuvée de tous mes lecteurs." (150). By invoking the reader's role in judging the behavior of the individuals in his narrative, Renoncour brings the reader's attention to the transition between narrative units.

becomes less regular, as sometimes the opposition is between the two love intrigues together and the external factors that move the narrative forward, while at other times the two men's romantic developments themselves are set in contrast to each other by narrative structural boundaries.

Narrative–Dispositive Mismatch and Coincidence as Structural Devices in the Fifth Major Narrative Unit: When the “How” is More Important than the “What”

Just as cooperation and tension between dispositive and narrative structures serve to open up possibilities for continuation, as shown in the preceding analysis of the first installment of the *Mémoires*, the same interactions can contribute to bringing about a work's conclusion—even if such a conclusion must necessarily remain provisional, as will become clear through analysis of the novel's last major narrative installment. An interesting characteristic of this narrative unit, which begins as the transition between the second and third installments is approaching and continues until the end of the third installment, is that the actual narrative content is fairly small in comparison to the number of pages. This could be seen as Prévost's effort to stretch out an insufficient plot to the required length, or it could be seen as Prévost's effort to provide unity to the whole of the novel. However, both of these interpretations miss the mark at least partially. Moreover, the first is cynical and the second buys into the nineteenth-century esthetic of completeness. While it is impossible to determine definitively whether either or both of the hypothesized motivations played some part in the composition of the end of *Mémoires*, it is certain that the inserted tales serve as speed-bumps, bringing the reader gently to the conclusion of the novel.

There are several examples of tension and cooperation between narrative and dispositive structure in this concluding major narrative unit, which is the longest of all five. In some cases, there is complete coincidence between the narrative and dispositive boundaries, but the narrative boundary is much less significant than the dispositive one. Significant examples of narrative–dispositive cooperation occur in both the second subunit, which centers on the beginnings of Rosemont’s covert efforts to achieve independence as a result of the first phase of his love affair with Renoncour’s niece, and the third subunit, relating Rosemont’s first open resistance against his tutor’s authority, which is intertwined with Renoncour’s renewed vulnerability to amorous feelings and the deepening of Rosemont’s attachment to Nadine. While the result of perfect coincidence between narrative and dispositive boundaries of differing levels of significance is increased suspense and decreased speed, slight misalignment of narrative and dispositive boundaries are just as significant. Three prominent instances of near coincidence occur in the novel’s last major narrative unit.

#### Asynchronous Narrative and Dispositive Boundaries

Narrative–dispositive misalignment occurs in connection to the transition from the second subunit, in which Rosemont’s love for Nadine leads him to rebel secretly against his tutor’s authority, into the third subunit, in which the pupil begins to rebel openly, and the nearest dispositive boundary, which separates the eleventh and twelfth books. With the end of Renoncour’s and Rosemont’s stay in Tunbridge, the end of the second subunit is approaching, but dispositive and narrative structure come together in a way that retards the localized impression of narrative progress while simultaneously enhancing the impression of the overarching narrative nearing its conclusion. Having

already left Tunbridge, Renoncour and Rosemont encounter the duchess of Marlborough while on the way back to London, who insists that they return with her to Tunbridge (261). Rosemont spends the remaining time in Tunbridge gambling with the duchess, despite Renoncour's admonitions, which provides Renoncour an opportunity to teach his young charge a lesson about the evils of immoderate passion, both negative and positive, that result from gambling (262). The end of this second stay in Tunbridge, which is accompanied by a proleptic commentary regarding the later reappearance of some Tunbridge acquaintances, marks the transition between the thirteenth and fourteenth episodes of the subunit and coincides exactly with the transition between the tenth and eleventh books. The return to Tunbridge thus acts as a coda to the Tunbridge section, and adds narrative significance to the dispositive transition: the first departure was planned, while the second comes from Rosemont's gradual acceptance of Renoncour's advice, showing that while his independence is growing, he still acknowledges his tutor's authority, even if he does so reluctantly. By using a backward narrative device to move the evolution of his characters forward, Prévost manages to increase the reader's impression of immersion in a dynamic narrative, and by locating that transitional narrative device at a dispositive boundary he simultaneously maximizes the opportunities for the reader to experience unhurried, yet marked narrative transitions between pleausurably contrasting narrative segments.

While in the second subunit the main instance of narrative–dispositive cooperation highlights Rosemont's evolving character, the most prominent such instance in the third subunit—which deals with Rosemont's first open resistance and Renoncour's

first renewed vulnerability to amorous influence—hinges on Renoncour's increasing blindness to the true impact of his behavior on others. The climax of Renoncour's love intrigue with Lady R... comes at the transition between the fourth and fifth episodes of the third subunit, which coincides exactly with the transition between the twelfth and thirteenth books, which is also the boundary between the fifth and sixth volumes. The fourth episode is structured around a relayed narrative: Renoncour learns from his daughter that when the news that Lady R...'s husband had died arrived, Lady R... had asked Renoncour's daughter whether she thought her father would be willing to marry her now, and that her negative response had put Lady R... into a depression (287). The episode comes to a close with a double narrative segmentation: first, without going into specific detail, Renoncour recounts the misfortunes of his life to Lady R... to explain why he is unable to marry her (289-90). Renoncour and Lady R... manage to come to an understanding about the future, which involves Lady R...'s adoption of Nadine as her daughter, but Renoncour hints to his reader that Lady R...'s adoption of Nadine will turn out badly (290). This coincidence of a moderately important narrative transition with a doubly-significant dispositive transition heightens the suspense at a moment of relatively slow moment of character evolution, increasing the reader's anticipation of the coming narrative crisis at a moment in the narration when little is actually happening to directly hasten the arrival of the crisis.

#### Synchronized Dispositive and Narrative Transitions of Unequal Rank

The misalignment between the beginning of the twelfth book and the beginning of the third subunit is significant because the dispositive boundary in question is also the beginning of a new volume, which happens to be the last of the novel. The portion of the

second subunit that extends beyond the dispositive boundary consists mostly of a rhapsody on the virtues of English society, which encourages the reader to reflect on the previous subunit, most of which has taken place in England, thus underlining the importance of the narrative transition that is about to take place (273-74).<sup>63</sup> However, this invitation to reflection elides the distinction between the first two narrative subunits of the novel's concluding major narrative unit. This technique has the effect of heightening the sense of narrative progress through the association of multiple narrative transitional factors with an important dispositive boundary, while at the same time building suspense by insisting on the continuity of the two narrative units despite the important transitions that are taking place. This portion of the text also forms an independent narrative episode whose opening boundary coincides with the beginning of the new book and volume. This juxtaposition of coincidence and near coincidence between the narrative and dispositive structures has the further effect of enhancing the impression of localized narrative acceleration. The conjunction of these seemingly opposite techniques shows the narrative to be a composite formed of multiple different kinds of parts, which themselves combine with each other in various ways to form various interlocking and overlapping wholes, each of which reflects a different aspect of the evolving narrative.

Unlike the end of the fourth episode of the third subunit, which coincides with the beginning of the fourteenth book and the sixth volumes, as described above, the transition between the sixth and seventh episodes of the third subunit is slightly out of alignment

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<sup>63</sup> It is easy to underestimate the significance of the two pages by which the second subunit extends into the twelfth book in the Grenoble edition, but each page of that edition is equivalent to multiple pages of an eighteenth-century edition.

with the transition between the thirteenth and fourteenth books. The portion of the episode that extends beyond the dispositive boundary consists of Renoncour's reflections on his decision to give up his authority over Rosemont (315-16). This near coincidence de-emphasizes the finality of the severing of Renoncour's ties with Rosemont, which was the climax of the sixth episode. The seventh episode is quite brief, occupying the equivalent of one full page in the Grenoble edition. However, it appears in two parts. Renoncour hears the news that his daughter is being extorted with the threat of arson after definitively giving up his position as Rosemont's tutor, but before taking what he believes will be his final leave of Rosemont and his father, the duke (313). After saying his goodbyes, Renoncour gives his former pupil some final advice (313-14). The sixth episode then continues beyond the dispositive boundary, concluding with an account of the retrospective reflections that occupy Renoncour's thoughts as he travels to his daughter's estate to deal with the arsonist, which summarize the entirety of his life's narrative (315-16). The seventh episode then begins again in medias res: "tout le monde y était dans l'alarme, somme si la flamme eût déjà été appliqué aux murs de la maison" (316). Thus, the end of the sixth episode and the beginning of the seventh are intertwined. Coupled with the slight misalignment of the nearby narrative and dispositive boundaries, this divided, yet compact narrative episode serves to camouflage the accelerating approach of the narrative's conclusion.

#### Synchronized Dispositive and Narrative Transitions of Equal Rank

In contrast to the dynamic tension and mismatched coincidence of the narrative and dispositive structural systems in the last major narrative unit of the novel, which brought the narrative toward its conclusion while preserving the work's segmentary

esthetic, the synchronization of the novel's final narrative boundary and its final dispositive boundary (prior to the publication of *Manon Lescaut*) shows that complete coincidence of equally-significant narrative and dispositive units is a powerful tool for enhancing the reader's impression of impending finality while bringing about the conclusion of the work. The concluding subunit begins, along with the last book, at the conclusion of a transitional period of rest and reflection: "Lorsque j'eus pris quelques jours de repos pour me remettre de l'agitation de tant d'événements, je commençai à réfléchir sur ma propre condition" (331). After the climactic confrontations that concluded the previous subunit resolved the question of Renoncour's authority over Rosemont, the final subunit focuses on Renoncour's efforts to order his affairs and those of his family, so as to enable himself to retire definitively. After unsuccessfully attempting to dissuade his niece from entering a convent, Renoncour bids her farewell and returns to his daughter's estate to inform her of his own intention to retire to a monastery and to tell her about his most recent travels in a narration that ends the first episode.

The following episodes alternate between Renoncour's efforts to implement his definitive retirement plans and interruptions that delay those efforts. The introduction to the second episode is quite clear in this respect: "Cependant, il se présenta deux légers obstacles, qui reculèrent de quelques semaines l'exécution de mon dessein" (334).<sup>64</sup> The

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<sup>64</sup> The first is the story of the Princesse de R... (334-40); "Cette *histoire* a fait trop de bruit dans la province pour être ignorée de personne." (340 emphasis added). The second incident occurs as Renoncour is on his way from his daughter's estate to the abbey where he plans to retire: "Mon gendre m'accompagna sur la route. Ce fut lui qui fit naître le second incident dont j'ai parlé, qui retarda encore de quelques jours le moment de ma retraite." (341). This incident is an encounter with a Flemish female thief, who tells her



third episode juxtaposes the beginning of what Renoncour calls “le temps de mon repos et de la paix de mon cœur” (346), and his entanglement with the secular world, which comes with his failure to prevent his niece from taking religious vows. The fourth episode recounts the beginning of Renoncour’s definitive retirement, which is set off from the rest of the narration by self-segmentation:

Mes jours se sont passés, *depuis ce temps-là*, dans une parfaite tranquillité. Je suis avec constance l’ordre de mes exercices. Les personnes avec lesquelles je vis supportent charitablement mes faiblesses et les infirmités de mon âge. La mort, que j’attends *à toute heure*, ne me cause nul effroi ; je la regarde comme le commencement d’une vie plus heureuse. *Chaque moment* qui m’en approche me paraît autant de gagné sur mes espérances. *Je compte les heures* avec une joie avide ; et mes sentiments changeront beaucoup, si je n’entends pas sonner volontiers la dernière. (352 emphasis added)

This episode, the final one of the novel prior to the publication of *Manon Lescaut*, closes with two exemplary stories of occasions when, despite living in retirement, Renoncour has opportunities to accomplish good works: “Le ciel permet que j’aie parfois l’occasion d’exercer de bonnes œuvres” (352). The first of these two stories, in which Renoncour convinces two young men not to duel each other, is quite brief, and is the last in the earlier editions of the text, which end with an exhortation that the *Mémoires* be read to good purpose (477). In later editions, a slightly lengthier story rounds out the episode. Unlike in the case of the two duelists, this time Renoncour himself is personally engaged (352). Just as happened with Rosemont, Renoncour’s tragic life story is the cause of his

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story after her identity is discovered (341-46). The episode ends as Renoncour passes along the woman’s story: “Etant arrivés à Paris, j’envoyai chercher un des directeurs de la Salpêtrière, à qui j’appris son *histoire*, après lui avoir fait promettre de ne se servir de cette connaissance que comme d’une bonne raison pour la tenir enfermée le reste de ses jours.” (346). The third episode relates Renoncour’s final farewell to the secular world, and is set off from the preceding narration by a description of life in the abbey (346-47).

involvement, as the new neighbors of the abbey become interested in him when they hear it from the prior at dinner (353). After multiple complications and an embedded narrative, Renoncour solves everyone's problems (353-59). Both versions of the ending use complete dispositive–narrative coincidence to bring the narrative to a conclusion that unites Renoncour's propensity toward helping others with his desire to leave the secular world behind. Even so, the very fact that it was possible to alter the structure of the narrative in this way demonstrates that the relationship between disposition and narration is malleable, and that neither is ever completely closed until enough time has passed that new publication norms preclude the possibility of a continuation within the framework of the same "work."

## Conclusion

It is difficult for a modern audience to interpret a work such as the *Mémoires* because our reactions to both its overarching structure and to its linear progression are conditioned by the double filter of nineteenth-century reactions to *ancien régime* esthetic norms and more recent reactions to those reactions. Our expectations are at odds with the reality of such a novel because of our unconscious assumption that the dispositive divisions of a prose narrative text should coincide with the points of articulation of the narrative, or that, if they do not, there should be a precise reason for the lack of correspondence, which should be part of an overarching authorial plan for shaping the narrative into a unified "work." As we have seen here, the *Mémoires* offer several scenarios of interaction between narration and disposition, which reveal the independence of the two structural systems. Minute analysis of the narrative structure of the first

installment of the *Mémoires* shows that the most significant narrative transition of the novel as it was first published derives from the narrator's gradual transformation from a passive subject into an active protagonist. By placing this transition significantly prior to the most notable dispositive boundary, which is occupied by a moment of high drama but low narrative structural significance, namely Renoncour's capture and enslavement, Prévost was laying the ground work for a possible future continuation. If the true points of articulation of the narrative structure are "hidden" from the reader, the author has more freedom to alter that structure.

This is not to say that novels such as the *Mémoires* were truly written in ignorance of their endings, as Marc Escola has suggested, or that Prévost could somehow have had perfect foreknowledge of the novel's second and third installments when he was writing the first one. Rather, attempts to determine to what degree the novel that Prévost ended up writing either conforms or fails to conform to Prévost's plan for it (if he had one) are ultimately unproductive for modern scholars. In the absence of further documentary evidence, any conclusions we may draw will remain forever provisional. However, using nothing but the text of the novel itself and knowledge of the novel's print history and the publication norms of the period, the methods I have outlined in this chapter have brought us to a deeper understanding of the one aspect of the work in which we can be sure Prévost's artistic talent is at work: determining the path from the beginning of the narrative to its end.

Accordingly, we need not regret that Prévost most likely did not have the developments of the second and third installments of the *Mémoires* in mind while he was

writing the first, as the lack of that knowledge did not prevent him from exercising his talents in a way that contemporary readers appreciated, and that modern critics can discern. It is also unnecessary for us to assume that even the entirety of the first installment was entirely planned out in advance, since while it is likely that Prévost did not know exactly how he intended to end the first installment, the esthetic norms of his time allowed him to proceed without knowing exactly how he was going to bring Renoncour from his childhood to his retirement. In fact, the same circular narrative structure can be observed in the first installment, taken as by itself, and in all four installments, taken together, and it is by maintaining that circular structure that Prévost is able to present them to his readers as “whole” narrative “works.” Accordingly, both ways of defining the borders of the “work” are equally valid according to the esthetic norms of his day, which suggests the extent of the differences between the attitudes of Prévost and his readers toward the relationship between part and whole and those of today. Thus, comparative dispositive–narrative analysis of the *Mémoires* suggests that while Prévost and his contemporaries could never know the exact circumstances of a novel’s ultimate ending in advance, they could still plan the details of the intermediary provisional endings provided by installments. Rather, it is the exact path from the point of origin to the ending that was unknown, and the process of guiding the narrative along this path in a pleasing way, in accordance with a segmentary esthetic, was a way for novelists to exercise their talents.

Attending to the ways in which the narrative and dispositive structural systems interact in the *Mémoires* helps to explain how novelists of Prévost’s era could write

novels without knowing exactly how they were going to unfold, and the emergence of the segmentary esthetic from the interaction of the two systems demonstrates how such novels could be as successful as the *Mémoires* were, despite their apparent lack of unity according to more recent standards. While it is true that a novel intended for an audience whose expectations are based on a segmentary esthetic risks losing the reader's attention if the segments are excessively disparate, or if the connections between them are awkward, those potential pitfalls are not constitutive elements of the segmentary esthetic itself. Novels that are completely planned out entirely in advance have just as much an inherent chance of turning out badly as ones that are planned out during the process of writing and publication. Through close analysis of a successful novel that seemingly transformed from the former type into the latter, it becomes clear that the distinction between the two categories is less than useful when dealing with *ancien régime* novels. Accordingly, the following analysis will focus on interactions between narrative and dispositive structure in a novel that was published in two distinct periods, the first of which did not form an apparently complete whole, as the first installment of the *Mémoires* did.

## Chapter 2: When the Parts Nearly Overtake the Whole: “Pseudoworks” and Intertextuality in *Les Voyages de Robert Lade*

### Beyond *Manon Lescaut*: Pseudoworks in *Voyages de Robert Lade*

The eighteenth-century reading public’s tolerance for the uncertain boundaries of novels is difficult for modern readers to comprehend. One way to improve our understanding of this larger phenomenon as it applies to the works’ outer boundaries is to examine the internal boundaries between the text directly attributed to the narrator-memoirist and “pseudoworks,” which are portions of the text that present themselves as independent from the main body of the work in which they appear. Prévost’s most extreme use of these “works-within-works” (in the sense of the “play-within-a-play”) occurs in a fictional travel journal entitled *Voyages de Robert Lade* published in 1744. Analyzing the role of pseudoworks in this limit case will help to explain how the differences between eighteenth-century and modern modes of production and distribution encouraged the reading public of the time to accept the dialogical and polyphonic capacities of prose narrative in ways that modern readers cannot. By incorporating seemingly authentic independent texts into his protagonist’s travel journal, Prévost strikes a balance between entertaining and instructing his reader. At the same time, Prévost arranges his text in a way that invites readers to put themselves in the protagonist’s position, and thus take a critical stance toward their own perceived ability to gain “authentic” knowledge of foreign cultures through the mediation of travel journals. Moreover, the fact that he achieves this balance and extends this invitation by appropriating and recombining actual authentic texts demonstrates the instability of the very idea of “authenticity.”

The most fundamentally unsettling aspect of the work for the modern reader is its generic instability, which arises from tension between the nonexistence of the eponymous narrator and the authenticity of much of the work's content, much of which is appropriated from authentic sources. Although much critical effort has been expended in search of these sources, the principal objective of the present analysis is to examine the effects of Prévost's decision to keep *some* of this "borrowed" material *separate* from the rest of the text, displaying its external origin, rather than melding all of it into the voice of his narrator, Robert Lade. To that end I will mobilize the concept of intertextuality to see the role of pseudowork within the *Voyages* as an invocation of the nascent and as-yet-non-contradictory generic codes of fiction and nonfiction in an attempt to produce a hybrid text that combined the informative and entertaining capacities of both codes in a single work. This hybrid text is also resolutely non-homogenous, both in its self presentation as an "authentic" travel journal composed of assembled heteroclite elements, and in its true status as a mix of fiction and non-fiction, narration and information, virtual texts and authentic texts. It is simultaneously all and none of these things, and thus it calls into question not only our understanding of the fiction of Prévost's era, but that of our own.

Prévost's best-known pseudowork is also his best-known novel, *Manon Lescaut*, which was originally published as part of the *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde*, the novel that established Prévost's reputation. While arguments in favor of *Manon Lescaut*'s original independence are strong, the text must still be considered, formally, as a pseudowork that eventually gained independence from the work of which it was originally an integral part. Chetro De Carolis has argued that the

multiplicity of novelistic forms present in the eighteenth century is reflected in the formal ambiguity of *Manon Lescaut*, which has never been *either* a “whole” *or* a “part,” but which has always been both simultaneously. The ambiguous status of *Manon Lescaut* derives from its ability to fall into either of the main novelistic categories of the time. As an addition to *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* it can be considered part of a “baroque” novel, to the degree that the great length of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* and its relatively high incidence of intercalated narratives are inherited from that earlier tradition. At the same time read on its own it takes on the aspect of a “classical” novel, being both brief and unified like other “classical” novelistic formats such as the *nouvelle*, the *histoire*, and the *conte*. However, De Carolis mainly addresses the status of *Manon Lescaut*, and only touches tangentially on the implications for *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*. As a result, there is one key observation implicit in his argument that he fails to make because it is outside the scope of his article, namely that the interdependence of *Manon Lescaut* and *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* is not symmetrical. This is not to say that one of the “works” is more dependent on the other, but rather that the two texts depend on each other in different ways, when they are considered as forming a whole, and that each lays claim to its independence differently, when they are viewed as independent works in their own right.

Yet *Manon Lescaut* is not the only example of a “work-within-a-work” in Prévost’s novels, although it is the only one that has been published on its own, and neither is it the only independent narrative presented as such within *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, as shown by the example of a pseudo-novella entitled “Histoire du



marquis de Rosambert,” which occupies approximately 80% of the second book out of the three that form the first of the two tomes published in 1728. Other novels by Prévost that incorporate independent narratives within the confines of the overall “work” are *Campagnes philosophiques, ou Mémoires de M. de Montcal, Aide-de-Camp de M. le Maréchal de Schomberg, contenant l’Histoire de la Guerre d’Irlande* (1741), and the *Voyages du capitaine Robert Lade en différentes parties de l’Afrique, de l’Asie et de l’Amérique, contenant l’Histoire de sa fortune, & ses Observations sur les Colonies & le Commerce des Espagnols, des Anglais, des Hollandais, etc.* (1744).<sup>65</sup> In both cases the full title hints at the presence of pseudoworks within the text, but in a way that obscures the work’s actual content. The *Campagnes philosophiques* contain a “Supplément aux mémoires de la Guerre d’Irlande, par M. de Montcal,” but it is unclear at first glance how this pseudowork relates to the “histoire de la guerre d’Irlande” mentioned in the title. The *Voyages* contains both an account of the titular character’s travels and interpolated documents, but the information about the various destinations mentioned in the title comes from both portions of the text, which are mixed together, and what is supposedly the main narrative of the *Voyages* only takes up approximately 30% of the text as a whole. Within the work, it is entitled “Voyages du capitaine Robert Lade et de sa famille” and only occupies about a tenth of the first tome, and nearly half of the second tome. The balance of the first tome consists of a “Mémoire sur la situation et le commerce de Carthagene,” and the second half of the second tome is quite fragmented,

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<sup>65</sup> Unless stated otherwise, references are to the original edition, whose spelling and punctuation I have preserved.

with 20% consisting of a “Supplément à l’histoire de la baye de Hudson,” a further 20% formed by the “Mémoire du capitaine Best,” and the final 10% being taken up by a “Description de la Nouvelle Espagne, depuis Panama jusques vers le 40<sup>e</sup> degré de latitude du nord.” The arrangement of the references to these texts within the title demonstrates the foundational importance of the relative privilege accorded to different kinds of authentic texts, and also suggests that the presence of such independent textual entities within a travel journal was a sign of authenticity and perhaps a selling point.

### *Pseudoworks and Intertextuality*

Intertextual characteristics appear in the *Voyages* when Prévost appropriates authentic travel documents and modifies them for use in a fictional context, thus transforming the conventional dialogue between real works into an intertextual relationship between virtual works. This transformation further engages intertextuality by creating an arena for a confrontation between two persistent nascent generic codes: fiction and nonfiction. In the following analysis I show how internalized intertextuality produces a dynamic threefold parallelism underlying the narrative structure of the *Voyages*: specifically, 1) between the reader’s encounter with the *Voyages* and Lade’s encounter with the various texts that he inserts into his journal (pseudoworks), 2) between the reader’s encounter with a foreign culture through reading Lade’s journal and Lade’s own encounters with the foreign cultures he visits (which are also mediated by translation), and 3) between Lade’s role as a presenter of foreign documents and the same role played by the editor-translator of the *Voyages*. Dispersive intertextual impulses manifest themselves within each parallel pair of elements in this triangular system and in the relationships between the

pairs, thus demonstrating the ultimate failure of the apparent linearity of narration to stabilize meaning. The diegetical authors of the pseudoworks that appear in the *Voyages* give up control over their work when they allow Lade to copy it, as Lade's use of the text for his own purposes proves. In a real-world parallel to the world of the diegesis, the real authors of the authentic texts from which Prévost took the material for these pseudoworks gave up control over their work when it was published, as shown by Prévost's appropriation of their material. Similarly, Lade gives up control of his text when it is published, as shown by the fact that it was translated (although he does prepare for that eventuality by leaving out certain elements, he leaves in other material that seems fairly similar to what he leaves out). Publication is also responsible for the taking control over the text away from the fictional editor-translator of the French edition (who may or may not be identified with Prévost), as readers make their own meaning of the text when they interpret it. And although Prévost loses control of the *Voyages* at the moment of publication, the assumption of control by readers is not absolute, as demonstrated by the fact that they are manipulated by Prévost's disguising the true source of the pseudoworks that appear in the *Voyages* and the fictional nature of his narrator. Furthermore, the parallel between a "genuine" instance of lost control (Prévost's appropriation of the work of writers who really did exist) and a "false" one (Lade's appropriation of the work of fictional writers) suggests that that control never belonged to the "real" authors any more than it did to the "false" ones.

#### *Title as Itinerary of Narrative Structure*

Because both travel literature and the travel that provides its inspiration depend on dividing the *whole* world into *parts*, travel literature of any period necessarily thematizes

the distinction between *part* and *whole* by putting different parts of the world into relation with each other. As my analysis of the *Voyages* demonstrates, eighteenth-century travel literature exhibits its own peculiar ideas about the unity of a text. These ideas are particularly evident in the simultaneous integration and separateness of pseudoworks in the *Voyages*. The paradoxical status of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* suggests that the subordination of all parts to a harmonious whole was not a high priority in eighteenth-century prose narrative esthetics, and that the presence of fragments was, on the contrary, tolerated even if they lacked a high a degree of integration with the subject matter of the rest of the work. Eighteenth-century travel novels such as the *Voyages* thus reveal a particular understanding of how relationships between the spatial units that make up a journey should be represented in prose narrative form, as can further be seen in the full title of the *Voyages*. The title's length might be its most salient feature for those unfamiliar with eighteenth-century literature, although it is not at all unusual for the period, but I would like to focus on the phrase "différentes parties," which might initially seem superfluous. It seems unlikely that a reasonable reader would expect an account of "voyages en Afrique, en Asie et en Amerique" to contain exhaustive descriptions of those continents in their entirety. What, then, is the reason for the title's specificity? Calling attention to the relation between parts and to the situation of the protagonist demonstrates the significance of the effects of modes of production and distribution on eighteenth-century narrative aesthetics. The title emblemizes the way the work itself is divided up into parts. My analysis will show how the presence of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* also calls attention to the relationship between parts, and points to a narrative esthetic that rather than encouraging

identification with the protagonist encourages identification with the protagonist's situation. Rather than focus on how this kind of narrative fails to match our current ideas about how texts like this should work, it is worthwhile to focus on what this technique positively accomplishes, which is to place the reader into a situation analogous to that of the narrator; and while it pushes the reader away from identification with the narrator, which we think of as being associated with the novel, it encourages a more analytical and reflective approach to the work as a whole.

By dividing the content of the work into "histoire" and "observations" the title also points to the sometimes cooperative, sometimes oppositional relationship between Lade's personal story and the parts that more properly belong to the travel literature, which obey two generic codes. The editor mentions not only the regions that Lade visits himself but also those that provide the material for the concluding pseudoworks when he references British "Auteurs" who "prétendent que les terres qui sont occupées par leur Nation, depuis l'extrémité de la Nouvelle Ecosse au Nord, jusqu'à celle de la Nouvelle Georgie au Sud, n'ont pas moins de seize ou dix-sept cent milles de longueur; sans compter leurs Isles, qui forment encore un Domaine si considérable, que la Jamaïque & la Barbade contiennent seules plus de deux cent mille Anglois" (1: [ii]). Lade's text incorporates both personal and historical details, while the "authorities" are solely historical. The relationship between Lade's text and its fellow texts is neither perfectly symmetrical nor entirely asymmetrical, and prevents any attitude toward it from being entirely consistent.

The editor also makes a contrast between the realistic portrayal of Britain's colonies in the *Voyages* and the more hyperbolic treatments they had previously received:

“Quoiqu’ils [the British] soient bien revenus de l’opinion qu’ils s’étoient formée de la richesse de tous ces Pays dans les premiers tems de leurs découvertes, ou de leurs Etablissemens, il est certain qu’ils en tirent de très-grands avantages” (1: [ii]-[iii])—both in serious prose—“C’est un Ecrivain serieux, qui s’applaudissoit ainsi de son bonheur en prose” (1: [iii])—and in verse—he quotes a certain “M. Waller, un des meilleurs Poètes d’Angleterre, [qui] a fait une peinture des Isles *Bermudes*, qui rappelle les plus délicieuses idées du Paradis terrestre” (1: I iv). The editor dismisses these overly positive descriptions of Britain’s colonies as “le langage d’une Nation peu accoutumée à voir des figues & des oranges, qui croissent en effet difficilement dans un climat aussi froid que l’Angleterre” (1: vi). However, at the same time as the editor disparages travel literature that exaggerates the marvelous abundance of colonies, he also profits from it by looking ahead to the treatment those goods will receive in the work he is introducing: “Pour l’or, le corail & l’ambre gris, s’il s’en est quelquefois trouvé dans les Colonies Angloises, ce n’est point assez souvent, comme on le verra par quelques endroits de cette Relation, pour donner droit aux Anglois de s’en applaudir dans des termes si magnifiques” (1: vi).<sup>66</sup> The editor then goes on to describe the discourse that serves as a context for the *Voyages* in such a way as to emphasize the importance of travel writers:

D’ailleurs, quoiqu’on ne puisse douter que leurs Plantations ne leur aient d’abord été fort avantageuses, elles ont souffert de l’altération sur quantité de points ; ce qui n’empêche pas néanmoins, qu’ils n’en tirent encore beaucoup d’utilité. Il se trouve là-dessus des détails curieux dans leurs Livres. M. *Littleton* Président de la Barbade, & le Chevalier *Dalby*

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<sup>66</sup> The main term for designating travel journals appears to be “relation,” e.g. when Lade talks about Anguilla, saying that “Les Habitans en sont si pauvres & si accoutumés à la paresse & à l’oisiveté, qu’on auroit peine à se le persuader d’une Colonie d’Anglois si l’on n’en étoit informé par des Relations certaines.” (2: 113)

*Thomas*, ont écrit avec beaucoup de feu sur cette matiere ; & ces explications présentées au Peuple par des Ecrivains si sensés, n'ont pas peu servi à redoubler l'ardeur de la Nation pour le service de Colonies. (1: vi-vii)

While, as J. Abioye points out, “ces références sont bizarres” (Grenoble 8: 423), given that the authors mentioned hardly fit the bill of “Ecrivains si sensés” (1: vii). However, this suggests that Prévost’s intended public would care more about the impression of authority than about actual authority. They were not going to check Prévost’s references, but they wanted to read a work with references. The reason for the importance of references is the integration of the work into a larger discursive field, but it is a complicated field that parallels the fictional field of novels and imaginary travel accounts.

#### *Editor’s Preface as Narrative Structural Guidebook*

If the work’s full title begins the thematization of the internal intertextuality that underlies the structure of the *Voyages*, the editor’s preface furthers that thematization by drawing attention immediately to the work being presented as a material production belonging to a particular domain of knowledge. The anonymous editor begins by situating the text he is about to present to the public within an established discourse of the period, that of the travel journal, and within that discourse, more specifically, that of the English travel journal, perhaps the most authentic-seeming in the eyes of a French audience:

De qui attendroit-on des *Relations de Voyages* plus utiles & plus interessantes que des Anglois ? L’Angleterre a presqu’autant de Vaisseaux que de maisons, & l’on peut dire de l’Isle entiere ce que les Historiens de la Chine rapportent de Nankin ; qu’une grande partie d’un Peuple si nombreux, demeure habituellement sur l’eau. Aussi voit-on paroître à Londres plus de *Journaux de Mer*, & de *Recueils d’observations*, que dans tout autre lieu. (1: i, emphasis added)

The hyperbolic nature of this assertion aside, here we have three different designations

for texts presenting information gleaned from travel to the public: *relation de voyage*, *journal de mer*, and *recueil d'observations*. Each designation is composed of two elements: one substantive element, i.e. *relation*, *journal*, or *recueil*, which designates the text according to the material aspect under which it comes to be purchased; and one epithetical element, i.e. *de voyage*, *de mer*, or *d'observations*, which designates the immaterial aspect of the text, which is roughly equivalent, but not identical, to the “content” of the text in its physical aspect: here, a *relation de voyage* is a textual entity that *relates* information about a particular *voyage* to the person who reads it;<sup>67</sup> while a *journal de mer* is a record of information gathered *while at sea*, perhaps arranged at least partially *according to date*;<sup>68</sup> a *recueil de voyages* is a *collection* of accounts of a certain number of *journeys*.<sup>69</sup> None of the three substantive elements that make up these

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<sup>67</sup> The first definition of the word “relation” that appears in the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* is the following: “Récit de quelque aventure, histoire, bataille [...]. On m’a envoyé une fidelle *relation* de ce qui s’est fait en cette négociation, en ce combat; la *relation* extraordinaire de la gazette contenant les cérémonies du couronnement de l’Empereur.” (1413) The second and third definitions, however, specifically refer to travel literature: “Relation, se dit plus particulièrement des aventures des Voyageurs, des observations qu’ils font dans leurs voyages [...]. Il y a un très-grand nombre de livres de *Relations*. On a ” (1414) (online version [www.cnrtl.fr](http://www.cnrtl.fr) 2/18/14)

<sup>68</sup> The relevant entry in the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* gives the following examples: “Cette histoire est réduite en forme de *journal*, jour par jour. Le *journal* d’un siège contient jour par jour tout ce qui se passe à ce siège. Les *Relations* des Voyageurs se font souvent en forme de *journal*.” (342) However, given the prominence of maritime travel in the *Voyages*, the following definition is also relevant: “Journal, en terme de Marine, est un régître que les Pilotes tiennent de tout ce qui est arrivé au vaisseau, par chaque jour & d’heure en heure, pour servir à faire leur estime & leur pointage, comme les rumbes, les vents, le sillage, les hauteurs, les tourmentes, les rencontres, &c.” (344)

<sup>69</sup> According to the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux*, the word “recueil” has several distinct relevant meanings. The first does not insist on the independence of the constituent elements involved, and the entity thus constituted is not necessarily published: “Recueil, se dit aussi figurément des remarques de Littérature [...]. Un Prédicateur se sert utilement des ses *recueils*. Faire un *recueil* des plus belles pensées des Poètes anciens & modernes.” (1362) The second refers specifically to published texts, and suggests that while physical inclusion of previously independent textual entities within a single newly constituted textual entity was an important characteristic of a *recueil*, it was not absolutely essential, and it was also possible for a *recueil* to be made up of multiple volumes: “Recueil, se dit aussi de l’assemblage de plusieurs Ouvrages compilez &



designations appears in the title of the *Voyages*, but two of the epithetical ones do: *voyages* takes on the guise of a substantive, while *observations* forms part of the epithet—in the subtitle the *Voyages* are described as “*contenant l’histoire de sa fortune et ses observations sur....*”<sup>70</sup> The full title also contains a fourth substantive, *histoire*, which the editor does not include in his list of typical terms for designating travel literature. This term invokes a complex semantic field with regard to published prose narration, because it applies both to factual and fictional works.<sup>71</sup> The complexity of this double semantic field is reinforced by the conjugation of *histoire* with *fortune*, a term that designates both the overall course of an individual’s life and the material success of an individual.<sup>72</sup> The flexibility of these terms suggests an instability behind the semantic codes they refer to: on one hand, genuine travel literature and technical writing (e.g. actual journals used by

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reliez ensemble [...]. Faire un *recueil* de divers Auteurs. ABL. La Bibliothèque des Pères est un beau *recueil*. On a fait un *recueil* des Poètes Grècs en deux Tomes.” (1362)

<sup>70</sup> The *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* vouches for the substantive use of *voyage* in this context during this period: “On a imprimé les grands *voyages* en six volumes ; comme aussi | les *voyages* de Christophe Colomb, de François Drac [*sic*], de Thévenot, de Hèrbert, &c. [...] Il y a plus de 1300 Relations des *voyages* imprimées. Rien n’est plus instructif que la lecture des *voyages*.” (777-78) The dictionary does not, however, provide any examples of *observation* as a substantive representing a textual entity, although it does provide two potentially relevant meanings: 1) “remarque critique sur un Auteur, pour l’expliquer, le commenter, ou le critiquer”, and 2) “se dit presque en ce sens [i.e. #1] des remarques, des considérations qu’on fait sur une chose, ou simplement pour y répondre, pour la faire remarquer aux autres” (1645). The dictionary’s entry for the verb *observer* brings us closer to the semantic field in use in this preface when, as an illustration for the verb’s meaning of “Éxaminer attentivement quelque chose : en bien remarquer la nature, les mouvemens, les qualitez, ou accidens particuliers” (1645-46), it gives the following as one of the examples: “Un Voyageur a mille belle choses à *observer* dans ses voyages.” (1646)

<sup>71</sup> The *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* defines “histoire” as a “[r]écit fait avec art : description des choses comme elles sont par narration soutenuë & continuëe, & véritable des faits les plus mémorables, & des actions les plus célèbres” (1727). It is important to note, though, that the dictionary does not refer to any kind of travel literature in its definition of “histoire,” although it does mention that “[h]istoire, se dit aussi des Romans, des narrations fabuleuses, mais vraisemblables, feintes par un Auteur ou déguisées.” (1728)

<sup>72</sup> The relevant definitions provided by the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* are “le bonheur ou le malheur : ce qui arrive par hazard ; qui est fortuit & imprévu” (953) as well as “toute sorte de prospérité & de succès” and “l’établissement, [le] crédit, [les] biens qu’on a acquis ou par son mérite ou par hazard” (954)

navigators and travelers), and, on the other, fanciful travel literature and novels. (The use of the word “histoire” in the title may even have evoked the generic code of the novel in the minds of contemporary readers.) I would like to argue that this instability stems from a confusion between the content of the textual entities that end up in the hands of the reading public and the “idea” of those textual entities.<sup>73</sup>

In the preface to the *Voyages*, the editor talks about the work he is introducing in a way that both enhances its authenticity and highlights the instability of the very codes within which it would seek to gain that authenticity. By mentioning the disparate sources that came together to produce the *Voyages* in the preface, Prévost both adds to the impression of realism by alluding to the technical side of the publication process and suggests that being composed of multiple source-texts was a characteristic that could enhance the perceived interest of a travel journal:

Quoiqu[e] [cette relation] ait été mise en ordre depuis plusieurs années, sur les Journaux & les Mémoires de l’Auteur, elle n’est tombée que depuis fort peu de tems entre mes mains. Toutes les parties en sont si agréables & si intéressantes qu’elle m’a paru digne d’une prompte traduction. (1: xi)

This is not only an instance of the conventional eighteenth-century appeal to the found-document motif; rather, it is also the beginning of a process of thematization of bringing documents together to form a work, part of which consists of some anonymous first editor’s work putting Lade’s collected papers in order, and part of which consists of Lade’s own work assembling the various elements of his journal into a whole he thought would be worth publishing. This thematization valorizes the fragments that come together

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<sup>73</sup> Compare this instability with the relationship between *book* and *text* in Barthes’ essay “De l’œuvre au text.”

to form a whole, but without denying the importance of each fragment as an independent entity. The *relation*, then, is the “whole” that results from the conjunction of a variety of fragmentary sources, i.e. *journaux* and *mémoires*, note that both nouns are plural, implying 1) that Lade had written in more than one *journal* and had collected multiple *mémoires*, and 2) that the editor performed some—as of yet unspecified—manipulations on these previously discrete elements to combine them into some kind of composite “whole” entity. It is also interesting to note that when the frame narrator summarizes the work’s contents in the preface he reverses the order of the two volumes and gives pride of place to the most prominent pseudo-works contained within the *Voyages*:

Les détails qui concernent la nouvelle Géorgie, la Baye de Hudson, divers endroits des Côtes d’Afrique, la Nation des *Muschetos*, & plusieurs parties des Etablissements Espagnols & Hollandois, contiennent tant de particularités qui n’ont jamais été publiées, qu’on ne se plaindra point d’y trouver comme dans la plupart des nouvelles Relations, la répétition de ce qu’on a déjà lû sous d’autres titres. (1: xiii)

Presenting the pseudo-works out of order implies that their order is not as important as the fact of their separateness. Although much critical effort has been expended in search of Prévost’s sources, here I investigate the effects of Prévost’s keeping *some* of his “borrowed” material separate, showing its external origin, instead of attributing all of it to his narrator. To that end I examine the role of what I call “pseudoworks,” which are portions of text that present themselves as independent from the main body of the work in which they appear—in other words, “works-within-works,” in the sense of the “play-within-a-play.” So the term *pseudowork* designates inserted texts that range in length from a few paragraphs to texts that themselves become full-fledged independent novels, such as *Manon Lescaut*.

The dispositive structure of the *Voyages* is both simple and complex: simple because it contains only two “conventional” dispositive units, being divided into two *tomes*, and complex because it also contains numerous pseudoworks of varying degrees of distinctness from the “main body” of the text. Another complicating factor is the relative length of the “main body” of the text and the text occupied by pseudoworks. Although the impossibility of establishing absolute criteria for identifying pseudoworks makes it difficult to determine an exact ratio, it is possible to estimate that pseudoworks make up about 40% of the work’s total length, with the remaining 60% comprising the main body. The work’s narrative structure is similarly complex and simple at the same time, because, as other critics have noted, Lade undertakes two voyages, and between the two of them he divides the world roughly in two: the first takes him eastward, to Africa and Asia (the East Indies), while the second is dominated by westward travel, since it brings Lade first again to Africa but then soon takes him westward to the Caribbean (the West Indies) and to North/Central America (Mexico).<sup>74</sup> Some of these pseudoworks are

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<sup>74</sup> See Joseph Ducarre (466). Lade only explains the purpose of his second voyage after the point in the narrative when he and Rindekly have left England, explaining that “Je n’ai pas crû qu’il fut nécessaire d’expliquer jusqu’ici quel étoit le premier but de notre course” (1: 162). Why not? It cannot be that the reader was expected to guess that “Nous cherchions cette même Côte où nous avions placé toutes nos espérances de fortune” (1: 162), because Lade’s explanation gives no intimation that this destination was obvious. Rather, the information was irrelevant, given that the focus was on Lade’s efforts to reestablish his reputation in England after the success of his first voyage. In that context, the mere fact of Lade’s intention to embark on a second voyage, one during which he and Rindekly would be “indépendans d’autrui” (1: 155), was more important than the precise purpose of that voyage. Lade mentions the destination at this point in order to explain how he and Rindekly ended up with a spy on board their ship: to avoid the repetition of previous problems arising from lack of geographical knowledge, they had engaged an expert as a member of their crew, whom they later discovered to be the king’s spy (Gant). Interestingly, as soon as Lade announce his ship’s intended destination, they are forced to change course to keep the spy from knowing their intentions, and to find a port from where they can send him back to England. However, a convenient and sudden fever puts an end to the difficulty by ending his life, and the voyage can take its original course.

fully contained within Lade's main narrative, but several appear after the relation of Lade's own travels have concluded; in fact the majority of the second volume comes from pseudoworks (84%), while only a small amount comes from the main narration (16%). Although it is quite possible that Prévost's need to fill out the second volume contributed to the imbalance between pseudowork and main narration in the second tome, it is still worth examining how that need influenced the creative process of building the work's dispositive and narrative structures.

Paying attention to this allows us to notice connections between parts the work that might otherwise have seemed unrelated. It is not necessary to claim, for example, that every individual element of the work relates to every other part in a precise fashion exactly as intended by the author to appreciate the parallelism between Lade's methods of presenting his text and those of his son (see, for instance, the *Mémoire du capitaine Best* [2: 165-307], which is followed by quotations from various authentic sources [2: 307-43]). Similarly, one need not posit a single, all-encompassing theory of the world as espoused by the work in order to realize that understanding the work as a two-part narrative organized according to the predominant direction of each of the eponymous character's two voyages leaves out vast swathes of the explored world, namely South America, the Pacific, and the British colonies of North America, which are covered in the pseudoworks that conclude the second volume. Both of these observations suggest the profitability of taking into account the interaction of narrative and dispositive structures when dealing with prose narrative works from other periods. In the case of these observations about the *Voyages*, attending to the dispositive–narrative structural

interaction leads us to question whether the division between the first and second voyages is the work's main narrative division or not. We notice that, as in the case of the first installment of the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, this major narrative division anticipates the first major dispositive division (between the first and second volumes), which increases the "suspense" of the narrative over a dispositive boundary. And though the result may not be compelling for the modern reader—or, perhaps, for the eighteenth-century reader, for that matter—considering the work in this way leads us to recognize the last 40% of the work, in which the adventures of Lade's son take the place of Lade's own adventures as the frame narrative, as a narrative unit of its own, despite the lack of a sustained narrative. Lade's son is doing the same thing as his father by collecting documents in the course of his travel and presenting them to a reader who may profit from them, but by doing so he fulfills a function in the wider context of the *Voyages* by increasing the work's impression of authenticity. There's also the influence of the editor to take into account, which is impossible to determine.

#### *Pseudoworks and Fictionality*

Recently, Colas Duflo has usefully demonstrated that the question of whether or not a text is *fictional* is not the only question to ask when dealing with a text such as the *Voyages*; it is also important to ask whether its primary aim is to *entertain* or to *inform*, to refer to a *fictional* world or to the *real* one (2009). Duflo argues that the primary purpose of the plot in the *Voyages* is to serve the work's informative objectives, not to provide the reader esthetic enjoyment (56-57). While modern readers might at first agree with Duflo, I would argue that the presence of narrative in the text suggests that Prévost's goals went

beyond simply informing his readers. I would like to add a nuance to Duflo's ideas by suggesting that even with this in mind there is less of a dichotomy in the mind of the eighteenth century reader than in the expectations contemporary reader. The similarity between a fictional travel account and a genuine one is potentially unimportant to the reader who is only seeking an interesting story, or one who finds fascination in the relation of outlandish details about faraway places, without necessarily needing to know that they are real, or, indeed, with the knowledge that they could be false always present somewhere in the back of the mind. Similarly, even readers who really do want to know the truth about distant cultures or landscapes could not afford to only take knowledge from entirely trustworthy sources, since such a thing practically couldn't exist.

However informative the work was, and despite the fact that leading scientists of the time cited the *Voyages* as an authoritative source, the combination of narration and information indicates that the primary purpose of the work as a whole was to *entertain* its readers *while informing them*.<sup>75</sup> Duflo argues that the *Voyages* is a fundamentally contradictory work: if one considers only the predominance of description over narration, one will perceive it as a work of non-fiction, which is how many contemporary readers saw it; if, however, one considers the fact that its narrator never existed, one will perceive it as a work of fiction, which is why it is now most often categorized as a novel (58-59). However, the characteristics that make the *Voyages* "unreadable" for modern audiences, according to Duflo (58-59), did not have the same effect on eighteenth-century readers, but

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<sup>75</sup> Even scientists may have been attracted by the combination of useful information and entertaining narration. Duflo suggests that Buffon's multiple citations from the *Voyages* indicate that he enjoyed reading it (55).

not because the work was perceived solely as an informative work, as Duflo further argues (62-64). Rather, the work has embodied both fictional and instructive aspects since its publication, as the attitude of the Trévoux journalists towards the work's relationship to the real world shows:

Tout cela est bon à amuser un Lecteur oisif, qui ne cherche point autre chose dans les Relations des Voyageurs, & qui n'est pas toujours en état d'y distinguer le vrai d'avec le fabuleux, ni le certain d'avec l'incertain. Le mal est, qu'en lisant sans être en garde contre ce qu'on lit, ou regardant ces sortes d'Ouvrages comme d'agréables Romans, ou l'on ne croit rien du tout, & l'on ne profite point de ce qu'il y a de bon ; ou que ceux, qui donnent dans une extrémité contraire, se remplissent l'esprit de notions fausses, & de préjugés mal fondés, dont il [*sic*] ne revient point. (Lallemant, Berthier and Aubert 1745: 339-40)<sup>76</sup>

The reviewers warn against what they see as a common problem for readers of their day: the tendency to accept the entirety of a travel journal at face value, or to consider all of it to be equally false. In the first case, the reader who fails to look at the text critically runs the risk of believing to be true things that are made up. In the second, the reader who dismisses the entire text as a work of fiction runs the risk of missing out on potential benefit from those of the work's observations that are accurate. In light of the Trévoux reviewer's views on this point I would like to add a nuance to Duflo's ideas by suggesting that reframing the question of how to categorize the *Voyages* in referential terms rather than in terms of an opposition between fiction and nonfiction does not fully account for eighteenth-century attitudes toward prose narrative. Distrust of novels was widespread in the eighteenth century, and even travel journals were seen as needing to be approached with caution, by readers who valued them as a source of reliable information about the world,

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<sup>76</sup> This criticism recalls Bayle's disapproval of works that blurred the lines between fiction and history.



while other readers might have given up on distinguishing between the true and the false within travel journals, instead deciding to enjoy the fantastic anecdotes, but even such a position acknowledged that “fact” and “fiction” could coexist within a single work.

Ducarre is concerned with how Prévost was able to fool his contemporaries into believing that *Voyages de Robert Lade* was an authentic travel diary, and he believed that asking the question “De quels éléments, imaginaires ou réels, est fait le récit” would reveal “des procédés de composition ... bien curieux” (465-66). One way to conceive of the novel’s structure is to look at the title: just how many *voyages* did Captain Lade undertake? Ducarre does just that, but without realizing that in doing so he is beginning an outline of the novel’s narrative structure: “Les voyages de Lade sont au nombre de deux : le premier aux Côtes de l’Afrique et aux Indes Orientales, le second aux Indes Occidentales” (466). Ducarre emphasizes the novelistic character of the text, noting that “Sur ce canevas, l’imagination de Prévost a brodé, pour l’enchantement de ses lecteurs, de multiples aventures”, even going so far as to recall a review in the *Journal de Trévoux*, which reports that “Parmi ces aventures, il y en a qui pourraient figurer dans les *Mémoires d’un Homme de Qualité* et dans le *Cléveland* [sic]” (466). It seems that Ducarre, despite the reviewer’s comparison between *Voyages de Robert Lade* and two known fictional texts, did not think that eighteenth-century readers might have realized that the text was fictional as well, or that the distinction may not have been as important to all readers of Prévost’s era. Ducarre is not interested in the structural role of these adventures, which the *Trévoux* reviewers mention in the context of summarizing the content of the text’s first volume: “Le reste de ce Volume contient diverses aventures” (*Trévoux* 347). One of the main uses of this review

for the purposes of understanding the text's structure is that it mainly consists of summary, which means that from it we can learn how readers of Prévost's time might have divided the text into parts. Ducarre insists on the lack of interest that the geographical portions of the text hold for the modern reader, but fails to account for differences in taste among eighteenth-century readers. While it is true that some readers may have been equally intrigued by many of the various kinds of texts included in *Voyages de Robert Lade*, regardless of the truth value they present to the modern eye, it seems unlikely that anyone could have read a table of latitude and longitude, or even a description of the parishes of Jamaica with as much relish as other stories, both among those Lade presents as his own writing and those he presents as being from the pens of other travelers. Inserted pseudoworks do not only serve as signs of authenticity, they also play a role in the structure of the text as a whole.

The presence of pseudoworks within the text of Lade's narrative does emphasize the text's nonfictional character, as Duflo argues, especially the fact that the first one appears quite early in the text (61-63). However, coming across these texts in the same way Lade did also has the effect of putting the reader in Lade's shoes. And while this technique does short-circuit the normal novelistic process of identification with the protagonist, the effacement of the protagonist that occurs when narrative authority passes from Lade to the pseudowork writers allows the reader to identify with the *situation* in which Lade found himself when he was confronted with the text he presents to his audience, rather than with Lade himself, thus achieving the identifying effect of fiction by different means. In the *Voyages*, Prévost manipulates the pseudoworks in ways that facilitate this identification.

Although the inserted documents do not always, or even often, make their appearance elegantly, they provide evidence of Prévost's efforts to maximize the reader's identification with Lade's situation.

If the Trévoux reviewer is to be believed, in the eighteenth century a work such as the *Voyages* could be valued for gathering even unrelated accounts of travel to places unknown to the reader. By contrast, today the interest of the pseudoworks Lade includes lies not in the sources they allow Prévost to incorporate in a fictional work, but in the structure of value they create. Not all of these accounts are of equal value to all readers, but they are all candidates for the attribution of value. Their lack of relatedness to each other and to Lade's own narrative underscores, for the modern reader, the difference between modern and eighteenth-century expectations of narrative coherence. The pseudoworks allow us to see the difference between the readers' identification with characters, including the narrator, which arguably characterizes a modern novelistic esthetic, and identification with the narrated situation, which I argue characterizes eighteenth-century novelistic esthetic.

The writer of the review seems not to think that the "Description de Carthagène" is ill-suited to its place in the text of the journal; rather it is a welcome addition, as are the other insertions, both pseudo-works and anecdotes: "De là il étoit allé relâcher à l'Isle de Fer, une des Canaries, où se rencontra un Navire Anglois, qui avoit été à Carthagène, & dans lequel Robert Lade trouva une Description de cette fameuse Ville, avec un état de son Commerce, dont il enrichi son Journal, aussi bien que de quantité d'Episodes de toutes les espèces, qu'il y insère, tantôt sur des oui dire, & tantôt sur de petites aventures, dont il a

été le témoin.” (339). The reviewer considers *Voyages de Robert Lade* to be neither completely factual nor completely fictional, and although he admits that some travel narratives are too full of exaggeration or fabrication to be at all useful, he is unwilling to dismiss the portions of the text that seem to be accurate. The reviewer hints at the perceived role of pseudo-works when he remarks that “La description de Carthagène est suivie de quelques Observations Astronomiques assez conformes à ce que nous avons de plus exact sur ce sujet” (340). This comment suggests that by giving parts of the text the appearance of being inserted from outside sources Prévost increased the verisimilitude and authority of his work. Furthermore, Lade’s practice of following external texts with additional external anecdotes shows the reviewer his dedication to his task as observer: “Robert Lade étoit trop en train de nous parler de Carthagène, pour en demeurer à la Description, qu’il nous en donne ; il y joint l’Histoire de la prise de cette importante place en 1585 par le Chevalier François Drake” (341). Further indication that pseudo-works were seen as potentially interesting aspects of a text comes from the reviewer’s decision to cite verbatim Lade’s account of the relationship between the “Description” and his journal, which highlights his decision to keep the texts separate rather than integrate the information contained in the Description into his own writing; namely that had he done so the “Description” would never have been noticed by the Spanish Colonial Coast Guard, thus bringing him under suspicion of espionage.

Both Lade and the reviewer value the inserted “Description.” Lade does this by talking about how he decided to leave out information regarding Jamaica due to the potential danger that doing so would pose to British interests, just as Rindekly was able to

use the “Description” to achieve ends of his own, and the reviewer by citing this comment verbatim (345).<sup>77</sup> The reviewers are ambivalent regarding the relative importance of a travel journal’s interest and its utility. Although they highlight the moderation of the work’s fantastical claims they also point out sections of the text that are more interesting than others: “Ils eurent dans cette traversée diverses aventures, qui rendent cette parti du Journal de Robert Lade assez divertissante.” (343). Perhaps the most obvious advantage that a proliferation of pseudo-works could confer on a text is visual variety. All a potential reader need do to become aware of these pseudo-works is to flip through the pages of the work. If nothing else, a volume containing pseudo-works will distinguish itself from a more homogenous one. In the realm of travel-literature, such immediately obvious visual distinction is of clear importance, as suggested by the presence of a map, and, moreover, the discussion of that map’s merits (or lack thereof) in the *Trévoux* review. The nuances of this review suggest that Duflo’s opposition between information and entertainment is not as robust as he argues, and that the presence of pseudoworks and other inserted narratives in the text contribute both to its entertainment value and to its value as a scientific document.

Similarly, the inconsistent character of the work is not as shocking to the eighteenth-century reviewers as it is to Ducarre. What Ducarre sees as “de nombreuses descriptions géographiques [...] très irrégulièrement réparties et développées” (469), the *Trévoux* reviewers see as manifestations of Robert Lade’s care for his responsibilities as

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<sup>77</sup> The *Recueil des voyages du nord* mentions a certain “Rindekly,” captain of the *Michel*, a vessel in Frobisher’s expedition (436 [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)).

an individual who finds himself in a situation that provides him a unique opportunity to render a service to his own nation and the entire seafaring and international mercantile community: “L’auteur n’omet [...] aucune occasion de faire en Navigateur curieux ses Observations Géographiques, & relève plusieurs fautes des Cartes Angloises, qui en fourmillent” (348). Moreover, these observations’ very haphazardness is the “guarantee” of the observer’s good faith. Seen in this way, the apparent lack of underlying structure would also seem to contribute to the general impression of the text’s authenticity. The reviewer provides further evidence of his positive opinion of Lade’s geographical observations when discussing Lade’s deliberations with Rindekly. For example, when Rindekly decides to embark on an expedition to the Bahamas to collect ambergris following a failed attempt to aid the Jamaican government in dealing with rebellious slaves, the reviewer insists on the windfall of geographical observations that this turn of events provides for the reading public:

[A]yant eu avis, que les Anglois établis dans l’Isle de la Providence demandoient du secours pour la Pêche de l’Ambre gris [...] [Rindekly] résolut d’y aller sans en rien dire à son Beupere, qu’il ne croyoit pas d’humeur à l’y accompagner. Lade voulut cependant être de la partie, & le Public y gagné d’être instruit de plusieurs particularités, qui regardent cette Isle, & plusieurs autres des environs du Canal de Bahama. (533)

Later, the reviewer reports that when this first fishing ground proves less rich than had been hoped, the two men decide to move their operation to Bermuda:

Rindekly vouloit avoir de l’Ambre gris, & son Beupere étoit pour le moins aussi curieux de voir de nouveaux Pays, & d’enrichir son Journal de nouvelles Observations. Ainsi ils se déterminèrent aisément l’un & l’autre à pousser jusqu’aux Bermudes, & tous les deux trouverent de quoi s’y occuper suivant leur goût. Le premier fit une abondante récolte de la précieuse Marchandise, qu’il cherchoit, & le second s’instruisit de

l'Histoire, du climat, des productions, de la qualité du Terroir, & de  
plusieurs singularités de ces Isles. (535-40)

These examples suggest that the Trévoux reviewers truly valued both the informative and entertaining aspects of the work. And although they reproduce more of the work's informative content than of its narrative content, this imbalance can be attributed to the fact that readers primarily interested in the information can receive it via the review without losing any of the benefit, whereas readers primarily interested in entertainment can only get what they want by experiencing the work directly. Although the reviewer appears to have been taken in by Prévost's subterfuge, having failed to recognize the external provenance of the information contained in Lade's observations, the fact remains that the reviewer sees value in the transmission of that information regardless of its haphazard presentation within the framework of Prévost's text. Or perhaps it is because of this presentation that the reviewer gives credence to Lade as a source of accurate information.

The review is particularly enlightening regarding possible attitudes toward this text as an example of the travel narrative genre, in particular as reflected by the incorporation of pseudo works and other interpolated narratives. The reviewer's ideas regarding these narratives are on display in his description of the last portion of Lade's own narrative:

La description de la Jamaïque est suivie de quelques unes de ces  
aventures, dont Robert Lade aime à parsemer son Journal, & qui ont peut-  
être déterminé son Traducteur, dont on connoît assez le goût, & le talent  
de les raconter, à préférer cet Ouvrage à beaucoup d'autres de même  
espèce. (543)

If we can momentarily set aside the reviewer's apparent inability to follow his own directive to discern what is true from what is false in travel narratives, we can see that by

the standards of this reviewer, at least, *Voyages de Robert Lade* embodies at least one positive trait of the travel narrative genre very well, in that its content is both compelling and informative, although not always both at once. Given that the reviewer understands why Prévost “chose” to “translate” this text rather than any number of other similar ones, we can deduce that, had the reviewer known the text to be fictitious, he might even have understood why Prévost wrote it as he did.

However, while the reviewer appreciates Lade’s occasional anecdotes and the pseudo-works that are contained within Lade’s own narrative, his opinion of the pseudo-works following that narrative is less positive. The first sign of disapproval comes with discussion of the transition between the end of Lade’s narrative and the concluding pseudo-works. The reviewer, like some modern critics, considers the main purpose of these pseudo-works to be “pour remplir [l]e second Volume” (544). Still, the reviewer does not cite the lack of relationship between these pseudo-works and the subject-matter of Lade’s narrative as a reason for evaluating them negatively. And, far from dismissing them, he evaluates each one separately, and sees varying degrees of utility in each. The first pseudo-work, which describes the British colony of “Nouvelle Georgie,” satisfies the reviewer best of the three: “Ce qu’il nous apprend de la nouvelle Georgie, feroit plus de plaisir au Lecteur, s’il y avoit joint une Carte de cette Colonie” (544). Such a map would increase the pseudo-work’s potential for providing pleasure because it would permit the francophone reader to compare the English names of the rivers and nations that figure in it with the equivalent French names (544-45). The reviewer also takes issue with this pseudo-work for inappropriately representing the basis of the British claim to the colony it describes. The



second pseudo-work, which deals with Hudson's Bay, strikes the reviewer as potentially useful "pour ceux, qui sont obligés d'y voyager" but uninteresting, as it offers nothing not to be found in better-organized, more recent, reliable sources (546-47). The reviewer's opinion of the *Description de la Nouvelle Espagne* is more neutral: while the previous two pseudo-works were "[d]es morceaux décousus & imparfaits," the *Description*, though it may be "assez superficielle," has the merit of providing details "qui ne seront pas inutiles aux Voyageurs" (547-48). Given that we know that Prévost wrote and assembled this text intentionally, unlike the Trévoux reviewer we cannot see the inclusion the three pseudo-works that make up the concluding portion of the work as the result of a choice made by an individual with little expertise in the area of composing narratives. What purpose, then, do these semi-dispositive, semi-narrative units serve? The talent Prévost shows elsewhere in his body of work should prevent us from attributing the decision to mere laziness or even solely to pragmatic concerns.

In her study of the *Voyages*, Lawther makes an observation that may point us to the answer when she describes the novel's "atmosphere[,] in which the factual is never purely factual and the fictional never purely fictional," and which "contributes substantially to the narrative unity" of the text (289). Lawther agrees with Sgard's hypothesis that Prévost's use of factual material beyond the extent necessary for literary purposes stems from a poorly executed plan to write a novel about Lade, which Prévost supplemented with documentary material (293-94). However, even this explanation does not account for Prévost's choice to present that documentary material in the form of pseudo-works, and the sophisticated way in which Prévost combined authentic sources with each other and

with his own material to produce a hybrid text. Surely someone as well-versed in travel literature as Prévost could have found source material that could have been incorporated without needing to be presented as belonging to a separate work. Even admitting that this novel is not an enthralling work, Prévost presumably would have wanted to organize his text in the way most likely to interest potential readers. Given that the work was not very influential, Prévost's strategies appear to have failed, but it is worth attempting to identify what they were in the first place.

Though modern and postmodern novels may offer clearer examples of polyphony and dialogism than eighteenth-century novels, these two elements of intertextuality are nonetheless at work in the *Voyages*, most noticeably through the presence of pseudoworks. The interface between the main body of the work and the pseudoworks that appear within it is one way in which the ever-extending web of intertextuality that is language manifests itself in Prévost's novels. The *Voyages* shows its polyphonic character in two ways: 1) covertly: the fictional narrator, Robert Lade, is made to appropriate the words of actual people when Prévost puts text from authentic travel journals into his mouth (this kind of covert polyphony is also at work when Prévost reattributes authorship of authentic text of external origin to his fictional characters); 2) overtly: the presence of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* constitutes an irruption of independent textual entities of external origin, preserving their own voice.

Like all of Prévost's works, like all eighteenth-century novels, and perhaps like all texts published in book form during the period, the *Voyages* has an intertextual relationship with itself in a way that distinguishes it from even the most "polyphonic" of modern or

postmodern novels. Although the situation may be changing with the increasing influence of the internet on the publication industry, the current way in which novels are produced and distributed encourages the reading public to think of novels as self-contained textual entities that can be expressed in a finite, delineated, relatively fixed physical form, which becomes available at a particular moment in time. The fact that novels were often published in installments in the eighteenth century meant that audiences could never be truly certain whether a given textual entity that became available at a specific moment in time constituted the “whole” of the work, regardless of whether its textual conclusion coincided with a narrative resolution or not. Texts that related apparently concluded narratives could be continued—by the original author, or by a substitute, given the lack of robust copyright—if their popularity warranted it, while texts that seemed narratively unfinished at the end of any given installment might never have another installment, which would leave them “unfinished.” Consequently, the various installments of a novel from this period maintain intertextual relationships with one another, and with implied or actual continuations. And while new installments of successful novels would usually appear once every year or so, occasionally there could be one or more much longer gaps in publication, which would effectively create an intertextual relationship between each of the “periods” of the novel’s publication. For this reason, even single-installment novels of the period can be said to maintain internal intertextual relationships with their hypothetical continuations that never came into existence. The presence of pseudoworks in eighteenth century novels, then, is the type of internal intertextual relationship that most resembles something that can be seen at work in more recent novels, recalling similar techniques in postmodern novels.

Although we now know it to be “fake,” the *Voyages* was long taken by many readers to be an authentic travel journal, and this apparent change in the work’s authenticity complicates the intertextual relationships it maintains with itself internally and those it maintains externally with other works, especially those works that are quoted within it. One question that arises is to ascertain the difference, if any, between “artificial” and “authentic” intertextuality; the latter being defined as the sum of intertextual relationships between two texts of known authenticity status, and the former being defined as the sum of intertextual relationships in which the authenticity status of at least one of the texts is uncertain or disguised. A fictional travel novel maintains intertextual relationships both with other examples of the genre as well as with other fictional texts, but it also necessarily exists in relationship to authentic travel journals. Bringing the *Voyages* back into the discussion, we might ask whether a *fake* travel journal, as distinguished from a novel *in the form of* a travel journal, has these same intertextual relationships. In other words, does the existence of a real person who can be identified with the “author” of a travel journal change the way it relates intertextually to other discourses? The difference is in the level of prestige accorded to different kinds of intertexts, or their degree of licitness or illicitness. In the eighteenth century, it was expected that any prose text, no matter how authentic it appeared to be, could be harboring—intentionally or not—some degree of intertextual relationship with fictional or inauthentic texts. Today, however, the discovery of any degree of intertextual relationship between authentic and inauthentic texts that fails to respect the separation between the two domains brings into question a text’s status.

Another question occasioned by the complicated authenticity status of the *Voyages* is to define the relationship between the eighteenth century's different attitude toward the fiction–nonfiction dichotomy and the parallel between the reader's cultural lensing of the *Voyages* and Lade's cultural lensing of the cultures he visits and the pseudoworks he presents. The relationship consists of two parallels. First, the reader's encounter with Lade's journal is analogous to Lade's encounters with the various texts he inserts into his journal as pseudoworks. Second, the reader's interface with a foreign culture through the medium of translation, represented in the preface, is parallel to Lade's interface with foreign cultures through travel, as recorded throughout the text of his journal, which is always ultimately mediated by someone who “translates” even in the case of English-speaking colonies.

The way that intertextual relationships affect the ability of authentic and fictional travel journals to create meaning for readers depends on how those readers relate to the concepts of “authenticity” and “fictionality,” which were less distinct for eighteenth-century readers than they are for contemporary ones. Although scholars generally agree that in most cases few eighteenth-century readers were fooled by the presentation of the fictional texts we now call novels as authentic documents, the reading public's confidence in the accuracy of authentic works was lower than what contemporary readers expect from non-fictional works. Eighteenth-century readers recognized that such works could contain inaccuracies for a variety of reasons—they could result from unintentional errors on the part of the author, or they could be the intentional products of the author's desire to embellish a text.

Today, as in the eighteenth century, sometimes these intertextual relationships manifest themselves overtly, as in the case of quotation, which can be acknowledged or unacknowledged. Acknowledged quotations offer a relatively clear case. As long as the author acknowledges the quotation, an authentic travel journal can contain material taken from either fictional or authentic travel journals without forfeiting their status as authentic documents, as in epigraphs, etc. Fictional travel journals can do the same for the sake of imitation. The case of unacknowledged quotations is more complicated: both the nature of the work containing the quotation and the nature of the text from which the quoted material comes have an effect on the authenticity of the quoting text. If an authentic travel journal contains unacknowledged quotations it retains at least partial authentic status, for the parts that describe travel actually undertaken by the author. An authentic travel journal that contains unacknowledged quotations from another authentic travel journal remains entirely authentic, despite being, at least in part, the product of plagiarism. If the “borrowed” material comes from a fictional source, though, only the parts describing travel actually undertaken by the author retain their authentic status, and the work as a whole.

For a modern reader, only *acknowledged* quotations presented in accordance with the authenticity status of their source entirely preserve the authenticity status of the work in which the quoted material appears. Buffon’s reference to Robert Lade as an authoritative source would be an indelible stain on his work if he were writing today, even though the information Buffon takes from the *Voyages* ultimately comes from an “authentic” source. This is because under the modern paradigm, an “authentic” text that presents a “fictional” text as “authentic” loses its right to complete authenticity, even if the reference is made in

good faith, because the author mistakenly believes the fictional source to be authentic, and even if the information taken from the inauthentic text is accurate—as is the case with the information Buffon takes from the *Voyages*, since Prévost’s information comes from authentic sources—the stain would nevertheless remain because current conventions do not ascribe the same level of authority to “fictional” texts as to “non-fictional” ones.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to know what an average eighteenth-century reader would have thought of Buffon’s reliance on the word of a fictional character. Perhaps discovering that Buffon had been taken in by Prévost’s ruse would not have bothered most readers much, given that, according to the attitude expressed in the Trévoux review of the *Voyages*, one should always be on the lookout for suspicious information when reading travel journals, so that one would be able to separate the portion of the text that was most likely reliable. By extension, it would seem logical that many or most readers would expect Buffon, and any other naturalist or historian, to possess the ability to distinguish the true from the fabulous. Therefore, the reader’s assessment of Buffon’s text would be more affected by the reliability of the information Buffon took from Lade, than by the existence or non-existence of Lade himself as a real person. And given that the information Buffon took from Lade ultimately came from authentic sources, it seems likely that readers would have decided to trust it anyway, or, they would have been at least just as likely to do so as if they had encountered the information in its original context.

Quotation is the main structural technique at work in this text. While the shifting balance between tension and harmony between the dispositive and narrative structural systems makes *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité* a more compelling novel: because the

two systems go in and out of phase with each other, as one system reaches a point of climax necessitating a *dénouement*, the other can begin rising toward a climax, thereby minimizing the amount of down-time necessary. Similarly, the complex relationships between the narrative units and units of quoted material maintain the text's forward momentum. While the transition from Lade's account of his own travels to the major pseudo-works at the conclusion of the work is perhaps not very compelling, in the final analysis, it is nevertheless deliberate and gradual. There is no firm boundary between the end of Lade's narration and the beginning of his relation of the material about Georgia communicated to him by his son, but rather a gradual transition (2: 161).

To understand the role of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* we must return to the title page, which informs the prospective reader that the text within is an "ouvrage traduit de l'anglais." Presenting this text as a translation gives it a dual nature. As a travel journal, it constitutes the record of one traveler's encounters with foreign cultures. More specifically, however, as the translation of an *English* travel journal into *French*, the text itself constitutes a mechanism for instigating a cultural confrontation very similar to the ones it records. Although the work does not directly describe English culture, it does provide a window into the culture of its narrator, who is English. In other words, the work itself is a *mise en abyme* of its own reception by its intended audience. However, this is not merely a question of analogy between an Englishman's discovery of certain cultures, on one hand, and French readers discovering English culture, on the other. Rather, the crucial parallel is between the narrator's culture as a lens for examining the cultures he encounters and the reader's culture as a lens for the narrator's report on his examination, because there we see



a confrontation between different “semantic fields” or “textual systems” rather than between individual instances of discovery. The presence of pseudoworks within the *Voyages* recreates this *mise en abyme* at an additional level of removal from the readers by creating a parallel between Lade’s viewpoint and that of the authors of the pseudoworks he includes in his journal. By reproducing the contrast between a pervasive field of vision and a discrete object to be viewed within that field, pseudoworks recreate this kind of relationship at an additional level of removal from the readers’ worldview. This is exactly the effect that pseudoworks produce by virtue of being present within a larger work. To better demonstrate this effect, I will now analyze the first pseudowork that appears in the *Voyages*, which initiates the reader into a process that continues throughout the work.

## Pseudoworks Fully Embedded Within Lade’s narration

### *Major Embedded Pseudoworks*

#### A Problematic Pseudowork: The Mémoire sur Carthagène

The first pseudowork to appear in the *Voyages* appears after only 41 pages of the original edition—by comparison, the preface is only 16 pages long (1: [i]-xvi), and the pseudowork itself takes up 30 pages (1: 41-72). At this point, Lade’s personal narrative has undergone only two major developments: first, his departure from England on a ship captained by a man named Rindekly; and second, the efforts he and Rindekly make to acquire gold on the western coast of Africa. As the Trévoux reviewer mentions, the text of this pseudowork falls into Lade’s hands by chance after a storm damages the ship, necessitating a stop for repairs at El Hierro, one of the Canary Islands. At El Hierro, Lade meets a certain Captain Flint, who has also come to the island to repair his ship after the storm. Flint has just come from Cartagena, and has written an account of the observations

he made there. He shares the account with Lade, who makes a copy of it for himself, presenting it in his journal as an independent dispositive unit entitled *Mémoire sur la situation et le commerce de Cartagene* [sic] (1: 41). This is the second time in the *Voyages* that a textual boundary has served to effect a confrontation between cultures, the first being the title page. This time, though, the text representing the foreign culture makes its appearance within a context *known explicitly* to Prévost's readers, namely Lade's personal narrative, rather than within a context that Prévost's readers know intimately, but only *implicitly*, namely daily life in eighteenth-century France.

Such a sophisticated and gradual process of weaving together narrative and description prepares demonstrates the parallel between Lade's encounter with the *Mémoire* and the readers' approach to texts about unfamiliar cultures and places. In fact, the transitional process mimics the path of Prévost's readers to the *Voyages*. This parallel structure underscore the analogy between the readers' and Lade's respective situations: just as the appearance of the *Mémoire* at this particular point in the text is not *necessary* in narrative terms, but the result of a coherent and logical chain of events, so Prévost's readers were never fated to read the *Voyage*, but each one decided to do so as the result of a series of logically-determined actions. Because the pseudoworks are only partially integrated into the structure of the novel, they cannot be simply dismissed by a reader who only wants to focus on the narrator's story; rather, this partial integration necessitates readerly engagement with the narrator's situation, rather than with the personal narrative of the journal-writer as a protagonist. Instead of seeing the partial integration of the pseudowork as a writer's mistake, it is more productive to read the very incompleteness of the

integration as a compositional technique that calls attention to the parallel between the reader's encounter with the *Voyages* and Lade's encounter with the *Mémoire*, both texts being artifacts that have no immediate specific use to the individuals who come across them, but which excites their curiosity nonetheless. This displacement of focus from the narrator to the narrator's situation occurs as a result of a three-stage process by which Prévost gradually modifies his text, first to make space for technical details within a work that begins as a personal narrative, then to allow descriptive details unrelated to advancing the plot to coexist with details that do, and lastly to activate the mechanism created by the modifications in the first two phases, and thus complete the preparation for presenting the first pseudowork.

The first stage of the transition leading from Lade's narrative frame to the first pseudowork displaces the primary focus of the text from the personal to the technical. This displacement mirrors the reader's choice of a genre after having decided to read a book. Just as Lade has reasons for choosing maritime trade, an eighteenth-century reader would have had reasons for choosing a travel journal rather than, say, a novel.<sup>78</sup> Both Lade and the reader find themselves in need of undertaking a productive activity, and both must decide what kind of activity to undertake. The fact that both choices ultimately lead to discovering foreign cultures shows that there is an element of the decision-making process

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<sup>78</sup> Specifically, Lade determines that he has to engage in some kind of commercial activity to earn back his family fortune, but he needs the help of a merchant acquaintance to figure out how exactly to do so (1: 2-3). This part of Lade's experience resembles the scenario of receiving a reading recommendation from a friend who works with literature—perhaps as a critic, instructor, or author. The parallel between Lade's need for expert advice and the reader's similar need deepens our understanding of this displacement by fulfilling a precondition for the curiosity that further drives the encounter with the foreign.

that both decisions share. The technical details begin to multiply as Lade's plans materialize,<sup>79</sup> and the reader's attention moves from a personal to a more abstract focus, from Lade himself to Lade's situation. The additional navigational details that start to appear when Lade finally sets sail further this effect. Lade's narration quickly distinguishes itself from that of Prévost's other narrators by incorporating numerous navigational details including meteorological phenomena, the use of charts to avoid navigational hazards such as sand banks, and the use of soundings to navigate close to shore, and Lade's account begins to incorporate dates in log-book fashion, all of which details Lade includes regardless of whether they have an effect on the progress of his narration (1: 10-11).<sup>80</sup> These narrative strategies simultaneously deepen the reader's awareness of the pseudowork, increase the reader's distance from Lade, and enhance the text's ability to incorporate primarily informational material alongside material of a more predominantly narrative character, a combination that prepares readers for the appearance of the first pseudowork, and for those that follow throughout the rest of the *Voyages*.

The second stage of the transition occurs when the expedition arrives at its first destination, mirroring a reader's choice of a specific work within a genre. Once Lade and his fellow voyagers begin to interact with the inhabitants of the area near their anchorage,

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<sup>79</sup> He takes a position as a supercargo with the promise of employment in the shipowner's office located at the final port of the journey (1: 3-4), he has to figure out how to support his family while he's gone (1: 4-5), etc.

<sup>80</sup> Lade's description of the first leg of his voyage begins in somewhat similar fashion to what one might expect in one of Prévost's more conventionally novelistic works: "Le vent fut si favorable à notre navigation, qu'ayant doublé les Caps d'Espagne en six jours, nous découvrîmes vers le soir du neuvième [*sic*] jour les Côtes d'Afrique" (1: 10). And while the increasing level of technical detail soon to enter into the text belies this initial resemblance to analogous phrases in *Cleveland* and elsewhere, even this very beginning sentence contains more geographical specificity than the rest of Prévost's body of work typically exhibits.

Lade's narration begins to incorporate descriptions of the inhabitants' habits and customs into his narration of their interactions with him and the other members of the expedition. As with the additional navigational details of the previous stage, some of these have nothing to do with advancing the plot, as in the case of a group of Africans who row out to meet the ship as it approaches the shore: "[I]ls monterent hardiment sur notre Bord, leurs épaules étoient couvertes d'une peau d'animal sauvage ; ils en portoient une autre autour des reins, qui leur couvroit les parties naturelles" (1: 12). Other descriptive details have a direct impact on subsequent events, such as the fact that some of the Africans wear golden earrings, from which fact Lade deduces, correctly, that Rindekly has come to this part of the coast hoping to acquire gold (1: 14-15). These examples show how the descriptive and informative aspect of the work coexists with the narrative aspect. As the story of the expedition's efforts to acquire gold from the Africans progresses, Lade continues to include descriptions of the Africans and their territory that far exceed the needs of the plot (1: 12-34). Here, Prévost manipulates the text to divert the reader's natural burgeoning identification with the protagonist of a prose narrative to an identification with the protagonist's situation: it is not so much Lade's *personality* that allows readers to imagine themselves in his shoes, but a description of the "shoes" themselves.

The third stage of transition consists of anchoring the descriptive aspect of the text more firmly in the narrative aspect, as the events of Lade's personal narrative become a frame for what is clearly, in the eyes of the modern reader, a geographical description lifted from an external source. This process mirrors what happens when readers reflect on what they have read, which involves integrating it into the narrative of their own lives. The

reflection acts as a transition out of the pseudowork, and this stage is more like a description of the reader's state of mind when reading the text. Perhaps there are two "texts" being "read" here: Lade "reads" the culture of the Africans he meets, but he also reads Flint's *Mémoire*. The frame for the pseudowork follows, which is part of this gradual process even though it is also distinct, and part of what makes that apparent contradiction possible is the sentence-level transition. Even though the transition from major work to pseudowork up to this point has been gradual, it is possible to locate the precise moment when the final transition occurs midway through the sentence in which Lade describes how his ship entered the port alongside Flint's vessel initiates the final transitional phase: "Nous entrâmes ensemble dans la Rade, qui est naturellement sûre & commode, & qui pourroit le devenir encore plus avec quelque secours de l'art" (1: 38-39). This sentence bridges the distinction between narration and information in a progression of three clauses. The first clause, which deals only with what Lade and the other members of his expedition *did* ("Nous entrâmes ensemble dans la Rade"), is primarily narrative, while the third clause, which contains only description of a significant geographical feature ("& qui pourroit le devenir encore plus avec quelque secours de l'art"), is primarily informative. The middle clause, which contains details that would be equally at home in the relation of a voyage and in a geographical text ("qui est naturellement sûre & commode"), takes advantage of the word "rade," which comes from the technical jargon of geography and navigation, to meld narrative and informative registers without any grammatical or thematic disjunction between the two. A full-page description of the island follows in the original edition. The

didactic tone of this passage completes the pervasion of descriptive text into the narrative, consummating the preparation for the pseudowork about to appear.

The three-stage process outlined above establishes a context within which an external textual entity can intrude into a narration, just as the *Voyages* comes to the reader's attention within a context. Having gradually transformed the *Voyages* in such a way that it can accommodate informational and narrative content with equal ease, Prévost then braids in another strand of the plot to explain the pseudowork's origin and to underscore the similarities between Lade's encounter with the *Mémoire* and his readers' encounter with the *Voyages*:

Pendant qu'on travailloit à réparer les deux Vaisseaux, M. Flint nous apprit les circonstances de son Voyage, & celles de la tempête qui l'avoit ennuyée. Il venoit des parties méridionales de l'Amérique, où il étoit allé de Carthagène pour recueillir des sommes considérables qui lui étoient dûës dans divers Ports. Comme il avoit fait un long séjour à Carthagène, il nous communiqua des Observations si curieuses sur la situation de cette fameuse Ville & sur l'état de son commerce, que l'intérêt commun à tous les Anglois de connoître un des principaux centres de leurs affaires, me fit souhaiter de prendre une copie de ses Mémoires. Je la placerai ici, telle qu'il eut la bonté de me l'accorder (1: 40).

Like Lade, Flint gives a background account of himself, then presents the textual product of his voyage (1: 40). Lade's role as narrator here also resembles that of the anonymous editor-translator of the *Voyages* in the preface, although Lade makes no mention of any modifications to Lade's text: on the contrary he claims that the text remains the same as it was when it was given to him, whereas the editor claims to have cut out the less trustworthy-seeming passages of Lade's text (1: xiii-xv). Here we see a nexus of intertextual relationships: Lade's fictionality and Prévost's attribution of pseudoworks to fictional characters destabilizes the meaning of the text today and in the eighteenth-century,

making it impossible for the text to fully conform to readerly expectations regarding either novels or travel journals. For both eighteenth-century readers and modern readers, the presence of this and other pseudoworks prevents the surface appearance of the text from being either fully narrative or informative. However, this destabilization occurs through different mechanisms for the reading publics of each period. For eighteenth-century readers unaware of the text's true authenticity status, the pseudoworks transform what would otherwise have been the record of one traveler's experiences into a heteroclite assemblage of textual entities representing historical, geographical, and cultural information, some of which stem directly from the traveler's narration, while others come from other narrators, some of which are themselves narrative in character, while others are strictly informative. For modern readers who know that the text of the pseudoworks comes from authentic sources, and that the sources to which Lade attributes them are fictional, the presence of pseudoworks problematizes the work's relationship to the very concept of authenticity.

Even book design underscores this complex relation between main work and pseudowork. In the original edition, this introduction to the *Mémoire* is followed by an ornamental design in the blank area at the bottom of the page signaling an important dispositive transition (1: 40). The *Mémoire* itself begins on a new page, separated from the preceding text by a horizontal line followed by a title page with the word "MEMOIRE" in large capital letters, and a subtitle, "Sur la Situation & le Commerce de Carthagene [*sic*]" in a slightly smaller typeface that is still somewhat larger than that of the main body text (1: 41). These dispositive marks do not rise to the level of those that set off the beginning of Lade's journal, which include a wider, more ornate bar depicting foliage and other



decorative elements in place of a simple line, and whose title is written entirely in capital letters, in four different sizes, the largest being significantly larger than that used for the word “MEMOIRE” (1:41). Even the editor’s preface features an ornamental bar with an ornate border and various decorative elements such as diamonds and miniature foliage, and whose title, “P R É F A C E” is set in quite a large typeface with extra spacing between the letters (1: [i]). However, although the textual features that set the *Mémoire* apart from the rest of Lade’s narration are not as elaborate as those employed on the work’s main title page or at the beginning of the editor-translator’s preface, the *Mémoire* remains a distinct entity—although only in part, as examination of the pseudowork’s conclusion will show.

A gradual transition back from the pseudo-work to Lade’s journal begins when the text of the *Mémoire* proper gives way to an annexed *Relation* recounting the capture of Cartagena by Francis Drake. There is no obvious visual transition marking the end of the *Mémoire* and the *Relation* that comes after it, only a brief introduction by Lade, who notes that “A ce Mémoire, le Capitaine ajoûta une Relation fort curieuse de la prise de Carthagène en 1585 par le Chevalier Drake [qu’il] tenoit de son pere, qui servoit alors dans la Flotte Angloise, & qui avoit écrit les événemens dont il avoit été témoin” (1: 58). This addition underscores the effect of the pseudowork on the larger work. Placing what is in effect a pseudowork within a pseudowork normalizes the structural technique that is to characterize the entire work. Just as Lade sees fit to insert whatever potentially useful material comes his way into his journal, the authors of the texts he inserts do the same to their own texts. This set of nested quotations also provides a measure of continuity in a text composed of heterogeneous elements. The lack of a visually obvious conclusion to this *Relation* makes

it more likely that readers will read through the entire text without skipping over inserted sections, although it is not an absolute guarantee against discontinuous reading (1: 72-73). Those who do read through the entire text discover connections between the apparently unrelated or barely-related inserted texts. For example, the “commerce des chaloupes,” that Captain Flint mentions in his *Mémoire* figures in the *Relation* as well, and in which Lade and Rindekly themselves eventually participate (1: 52-55, 67-69). After the last paragraph containing an incontrovertible sign that it belongs to the *Relation*—it mentions Sir Francis Drake—there is another paragraph before the first explicit indication that the narration has passed back into Lade’s own voice. This intermediary paragraph brings the narration closer to the time of Lade’s voyage, mentioning that “Carthagene [*sic*] s’est vengée depuis ce tems-là des Anglois, non seulement par la ruine du Commerce des Chaloupes, mais en prenant sur eux l’Isle de la Providence, que les Espagnols ont nommé *Santa Catalina*”, and discusses the geographical features of that island (1: 72). The term is in italics, which makes it stand out even to someone skimming through the section looking for the continuation of Lade’s narrative. It is one of only two italicized terms in this section that are not foreign words or place-names or translations of these. The other italicized term is “sang de dragon,” which is the name of a kind of “baume odoriférant” (1: 56), which foreshadows the ambergris-fishing that Lade and Rindekly will later undertake in the Caribbean.

While nothing in this paragraph explicitly identifies it as being Lade’s personal contribution to his journal, the subject matter suggests that it is not part of the *Relation* provided by Flint’s father, to whom Lade only attributes responsibility only for narration of the events of Drake’s taking of Cartagena. It is possible that the paragraph represents a

return to Flint's *Mémoire*, in which case it would be a sign of even greater structural similarity between it and Lade's journal. The transition out of the *Relation*, however, minimizes the impression of separation. Lade simply begins a new paragraph in which he discusses the role of the *Mémoire* in the *Voyages*:

Je ne prévoyois point en tirant la copie de ce Mémoire, qu'il dût jamais contribuer ou nuire à ma sûreté. L'envie de m'instruire étoit mon unique motif, & ce fut elle encore qui me fit commencer dès le même jour à faire exactement le Journal de mon Voyage. Je commis seulement une imprudence en gardant à part le Mémoire de Carthagene [*sic*], & l'on me fit connoître dans la suite qu'il m'auroit été moins dangereux, si j'eusse pris soin de le mêler comme indifféremment dans mon Journal. (1: 73)

This commentary brings the reader's attention to the relationship between this pseudowork, which is a "whole" in its own right, and the "whole" work of which it is a part. The reader learns that Lade originally kept the *Mémoire* separate from his own journal, which suggests that the two texts are independent entities. Furthermore, the *Mémoire* constitutes a "whole" work to the extent that it represents a self-sufficient entity handed over to Lade as-is by Flint. By maximizing the dispositive transitions at the beginning of the inserted material and minimizing them at the end, Prévost draws the reader further into the world of the text while preserving the impression of authenticity that comes with visible signs of inserted documents.

Such complex relations help constitute a distinctive narrative aesthetic of wholeness, but not the kind of wholeness that comes from a perfect design in which every element serves a specific purpose in harmony with every other element, rather a wholeness born from the organic process that Flint engaged in to produce it. The way that Lade only partially integrates the text of the *Mémoire* within the fabric of the *Voyages* is both an

example and a thematization of this kind of wholeness, and Lade's commentary brings the reader's attention to that thematization. Fully integrating the text of the *Mémoires* into the main body of the *Voyages* would show the reader what it would have been like for Lade to mingle his copy of Flint's writings into his journal, but doing so would have obscured what actually happened, since Lade kept his copy separate from the rest of his journal. Similarly, marking off both the beginning and the end of the *Mémoire* would create an overly stark contrast between it and the rest of the *Voyages*, which would prevent the reader from appreciating it as an integral part of the overall work. On a practical level, the *Mémoire*'s lack of a clear end-boundary makes it difficult for a reader inclined to skip over inserted pseudo-works to do so. The combination of a clear beginning and a hidden end provides the best of both worlds: both the added interest and authenticity of an inserted pseudo-work and the continuity and organicity of a sustained narrative.

Lade's later account of how the Spanish Coast Guard discover the *Mémoire* is instructive as to the importance of that pseudo-work's position within Lade's journal and its relationship to the larger published work of which it eventually becomes part. Lade's description of this discovery provides the reader with a detailed understanding of the place occupied by the *Mémoire* in Lade's journal:

[E]n observant ma Cabane, ils apperçurent mon Journal qui étoit ouvert sur une table, parce que j'y ajoutois tous les jours quelques circonstances. Ils le parcoururent, & leurs yeux tombant sur la description de Carthagène, qui se présentoit dès les premières pages. Cette découverte les occupa long-tems. Enfin bornant leurs réflexions, ils déclarèrent à M. Rindekly, que des observations si particulières, sur un lieu de cette importance n'avoient point été faites sans quelques vûes [...]. (1 : 221)

It would appear that position of the text Lade copied from Flint's original mirrors that of

the pseudo-work in the published version. Both appear early on in the text, and both are sufficiently conspicuous to be easily noticed. This is true despite the double revision process the text has undergone, first at the hands of Lade himself, and presumably his English publisher, and then at the hands of Prévost. It was not strictly necessary that the position of the pseudo-work within the work be analogous to the copied text's position within the original journal. That it does is reflective of an editorial choice implicitly imputed to Lade or his publisher.

Lade's journal takes on increasing importance when, upon leaving St. Lucia, they are compelled to travel to Cartagena by the Spanish coast guard. When they arrive, only Rindekly and four others are allowed to disembark. At first Rindekly asks Lade to remain onboard, but "le désir de vérifier par mes propres yeux la description que j'avois de Carthagene me fit souhaiter de gagner le rivage avec lui" (1: 308). Lade specifically mentions his decision to take his journal with him: "Je n'oubliai point mon Journal, qui commençoit à grossir par le peu d'ordre que j'avois mis jusqu'alors dans mes Relations" (1: 308-09). One might think that Lade's reason for bringing the journal along with him was to enable immediate verification of the details in his written account of the city. During an inspection, the Spanish authorities examine Lade's journal to complement the scant information they are able to extract from Rindekly's papers, which consisted only of "observations sans datte sur les mouillages & sur les Côtes", because Rindekly relies on Lade's journal for more detailed records (1: 317). Unlike Rindekly, Lade had prepared his journal for the inspection to prevent the Spanish authorities from discovering evidence of their illegal activity: "La même précaution qui m'avoit fait prendre mon

journal en sortant du Vaisseau, m'avoit porté à le mettre dans ma poche en allant à l'audience" (1: 317). Regardless of whether or not Lade intended to compare his written account of Cartagena against the city itself, or whether his primary intention in bringing his journal with him was to conceal it from the Spanish authorities, the end result is that, due to the necessity of avoiding suspicious behavior, Lade ends up being better informed about the city by means of his second-hand written account than by means of any direct observation he might have wished to undertake on his own behalf:

Nous affectâmes, en descendant au long du Canal, de ne pas faire des observations trop curieuses ; de sorte qu'après avoir demeuré quatre jours à Carthagène, & traversé deux fois le Port, je me trouvai bien moins instruit par mes yeux que par la Relation qu'on m'avoit communiquée deux ans auparavant. (1: 324-25)

In bringing this surprising turn of events to the reader's attention, Lade elevates the role of the pseudo-work containing a description of Cartagena in a way that thematizes the relationship between eyewitness accounts and the experiences that produce such accounts. What does the valorization of direct eyewitness accounts over indirect ones mean when any such account is only one step away from being transformed into a secondhand account through inclusion within another work? And this inclusion is not always transparent, as in the case of pseudo-works, because authors are free to use information gleaned from direct accounts without attribution, as Prévost well knew, since he used the technique often throughout his career.

#### *Shorter Inserted Texts*

##### Mémoire sur Carthagène vs. Description of Cuba

The difficulty of separating the travelogue from the journal varies; or, put otherwise, some of the encyclopedic prose is better integrated into the fabric of Lade's

personal narrative. Rather than a sign of insufficient skill on Prévost's part, this variation facilitates the coexistence of both types of writing within a single work. The varying degree of ease with which the encyclopedic prose can be distinguished from the narrative prose casts the role of pseudo-works in a different light. Each new place has its attending description, and some extended historical narratives or descriptions are not presented as separate texts. Is it a strategy for making the work as a whole seem more realistic? Seems unlikely because not all extended descriptions/narratives are presented as pseudo-works. It seems more like an attempt to make the work as a whole more homogenous in a way that makes for a smoother reading experience. The variety of contrasts between the journal/narrative and the external narrative/description makes the distinction less jarring. The pseudo-works are longer than the narratives and descriptions that Lade incorporates into the text of his journal. Compare the *Mémoire* on Cartagena and the introductory material about Cuba (1: 233-39). In echo to the cloak-and-dagger commentary at the end of the *Mémoire*, Lade expresses a cautious attitude toward publishing such sensitive material:

[C]'est par l'importance de sa force & de son commerce, qu'il faut considérer la Havana. Je réserve pour ceux qui nous gouvernent, toutes les observations de M. Rindeckly & les miennes sur le premier de ces deux articles, & je me garderai bien de les exposer au hazard d'être traduites dans quelque autre Langue, pour servir de préservatif contre l'utilité que l'Angleterre en peut tôt ou tard esperer. (1: 239)

This textual *sotto voce* appears intended to give readers the impression of listening in on a conversation, between Lade and his British audience, not meant for French ears. This interpretation would be in line with the hypothesis of R.A. Francis that Prévost intended to serve the interests of his naval minister through this work, as this guilty pleasure would

seem to have the effect of giving French readers the idea that they are receiving sensitive information, in response to which they would perhaps be more likely to favor active naval expansion or other more aggressive maritime policies.<sup>81</sup> While it is true that the result is not a page-turner for modern audiences, it is also true that the overall fusion, constant ebb and flow, and gradual transitions between the two registers is very complex and executed with attention to detail.

#### The Story of Mr. Speed, a Description of Barbados, and Mr. Rytwood's Journal

So as not to ignore evidence against my thesis, I should talk about stories that are neither typographically demarcated from the surrounding narrative nor referred to by terms that designate them as coherent entities. Precious little seems to actually *happen* in Lade's own narrative, particularly in the second volume, which consists mainly of pseudoworks, and even the part of the text for which Lade is directly responsible contains many of these interpolated narratives that fail to rise to the level of true pseudoworks. The process of "transitioning" back to his personal story forms the bulk of the narrative. After the story of the two brothers, Lade brings the moment of his departure closer in the narration by mentioning that the unfortunate love interest of that story became one of his and Rindekly's passengers. Likewise, Lade includes Mr. Speed's story and that of a French refugee named lieutenant governor of Jamaica (116-17) because both men are among "plusieurs personnes qui nous demanderent [*sic*] le passage" (110-11). When Lade mentions the "service fort singulier" (111) that earned a certain Quaker the right to

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<sup>81</sup> See "The *Voyages de Robert Lade*: Anatomy of a Hero." *Nottingham French Studies*, n° 29 (2), 1990, p. 56-63.



buy Speed's plantation, Lade is effectively referring to Speed's story more by summarizing its contents than by naming it.

Lade's description of Barbados is another threshold case. He begins with an account of Bridgetown and its environs, which includes its physical location, a characterization of the surrounding terrain, a list of its fortifications, and a brief account of its history (1: 250-53). Lade provides a glimpse into his approach to his task as geographical observer when he mentions that "J'ai commencé par faire la description de ce qui se présente à la première vûë" (1: 254). Before moving on to the less immediately apparent aspects, Lade pauses to advance the narrative. After this brief narrative interlude, Lade returns to his description:

Comme notre unique affaire à Bridgetown étoit de renouveler nos provisions, & de mettre nos richesses en sûreté, je laissai ce soin à M. Rindekly, pour observer particulièrement les propriétés d'un Pays dont nos Marchands s'étoient moins occupés jusqu'alors à nous faire des relations qu'à tirer de solides avantages. (1 : 256)

The description that follows is not radically different from the "description de ce qui se présente à la première vûë," but it does widen the scale by following the line of fortifications that extend from Lade's port of arrival to nearby towns (1: 256-60). A transition from a narrow-focused description of fortifications to a more general discussion of the area occurs when Lade turns his attention to a stretch of coastline beyond the extent of the manmade fortifications: "Delà jusqu'à la Ville d'Ostin ... l'Isle est fortifiée naturellement par une chaine de Monts, & de Rocs, qui la rendent inaccessible" (1: 260). Having brought up the natural features of the island insofar as they contribute to the island's fortification, Lade then transitions to a more general discussion

of those natural features for their own sake, and then to an even more general discussion of the island's other features and a wide-ranging variety of historical and anecdotal accounts (260-78). Eventually, Lade claims to transition to commercial observations: "Parmi toutes ces observations, je me gardai bien de négliger celles qui pouvoient m'apporter de nouvelles lumières pour le commerce" (278). Taken together, the various parts of this description add up to approximately 25 pages.

On the island of Saint Lucia, Lade encounters a certain M. Rytwood, who narrates a tale that nearly qualifies as a pseudowork. Like a pseudowork, this passage is marked off from the main body of the text, though not by a title but instead by the presence of quotation marks that run along the margin. This is a difference of degree, rather than of quality, and it underscores the importance of a continuum of dispositive differentiation to the narrative functioning of the work as a whole. Lade's introduction to Rytwood's account sheds light on its role within the overall dispositive and narrative structure of the work:

Entre diverses recits de ses voïages il nous en fit un fort étendu de la fameuse navigation du Duc & de la Duchesse, deux Vaisseaux de Bristol, qui firent le tour du monde dans le cours des années 1708, 1709, 1710 & 1711. Il étoit Contremaître du Duc, Mais la relation de cette grande entreprise ayant été publiée à Londres en 1712, par le Capitaine Edouard Cooke, je n'en donnerai place ici qu'à ce qui peut éclaircir un fait assez intéressant, dont on a négligé les circonstances dans le premier volume. Le Capitaine Cooke parle d'un William Selkirk [...]. M. Rytwood nous apprit d'abord que ce malheureux solitaire se nommoit Selcrag, ce qu'il nous prouva aussi-tôt par la lecture même de son Journal, où il avoit eu soin de lui faire signer de sa propre main la vérité de son aventure (1: 284-85)

Here Rytwood echoes Lade, as he also corrects the published accounts by referring to his journal. Lade transmits Rytwood's tale to the reader in the same manner as the *Mémoire*:

“ensuite il nous lut ce qu’il me permit de transcrire dans le peu de temps que nous passâmes à Sainte Lucie” (1: 285). By including various elements of Rytwood’s journal in Lade’s account, Prévost is able to redirect his reader’s attention from the St. Lucia episode to the continuation of Lade and Rindekly’s personal odyssey.

The two travelers’ intention in going to St. Lucia had been to deposit part of the pearls they had acquired in Spanish waters in safe hands, to minimize their risk. The beginnings of their attempts to do so form one bookend around reported information from Rytwood (they deposit two of three chests); their ultimate decision not to risk trying to have the third sent through French customs, who would hopefully let them pass in order to hurt the Spanish, forms the other. Between these two bookends Prévost places several heteroclit elements. The first, and most developed, is an account of the voyage of the Duke and Duchess (285-90). The transition between this nearly full-fledged pseudo work and the next piece based on Rytwood’s journal is the journal itself:

Le Journal de M. Rytwood, étoit celui d’un homme de mer, qui s’attachoit plutôt à la position des lieux, à la description des Côtes, des Ports, des Bayes, & des Parages, qu’à l’Histoire physique ou morale des pais qu’il visite. Cependant je tombai sur divers traits curieux, dont il m’accorda la communication. Je n’en rapporterai qu’un, dont l’exemple m’a paru singulier pour l’utilité du commerce. (1: 290)

This transition is the equivalent of a common conversational strategy: essentially, Lade is saying to the reader, “speaking of Rytwood’s journal, here’s another interesting thing about his journal.” This “free-association” allows Prévost to move on quickly to a “trait curieux” having to do with cooperation between men of warring countries when far from the influence of their masters in the Mariana Islands (1: 290-95). Then, using the islands as the common thread, he moves on to a discussion of the cartographical errors related to

them (1: 295-96), which brings up a brief anecdote regarding the frustration of sailors unable to find some nearby islands whose stones and soil, taken on as ballast by the ships that discovered them, allegedly later revealed the presence of gold (1: 296-97). and finally to “ce que je tirai de plus utile & de plus remarquable du Journal de M. Ritwood”, a table of latitude and longitude, which Lade reproduces in its entirety (1: 298-303). This table creates a visual and formal boundary that brings closure to the series of “traits curieux” that began with the story of the Duke and the Duchess. It also serves as a point of transition into the story of Helena Perez and her lover, Spallo.

#### Description of Veracruz and San Juan de Ulúa

Lade’s description of Veracruz and San Juan de Ulúa, which brings the text nearly to the end of its first volume, is less distinguished from previous narration than some of Lade’s other such descriptions (1: 342-53). Lade’s account of his visit to the city follows. This account includes a humorous anecdote, a portrait of the inhabitants’ habits and customs, a description of the city’s climate, and the city’s role in regional and international trade (1: 354-60). Lade follows his account of the city with an attempt to correct cartographical errors related to the city and its environs (1: 360-62). He then relays the story of an attack on the city by pirates (1: 362-66). This tale is narrated to him during “une heure de promenade” by the doctor who figured prominently in the earlier anecdote, in addition to many “choses incroyables de la puissances & des richesses du Roi d’Espagne” (1: 366). In a way, the various descriptive elements are incorporated into the textual unit formed by the anecdote, which only ends at this point (1: 355-66). The episode with the doctor ends with a final commentary by Lade: first he makes one final sarcastic comment regarding the doctor’s avariciousness, and then mentions the dark skin

of the doctor and his family, which would seem to camouflage Helena Perez among Lade and Rindekly's English crew, given the lightness of her complexion relative to the residents of Veracruz (1: 366-67). In this way, Prévost brings the subject back to the earlier narrative thread without marking a major transition. This is also the moment for preparing the transition between volumes: rounding out the "representatives of the British government" subplot (1: 367-68), setting the scene for a new phase of his journeys with Rindekly (1: 368-69), account of actual departure including how winds force them to travel to a place where they will be able to drop off Helena Perez and Spallo (1: 369-70). The impression of transition comes more from Lade's presentation than from a real transition. It might seem that Prévost treats this transition in such a way as to play it up, and thereby increase the drama of the end of a volume, but in fact it functions in the same way as similar ones from previous junctures in the plot, and merely seems to be more dramatic because of its situation near a dispositive boundary.

#### Description of the Parishes of Jamaica

The second volume of is mostly composed of pseudo-works. The party return to Jamaica, and come up with the idea of attempting to employ Mosquito tribespeople to quash a revolt of black slaves. This preliminary episode is followed by a description of the Mosquitos and an account of previous occasions when Mosquitos had been employed to fight against slave rebellions. Rindekly is willing to go pursue the idea, and the marriage of Helena and Spallo leads into the final preparations for the journey to the cape of Gracia de Dios to visit the Mosquitos, which provides an opportunity for Lade to describe his experiences with the Mosquitos. During both phases of this narrative subunit, Lade stresses the importance of geographical accounts from reliable sources in the form

of the map provided by the pilot, as well as the “leçons” and “récits” necessary to use them correctly (2: 13). Using information gleaned from the Mosquitos, Lade and Rindekly discover a Spanish silver mine and rob it, after which they return to Jamaica and attack rebellious slaves, ending the episode. While figuring out what to do next, Lade mentions “notre aventure,” referring to time spent in Africa (2: 40). This self-referential summary contributes to the construction of the text as a work. The next episode focuses on an ambergris harvesting expedition, but includes a “trait fort remarquable” (2: 56) told by Credan, who is basically a pirate captain, an account of Bermuda, and concludes with a near pseudo-work consisting of a description of the parishes of Jamaica (2: 78-88). The main characteristic that makes it a pseudo-work is the numbering of the paragraphs describing each parish. The end of the list is followed by a table of tax revenue, which serves as a visual division, but as it is not clear that the description of the parishes is over, the table both marks and hides the dispositive structure (2: 89).

## Transition from Embedded Pseudoworks to Open-Ended Pseudoworks

### *Last Pieces of Text Directly Attributed to Lade Himself*

In addition to interpolated narratives that are present in the text but fail to rise to the level of pseudoworks, the transitional mechanic that advances the narrative depends on a combination of personal interest and curiosity that comes from references to documents that would qualify as pseudoworks, if they were present in the text, but exist only as titles or pseudo-titles. An encounter with the Spanish warships soon after departing to return to England brings up a pseudo-work not present in the text Lade presents to his audience, namely “le Mémoire qui contenoit non-seulement le nombre de

perles, mais quelques observations sur celles qui avoient été pêchées en notre présence, & sur les differens lieux de la Marguerite, d'où nous avons tiré les autres" (2: 120). What *mémoire* is Lade referring to here? It does not appear in the text here, and hasn't been explicitly mentioned before. What does Lade mean when he says that while "ce n'étoit point assez pour découvrir tout le mistere de notre voyage, il n'en falloit pas tant pour fournir à nos Ennemis le prétexte qu'ils cherchoient" (2: 120)? No single *mémoire*, it seems, would be sufficient for that purpose, given that the only text sufficient for that task would be *Voyages de Robert Lade* itself, which is a text of a sort that *contains* mémoires. Also, not everything about the voyage would interest the Spanish warships, since much of Rindekly's and Lade's activities, while perhaps illegal or immoral, did not break on any Spanish laws or infringe on any Spanish rights. By including a reference to an unidentifiable independent text, Prévost ensures that the boundaries of this work will forever remain open.

After having their pearls seized Rindekly and Lade set sail again to continue their return journey to England, but Lade finds himself laid out sick in bed by their loss, which gives him an opportunity to tell his story to their Quaker passenger, Mr. Speed, and this interest eventually brings up the possibility of marriage between Lade's daughters and Speed's sons (2: 122-23). The "aventure" of Anna Pelez, though it is only referred to in that way later, is another interpolated narrative, but it is included in parts: it begins with her father's account of how he came to be stranded at sea in a small boat with his wife, daughter, and some other servants (2: 130-32), then continues when she tells Lade a bit more about herself and her family when it comes time to decide whether she should be

dropped off in Spain (2: 133-35), and then concludes when Lade's wife hears the young Spanish woman's story (2: 140).

The conclusion of Lade's personal narrative is also prompted by a document that is not itself included in the text of the work. When going through his effects, the family of the ill-fated secretary discover the secret order that he had received to spy on Lade and Rindekly for the crown, and take it to the Minister, who calls Rindekly in to give an account of himself, which provides an opportunity for a summary of the entire journey:

On le pressa beaucoup sur le détail de nos voyages. Il raconta ingénument les entreprises que nous avons formées en divers tems, sans craindre d'avouer les avantages que nous en avons tirés. Il avertit même le Roi que dans la même cassette, où la Commission de l'Ecrivain s'étoit trouvée, on trouveroit une description fort étendue de toute la Côte Occidentale de l'Afrique, dont le respect que nous avons crû devoir aux Ordres de la Cour nous avoit empêchés de nous saisir ; & ne faisant pas difficulté d'offrir au Roi la lecture de notre Journal, il se fit honneur d'avoir tenté plusieurs projets extraordinaires que la fortune avoit fait réussir. (2: 141-42)

Once again, the exact identities of the texts referred to here is uncertain, given that the "description" and the "journal" both contribute to the composition of the text that makes up this novel. This uncertainty contributes to Prévost's efforts toward creating a coherent identity for *Voyages de Robert Lade* as a work. In this way, he is able to imbue it with the documentary authenticity without equating it with any particular documents. Lade's account of Rindekly's interview with the Minister provides another kind of summary, one that necessarily focuses on the commercial aspects of the voyage, namely the two men's successive efforts toward seeking gold, pearls, and ambergris, presenting a tripartite vision of the narrative.



The final conclusion of Lade's personal narrative comes with the resolution of Lade's daughters' marriages, the death of his wife, his remarriage, the settlement of his younger son, almost *deus ex machina* except for the son's separation from his wife. The return of Lade's older son partially makes up for this disappointment, and his involvement in the British colony in Georgia provides a transition into the concluding pseudo-works (2: 152-59). The introduction to these pseudo-works still ostensibly concerns Lade's son, but it contains no personal narrative information to distinguish it from Prévost's source material. This introductory material includes two mini-pseudo-works: 1) a list of Native American dignitaries received by Oglethorpe at Charleston (2: 165-66), 2) the text of the treaty those dignitaries signed with Oglethorpe (2: 169-70), and 3) a transcription of a speech given by a Native American chief during an audience with the English king (2: 171-72).

#### *Transition from Lade to Lade's Son*

It is interesting to see how the text transitions quickly but almost imperceptibly from Lade's son's voice to a dated journal-entry-style text, which facilitates the transition from Lade's relatively unified personal narrative to the assemblage of pseudo-works that conclude the work. The first paragraph that can no longer be considered part of Lade's personal narrative proper begins with Lade's description of his son's role in the establishment of the colony: "Il étoit un des principaux membres de l'honorable Compagnie qui avoit entrepris de peupler, sous le titre de Georgie, tout ce grand espace qui est au Sud de la Caroline, entre la Riviere de Savannah, celle d'Alatamaha, & les Monts Apalaches" (2: 160). This geographical description paves the way to more

impersonal material regarding the founding of the colony, including how “Vers la fin du mois d’Août 1732, le Chevalier Gibert Heathcote avoit obtenu une Charte de Sa Majesté pour l’établissement régulier de cette Colonie” (2: 160). At this point there is still a connection to Lade’s son, but the very mention of that connection is also the tool for transcending it:

Mon fils, qui demouroit encore à la Jamaïque, se sentit porté, par un penchant particulier, à mettre une grosse somme dans cette association [...]. Comme il avoit eu continuellement les yeux sur les essais du premier embarquement, il me communiqua ce qu’il crut propre à orner le Journal de mes Voyages. (2: 161)

The text’s divorce from Lade’s narrative is confirmed by the next paragraph, which begins with an even more specific temporal reference, “Le 6 de Novembre de la même année, le Capitaine Thomas partit de Londres” (2: 161). The paragraph also mentions the departure of “Jacques Oglethorpe” for the colony on the 15<sup>th</sup>, presumably of the same month, and their arrival in Carolina the 15<sup>th</sup> of January (2: 161). The following paragraph gives the 18<sup>th</sup> as the date of Oglethorpe’s arrival at the “Isle de Trench,” now known as Hilton Head, apparently an important stopping point on the way to the colony in Georgia, and the 20<sup>th</sup> as the date of the expedition’s arrival at the Savannah river (2: 162). At the beginning of the following paragraph the reader learns that “Toute la Colonie s’y étant rassemblée le 1 de Février, on se logea sous des tentes pour commencer par le travail des fortifications” (1: 163). The next specific date mentioned, the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, comes at the beginning of an indented paragraph and is separated from the text of the treaty only by a single short paragraph (2: 170). Moreover, the transition from Lade’s own journal into the portion of the text based on material provided by Lade’s son is not marked by any of

the typographical signs associated with dispositive boundaries. Thus, the arrival of the first degree of distance between Lade and his own text is softened, which has the effect of maintaining the impression of the text's unity.

Although these temporal indications pave the way to a complete dissociation from Lade's family narrative, Lade continues to return to his son's role in the affairs of the colony in such a way that this eventual dissociation is gradual and itself forms part of the narrative framework. The first of these describes the role Lade's son played in supporting the new colony's gains from its negotiations with the Native Americans. Typography begins to play a role in the creation of distance between Lade and his text when the description of the Native American delegations that attended a meeting with Oglethorpe, with a visual rhythm provided by the italicized names of the tribes followed by the names and titles of the members of each tribe's delegation (2: 165-66). The numbered articles of the treaty signed at this meeting provide further visual rhythm (2: 169-70). Here, Lade intervenes to summarize the previous portion of the text based on his son's material, before the degree of separation increases yet again: "Tel étoit l'état de la Georgie en 1733, lorsque mon fils revint de la Jamaïque à Londres" (2: 172). It would seem that Lade's son's efforts "pour obtenir du Ministere, de nouveaux secours d'hommes & de provisions, & sur tout pour procurer à la Colonie quelques pieces d'artillerie, sans lesquelles on n'est jamais sur de contenir les Indiens dans la soumission" may have been superfluous, or at best auxiliary, as it appears that it was Oglethorpe's arrival the following year, accompanied by various Native American ambassadors, that secures the necessary assistance for the colony. One of these dignitaries, "le Mico Tomochichi,"

gives a speech that underlines the increasing degree of separation between Lade and the text of the work that bears his name, as the eighteenth-century typographical convention of quotation marks running the whole length of the margin in quoted passages, providing a visual reminder of Lade's delegation of narrative authority (2: 172-73). The next step in this process of separation comes when Lade's son receives a letter from the captain of an expedition taking German colonists to Georgia, a certain "Capitaine Georges Dumbar, qui étoit un des meilleurs amis de mon fils" (2: 175). While Dumbar's friendship with Lade's son preserves the connection to Lade, the blank line between Lade's text and the letter is another visual sign of the increasing distance between Lade and his text.

*Transition from Third Party, Lade's Son, to an Anonymous Fourth Party*

As the work continues to approach its textual conclusion, the narration continues to move ever farther away from Lade. After the digest of material from his son, Lade introduces a text that presents yet a further degree of separation, a *Supplément à l'histoire de la baye de Hudson*. This transition is more strongly marked by typography than the previous one. While the beginning of the Georgia material was distinguished from the preceding narration only by the start of a new paragraph, the Hudson's Bay material is presented as a full-fledged pseudo-work. The text on the previous page ends with a decorative mark, and the new passage begins on new page marked by a decorative bar, and a title (189-90). However, Lade's unmarked introduction maintains a minimal degree of continuity: "Mon fils s'étant associé à la nouvelle Compagnie qui a recommencé le commerce de Pelleterie dans la Baye de Hudson, m'a communiqué le Mémoire qu'il a fait faire de l'état de cette entreprise" (190). While the passage related to the Georgian

colony was assembled by Lade from material provided by his son, Lade presents the Hudson's Bay passage to his reader in the form in which he received it, and while Lade's son himself was presumably the author of at least some of the material about Georgia, the Hudson's Bay material is merely the product of some unknown individual's work done at the request of Lade's son.

While Lade fails to name the author of the *Supplément*, the source text is John Oldmixon's *The British Empire in America* (1741). A significant addition by Prévost to the material quoted from Oldmixon has to do with Frobisher's own putative written accounts of his expeditions: "Nous avons ses trois Relations, qui ne contiennent que le détail de ses périls & de ses craintes" (2: 191). Similarly, while Oldmixon expects that "at the Mention" of the fact that Hudson went as far as 80°23' North latitude "the Reader will almost freeze as the Writer does" (2: 543), Prévost's text speaks of "un climat si froid que la seule Relation est capable de glacer le Lecteur & l'Ecrivain" (2: 192). This change, though slight, suggests a shift in meaning. Whereas Oldmixon expects that mentioning the northern extent of this voyage will cause his reader to feel a chill, the version that Prévost puts in Lade's mouth suggests that it is the entire *description* of the climate that provokes the effect. The term "Relation" is likely to signify a body of text we would recognize as a "work" or at least a manuscript capable of becoming one.

Often when a true relationship exists between Lade's fictional journal and the authentic journals that Prévost appropriated for use in creating this work, Prévost transforms that authentic relationship into a virtual, intertextual one. When Oldmixon mentions the Danish claim of discovering the strait, his main points are that Hudson was

at least the first Englishman to discover it, and that it was Hudson “who indeed first sailed to near the Bottom of the Bay” (544), and while Lade says largely the same thing, he introduces an interesting nuance: “Mais sans entrer dans cette discussion, il est sûr du moins que c’est Henry Hudson qui a pénétré jusqu’au fond de la Baye” (2: 193). The emphasis on the *discussion* highlights the novel’s participation in a multifaceted confrontation of texts, in which the work engages as a whole, and which exists within the body of the novel itself.

Another example of this phenomenon is an inserted story about the discovery of a pre-existing European settlement that comes from Nicolas Jérémie’s *Relation du détroit et de la baie d’Hudson*, and which does not appear in Oldmixon’s account. Prévost adds a connection between the material he takes from Oldmixon and from Jérémie. In the source for this inserted story, when Groseliers’ Native American allies find an English settlement in the area, this settlement isn’t named, while in Prévost’s version it is identified with Port Nelson, mentioned in Oldmixon’s source text and in Prévost’s version of that text:

Pendant le cours de l’hiver, il vint quelques Sauvages chez M. de Groseilles, qui lui dirent qu’il y avait un autre établissement d’Anglais à sept lieues dans la rivière Bourbon. Aussitôt il se disposa à les aller attaquer. (Jérémie 11)

Pendant le cours de l’hyver, M. des Groseliers, se lia avec quelques Sauvages du Pays, qui lui apprirent qu’à sept ou huit lieues de son Etablissement, il y en avait un d’Anglois. *C’étoit celui du Port Nelson*. Il se disposa aussi-tôt à les aller attaquer [...]. (VRL 2: 196 emphasis added)

Neither Prévost (VRL 2: 194) nor Oldmixon (544) make much of Port Nelson the first time it’s mentioned, when it is merely mentioned as the farthest extent of exploration by a

certain Captain Fox. This settlement is identified as Port Nelson in *Jérémie* (12), so Prévost weaves the two source texts together by consolidating material relating to the same location. By modifying the original in these ways, Prévost underscores the importance of the written accounts of these voyages even as he minimizes the direct impact of these texts in their authentic form, thus exchanging what might be a less effective authentic relationship for a potentially more effective virtual relationship. Complicating this relationship is Prévost's insertion of a note in the text alerting the reader that "*La Relation de M. Jérémie met faussement ce voyage en 1612*" to highlight the supposed accuracy of Lade's son's text (2: 192).<sup>82</sup> While Prévost obscures the authentic relationship by replacing it with a virtual one, he obliquely refers to the authentic one even though any effort by the reader to follow up on that reference would reveal the virtuality of its replacement within the text.

Occasionally, text is presented as a quotation, and actually quotes the material it purports to quote (*Jérémie* 12-21, *VRL* 2: 245-63). When switching from Oldmixon to *Jérémie*, Prévost provides the following explanation from Lade: "Rien ne marque mieux la décadence de nos affaires que le silence de tous nos gens de Mer jusqu'à la paix d'Utrecht. Mais on trouve dans la relation d'un étranger, nommé M. Jeremie [*sic*], le récit suivant. Il parle comme témoin" (2: 245).<sup>83</sup> One wonders why Prévost switches sources

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<sup>82</sup> Jérémie makes a protestation of sincerity that recalls Lade's commitment to rigorous observation: "Ceci paraîtra peut-être fabuleux, aussi bien que quelques autre circonstance que je ne puis me dispenser de marquer, pour ne rien omettre de ce qui doit satisfaire la curiosité; mais je puis protester que je ne marque rien, qu'après l'avoir vu et examiné par moi-même: et afin de ne rien risquer sur le rapport d'autrui, je me suis transporté presque dans tous les lieux dont je parle" (10).

<sup>83</sup> Prévost omits Jérémie's sympathetic commentary on a French ship captain's resistance against the English: "il rencontra trois navires Anglais contre lesquels il se battit depuis huit heures du matin jusqu'à

here, since Oldmixon's text continues well beyond the point after which Prévost ceases to follow it. A partial explanation, which deals only with the reason for picking up Jérémie at this point, and does not help explain why Prévost would stop following Oldmixon in the first place, is that this is the point at which Jérémie himself becomes part of the events of his narration.

Although Prévost may have taken much inspiration for passages of his other works from authors of travel literature, it makes sense to study *Voyages de Robert Lade* in detail to see how he manipulates his source texts because the insertion of material from other works and sources is thematized in the novel. For example, Prévost reproduces Oldmixon's table of Hudson's Bay Company goods exchange rates, but modifies the introduction. Oldmixon mentions the table as one document of many received passively: "[t]his Paper being put into my Hands, among others relating to the Affairs of the Company, is as follows" (547). Lade's son's (presumably male) informant confers greater importance on it by mentioning it alone, by specifically mentioning that he made an active decision to copy it, and insisting on both the fact that he copied it himself, and that he did so from the original: "J'en ai tiré de ma propre main cette copie sur l'original" (2: 203). There is a similar difference in how Oldmixon's text and Prévost's introduce a Native American vocabulary. Oldmixon is neutral, privileging the informative mode over the narrative mode: "Before we proceed in our History, we shall communicate to the Reader a small Dictionary of the Language of the Indians at the Bottom of the Bay,

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onze heures du soir, sans que les Anglais le pussent prendre, *quoiqu'ils fussent supérieurs en forces, mais non pas en courage*" (VRL 2: 246, Jérémie 14, emphasis added).



which is like the rest distinguished by several Dialects, but this is the Cuscudidah's" (558). Prévost's version emphasizes the specificity and curiosity of the document over its content: "Entre plusieurs curiosités qu'ils rapportèrent, on a conservé, dans les papiers de la Compagnie, quelques mots du langage des Indiens de la Baye, que M. Bayly même avoit pris soin d'écrire de sa main" (239). Once again we can see that the impression of authenticity outweighs actual authenticity.

Oldmixon often inserts pseudo-works without any particular reason, whereas Prévost ties them into the narrative somehow. And while Prévost preserves Oldmixon's note about the source of the information, it is worth noting that he is particularly concerned that the reader believe that redundant details have been removed. For example, when Oldmixon reports that "Mr. *Baily* appointed Mr. *Thomas Gorst* to be his Secretary, and order'd him to keep a Journal of their Proceedings there, and which is now in my Custody," Prévost's translation preserves the indication unchanged: "M. Bayly nomma pour son Secrétaire, Thomas Gorst, & lui donna ordre de tenir un Journal de leur voyage que j'ai actuellement entre les mains" (Oldmixon 549, *VRL* 2: 205). However, while Oldmixon's explanation of his rationale for which parts to retain is straightforward, "the Events it contains are too trivial to be remember'd: What are most curious I shall report" Prévost adds a reference to other travel narratives: "j'y trouve tant de remarques triviales & qui sont dans toutes les autres Relations, que je n'en tirerai que les plus curieuses" (Oldmixon 549, *VRL* 2: 205, emphasis added). Similarly, Prévost omits Oldmixon observation regarding the end of his source text when he fails to name the new ones: "Though with this I must leave my Journal, from other good Memoirs I shall continue the

History” (558). If Oldmixon’s work is an authentic example of the genre Prévost is attempting to mimic, why omit this, especially when he does include references to source material in other locations? Prévost is more concerned with creating the impression of authenticity than with reproducing actual authentic source material.

## Conclusion

This heteroclite text depends on the homogeneity of the discourses it mobilizes as a marker of authenticity, but in doing so it calls into question both that homogeneity and the authenticity it subtends. If an assemblage of recombined and reframed authentic texts can successfully fool a leading scientist, surely many average readers would have been taken in by it as well. And yet, if the illusion is too perfect, it loses its power, because the reader for whom the *seemingly* authentic but *actually* fictional text constitutes enjoyable reading is unlikely to read a text that gives no sign at all that it is fictional. For this reason, Prévost mixes entertaining material with informative material, and both the external “authentic” texts and Lade’s own narration fall at times into one category or the other. The rapid and unpredictable alternation between Lade’s narration, the various small quotations, and the inserted pseudoworks creates an interesting interplay between the narrative structure and the dispositive structure of this unusual work, and this interplay doing highlights the problems inherent in “authenticity” as a category. As soon as something “appears” authentic, in some ways it can no longer be authentic: true authenticity (if such a thing existed) would not need to announce itself. Thus a fictional travel journal needs to constantly straddle the line between believability and incredibility in order to reach its intended audience. And yet the very fact that such an in-between

status is possible underscores the fundamental flaw of authenticity. While we, like Prévost's readers, and like Lade, may wish to learn about unfamiliar places and cultures, there is no way to achieve that goal in an entirely "authentic" way. Lade must subordinate his curiosity to his mercantile needs, and readers of today, like Prévost's readers must accept the mediation of Lade's viewpoint between them and the foreign cultures he describes: how can it be possible to access "authentic" knowledge of an unfamiliar place by means of an unfamiliar witness? The unfamiliarity of the witness provides a built-in critical stance toward the new material, which renders the reader better equipped to approach the newness with conscious critique.

## Part II: When the Whole Has a Hole in it

### Chapter 3: When Two Halves Surround a Hole: The Influence of a Publication Gap on Narrative and Dispositive Structure in *Cleveland*

#### Interrupted Publication, “Super-Installments” and Significant Emptiness

Serial publication inherently creates a malleable relationship between parts and wholes of prose narrative work. In my first chapter, I showed how this phenomenon manifests itself in a novel containing pseudoworks, and in this chapter I study the phenomenon in *Cleveland*, a novel whose publication history contains a significant gap, which creates two “super-installments.”<sup>84</sup> What makes a work with a “hole” in the middle different from one without? Do we *perceive* the end of the part that comes before the interruption as being more significant than it really is because of the long publication gap that followed? Or does it *become* more significant because of that gap? In the context of the theoretically infinite potential for continuation through the introduction of further difficulties to be resolved, having a published “half” to react against provides a novelist with a way to bring the work to a “conclusion.” The previous “possible” wholes remain in the reader’s mind (to a limited extent) and can be evoked by the author even after continued publication puts an end to some of the uncertainty. However, instead of revealing the author’s weakness or inability to bring the novel to a planned conclusion, the unfinished possibilities provide the border or contrasting background that allow the text to take shape as a “work” in a way reminiscent of the familiar phenomenon of

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<sup>84</sup> All references are to the edition by Jean Sgard and Philip Stewart (Paris: Desjonquères, 2003).

peripheral vision. The nineteenth-century and modern idea of a “work” as distinguishable from the “non-work” surrounding it has already been brought into question by postmodern and deconstructionist criticism, but studying Prévost’s novels provides another way for us to become aware of our own biases that stem from that way of conceiving of what constitutes a “work.” And the work with a “hole” in it provides a special example: the first part constructs its own tension for eventual resolution while simultaneously providing sufficient tension/resolution within itself for readers to be satisfied, but the second part in some ways can be seen as grafting an independent structure onto the first.

What effect, then, does the “hole” in *Cleveland*’s dispositive structure have on its narrative structure? At important moments in the narration, there seems to be a need to highlight the wider textual framework within which the narration belongs, although this framework shifts as the work evolves and is frequently at odds with the division of the text into dispositive units.<sup>85</sup> To shed light on this phenomenon, I examine several compositional techniques that contribute to the reader’s perception of the text’s identity as a work, either by explicitly referring to the relationship between the text currently before the reader’s eyes and the larger textual entity that provides the context necessary for the reader to make sense of and to fully appreciate the current text, or by implicitly suggesting how the various textual entities that have been and will be published under the

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<sup>85</sup> Other critics have analyzed the things I’m going to analyze, but not as part of the phenomenon I’m trying to describe. Zagamé talks about how Prévost’s summary of the preceding narrative at the beginning of the sixth volume is part of his response to critiques of the previously published volumes, but I’m more interested in how the “local” makes use of the “global” than the reverse.

current title come together to fit into a larger whole.<sup>86</sup> I continue to analyze the compositional techniques that I made use of in analyzing *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* (narrative transfer, relay, and summary), but I also pay attention to what can be called “before-after moments,” which are moments of transition in narrative structure that can evoke imaginary “whole” works that form a framework for the present text. These phenomena can be studied without trying to determine whether they show that Prévost was trying to change the course of the plot or respond to criticism. That kind of analysis is useful, but fails to fully address the experience of actually reading the work.<sup>87</sup>

While a fair amount of scholarly attention has been paid to the unfulfilled promised of the preface to the first volume of *Cleveland*, my focus is on how Prévost sets

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<sup>86</sup> Sermain points to this phenomenon when he points out that in *Cleveland*, as in Perec’s *La Vie mode d’emploi*, “des images se dégagent et se combinent, des associations conscientes et inconscientes se tissent, révélant la construction imaginaire du roman” (*Figures de l’imaginaire dans le Cleveland de Prévost* 66). Dionne notes that the dispositive boundary is, by its very nature, a “privileged articulation” in the terms of Philippe Hamon: materially, it is easily localizable, and a strategic site, being simultaneously “un point d’arrêt, de récapitulation, de ‘stockage de l’information,’ et un espace de projection, de relance et de questionnement” (480). The status of the chapter boundary, however, is problematic, because any motif we find there becomes a ruptural *topos* by virtue of being situated at a site of rupture, while it is also by providing a ruptural *topos* that the chapter boundary is best able to fulfill its simultaneous functions: to divide and to connect (480). In addressing this mutability, Dionne touches on one of the key methodological concerns of my project: how to account for the subjectivity of the reader who is the sole competent judge of the effectiveness of a given dispositive boundary’s ruptural *topos* (481). At times, Dionne refers to ruptural *topoi* as occurring at the ends of chapters (e.g. 491), but at times they can appear at the ends of parts (e.g. 494), and it is unclear whether he believes that they apply equally to all kinds of dispositive units. In truth, these *topoi* are not only to be found at dispositive boundaries, even in novels containing chapters, simply when they do occur at dispositive boundaries the burden of assigning narrative significance to them seems to be lifted from the reader’s shoulders. However, I will demonstrate that there are ruptural *topoi* present at dispositive boundaries that do not deserve as much narrative significance as their placement would seem to afford them, and there are others that are quite significant in narrative terms that do not occur in conjunction with dispositive boundaries.

<sup>87</sup> While it is impossible to fully recreate that experience, there are some assumptions that we can safely make. For instance, it seems likely, given the popularity of *Cleveland*, that most of Prévost’s contemporary readers were more eager to learn how Cleveland was able to overcome the tragic misunderstanding that separated from him Fanny than they were to find out how Prévost had decided to respond to the criticism of the *Bibliothèque Belge*.

up the narrative structure of the work he's introducing in the mind of the reader. This does have something to do with those promises, but I'm more interested in them insofar as they paint a picture of the work's general contours, not as specific features of the terrain.<sup>88</sup> Rather than address each of the unfulfilled foreshadowed events, I intend to study the text as it ended up being written, to see how Prévost shapes and manages his readers' expectations in order to bring the text to a satisfying conclusion without ending the narrative. To that end, the question to ask about *Cleveland* is how the various installments make sense as *parts* of *imaginary* longer works. This is tricky because none of the installments exists outside of its relationship with the others, so each one depends to a certain degree on the framework created by the others, but the success of the novel despite the lack of true structural concordance across all installments suggests that while the narration may have needed to exist within a framework that implied completion beyond the bounds of the present installment, that completion was not *in itself* the most important characteristic of the work for most readers.

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<sup>88</sup> Sgard and Sermain suggest that the lack of any indication that Prévost intended to continue *Cleveland* means that the work was "finished" as far as Prévost was concerned, and that, therefore, the novel's abrupt ending and the attendant allusion to a possible continuation "servent surtout à dissimuler l'absence dans le roman de certains événements situés en Angleterre qu'avait annoncés la préface de 1731, et à excuser la nature très sommaire de la vie édifiante de converti que le héros devait mener, en principe, à la fin du roman" (1121). Based on the text alone, why should it seem more likely that Prévost would not have considered continuing *Cleveland*, which ends abruptly and fails to include several events alluded to in the original preface, while he did continue *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, which reaches a much more satisfying conclusion and which contains no allusion to any possible continuation? Nothing would preclude Prévost from telling the story of his life in England with Fanny, and doing so would have provided him ample opportunity to fulfill the unkept promises of the original preface. Both *Cleveland*'s suspected involvement in the Ryegate affair and the story of "le capitaine Blud" would serve as promising ways to explain why *Cleveland*'s narratorial voice fails to show the serenity one would expect from a satisfied convert; and while *Cleveland* does not yet owe most of his fortune to the exiled king, his path to that status would serve admirably as a pretext for continuing the novel.

The division between the two “super-installments” is perhaps the most difficult feature of the novel’s structure to account for. Did Prévost realize that he was going to have to take a break from *Cleveland*, and did he begin to alter the novel’s narrative progress as he approached the end of the second installment to accommodate that hiatus? If not, did he attempt to incorporate the hiatus into the novel’s narrative structure once he came back to it? These questions are almost irresistible, and some deductions can be made based on the limited evidence, but in the end we find ourselves, like Prévost’s contemporary audience, faced with the text itself, the product of a fundamentally unknowable organic process of creation. What is clear, though, is that a signal of the second major narrative unit comes significantly before the end of the first super-installment. More important than whether the progression from that signal to the end of the narrative is symmetrical or asymmetrical, orderly or disorderly, is the succession of evocations of the whole as the narration continues to drive the evolution of the work’s narrative structure toward its eventual termination. The transition between the novel’s major narrative structural units takes place in the third narrative subunit, which has two episodes: each begin with a retrospective turn, but the structure of the first episode emphasizes the future, while the second one continues to focus on the past. Both episodes of this narrative subunit include prospective and retrospective passages, but each one emphasizes a different aspect: the two episodes work together to continue the transition that began as the previous subunit was drawing to a close, and so the present subunit is a transition from Cleveland’s philosophical testing to his recovery from the despair into which he falls as a result of the failure of those tests.



How does the end of the first installment intersect with the novel's evolving narrative structure? How does this compare to the role of the first "super-installment?" Does the first installment, which was a planned dispositive transition, compare to the division between the two "super-installments," which were unplanned? At the end of the first installment, prospectively, the work seems like a "first part" to be followed by a succession of misfortunes. At the time of the first installment's publication, this vision of the work gives the reader the impression of having a reproduction in miniature of the experience of reading the whole work: the first volume is the introduction, and the second volume is a sample of what is to come as the work continues. Cleveland's reference to "la situation tranquille dont le Ciel me permet de jouir depuis quelques années" contrasts with "la plus belle saison de ma vie" (613), and although nothing is explicit, one can read this as being the voice of a man retired to a monastery, his family dead or gone, as all that is left to him is his painful memory of the troubles caused by his difficulties with his wife and daughter.

The first installment and the first "super-installment" lay the foundations of a narrative structure with two aspects that are often in tension with each other: one that has to do primarily with Cleveland's relationship with Fanny, and one that mainly stems from his involvement with philosophy and his own emotions. The philosophical-emotional narrative structure is determined by Cleveland's evolving attitude toward philosophy and how that attitude shapes and is shaped by the emotions he experiences as a result of developments in the relationship plot. The novel's first major narrative unit is characterized by the declining dominance of philosophy over religion, while the second

major narrative unit is characterized by the increasing dominance of religion over philosophy. The first major narrative unit's evolution can be divided into three narrative subunits. In the first narrative subunit, Cleveland's education cultivates his unquestioning faith in philosophy, which lasts until the complications of romantic relationships trouble that faith, leading to the first test of his faith in philosophy: hiding his love from Fanny.<sup>89</sup> The second narrative subunit contains a second test: hiding his emotions from Fanny to protect her from tragic events. The third narrative subunit contains a third test: control reactions to Fanny's disappearance and Bridge's death. In the second major narrative unit, true peace continues to elude Cleveland even after the complications are seemingly resolved, and although his conversations with Clarendon and his ensuing conversion appear to resolve that issue, a continued tone of narratorial melancholy indicates incomplete resolution, which preserves both the theoretical possibility of a continuation and the internal tension that provided the very motive force of the narrative from the beginning. More than in the case of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, the very narrative structure of *Cleveland* is based on evaluation of that structure itself. In the beginning, this evaluation is more forward-looking, but even fairly early on a significant amount of retrospection comes into play, and the importance of retrospection only increases as the text progresses. My analysis of the second "super-installment" is therefore based mostly on the various retrospective reconstructions and reevaluations of the narrative structure that punctuate the second major narrative unit. It also addresses the interactions between the retrospective current that flows through the narration and the less-obvious

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<sup>89</sup> For more analysis of this theme, see Christophe Martin, "L'éducation négative de Cleveland."

but essential prospective thread. By attending to the possibilities of the reader's experience of the text I am able to steer a middle course between two currents of past Prévost criticism, which tend either towards finding the common threads of Prévost's novels that unite them as a coherent body of work, or towards identifying all the ways in which Prévost was influenced by publication schedules, critiques, and other pragmatic considerations. Both of these approaches are profitable, and I intend to build on them by demonstrating the function of an evolving sense of "inchoate wholeness," both on a localized scale and across various states of the novel. For instance, when dealing with the various interpolated narratives that appear in *Cleveland*, I treat them less as tools for interpretation, and more as elements of the narrative structure.<sup>90</sup>

The first instance of tension between the dispositive and narrative structural systems is the mismatch between the first significant units of each: the first narrative subunit, which recounts Cleveland's education, does not end until he begins to make decisions for himself, independent of those who have been responsible for him during his education (his mother, Mme Riding, the Viscount of Axminster, and Fanny), and this only happens after the second book is well under way. One of the main purposes of this first subunit is to provide models of narrative structure, in the form of inserted narratives, to encourage the reader to speculate about the future course that Cleveland's own

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<sup>90</sup> In Prévost's novels, the speech of characters other than the narrator-protagonist may indeed make it possible to address themes and ideas that would otherwise be inaccessible, as Magnot suggests in her study of *La Parole de l'autre dans le roman-mémoires*. Indeed, Prévost may use inserted narratives and metacommentary to communicate to the reader his ideas about how the novel should be interpreted, but neither of these functions can be separated from another function they perform, which is to create a framework within which readers can perceive the text they are reading as being part of a larger work. And while this additional function may overlap with the other two, it goes beyond them.

narration will take. The presence in the following narrative subunit (in which Cleveland had assumed full responsibility for his own actions) of another inserted narrative, which provides another structural model, shows that the interlocking elements of the novel's narrative structure are a key element of the work's mechanism of narrative evolution. This first subunit is important because it sets up horizons of expectation for the reader. Whether these horizons are reached or whether they end up being modified as the novel progresses is less important than the fact that they establish a framework for interpreting the narrative as it evolves over the course of its publication. No one—not Prévost, not his publishers, and least of all his readers—could have known at the time of the first installment's publication that there would eventually be a multi-year interruption of publication, so any indications of a two-part structure in the first installment can only be retrospective. However, the interpretational framework established in the first installment continues to be relevant as the novel progresses, even as it continues to be modified by that very progress.

The entire structure is rooted in Cleveland's education, and each major narrative unit corresponds to a phase of the educational process under the guidance of a principal mentor whose teachings are subject to diversion by later flawed guides and then correction by subsequent guides, although imperfectly. During the first phase Cleveland's mother occupies the role of mentor, with Mme Riding and Lord Axminster taking over for her in succession as the plot progresses and Cleveland evolves as a philosophical and emotional subject. Recurrent references later in the novel to this early education show its foundational role in structuring the text as a narrative. In this unit, Mme Riding diverts

the original education Cleveland receives from his mother. Lord Axminster then provides a corrective influence, although he introduces some new problems. Fanny then provides a simultaneously corrective and diverting influence. In the second major unit, Madame is the principal guide, and her influence is first diverted by the Jesuit, after which Clarendon provides an initial, incomplete correcting influence, after which Fanny both corrects and diverts Cleveland, leading to Clarendon's final correction and Cleveland's conversion.

### Interpolated Narratives

The first narrative episode of Cleveland's story is organized around the nucleus provided by the education he receives from his mother, and provides several examples of possible narrative structures (1-80); the second episode focuses on the second phase of Cleveland's education, in which Axminster and Mme Riding take the lead (75-128); the third episode revolves around Fanny's contribution to Cleveland's education (128-41), and in the fourth episode Cleveland begins to take charge of his own education (141-169). Cleveland's frame of reference during the initial period after his mother's death is still based on what she taught him about philosophy, both prior to meeting Axminster and immediately afterward: philosophy as resolution to die (75), reference to mother's and best authors' instruction regarding polite people being untrustworthy (97). Mme Riding and Axminster share responsibility for Cleveland's education for a short period, although Axminster's influence starts to increase almost immediately when he takes on the role of Cleveland's tutor (104). Cleveland's transitional prolepsis in reaction to Axminster's revelation of the holes in the education his mother gave him opens a parenthesis that is never truly closed, but the "whole" evoked by it changes how we interpret the transition

at the moment of reading it: “On verra dans le cours de mon histoire qu’elle ne perdit point absolument ses peines, du moins si l’on s’en rapporte au témoignage d’un puissant roi, qui m’a honoré dans la suite du glorieux nom de philosophe” (103).

### *Narrative Models*

#### First Narrative Model: Mally Bridge

The first of these inserted narratives is told by Mme Riding, who warns them of a possible future that awaits them: “Vous êtes perdus, vous et votre fils si vous prenez la moindre confiance aux promesses du Protecteur. Je vais vous apprendre une aventure si terrible qu’elle suffit pour faire foi du péril où vous êtes et pour vous servir d’exemple. [...] Écoutez leur triste histoire” (53). This is a possible future for Cleveland, and as such it has the power to shape the reader’s expectations for the text to come. To see how this story might influence a reader’s perception of the framework within which the narrative will begin to evolve, we can examine the narrative structure of the story of Mally Bridge, which is based on the evolving relationship between the narrator, Mme Riding, and what she narrates. It begins with a very brief evocation of Mally’s relationship with Cromwell; almost no mention of Bridge’s education because she presents him to his father when he’s still very young (53-54). In this initial part of the story, Mme Riding remains secondary to Mally Bridge, but she quickly begins to focus more of the narrative resources on her own experience of the events: e.g. after the meeting, she says “J’avoue qu’il s’était contrefait avec tant d’art que je fus embarrassée sur la réponse que je devais faire à Mally lorsqu’elle me demanda ce que je pensais de tout ce que j’avais entendu” (55). At this point she still would prefer to keep from getting involved in Mally’s predicament: “Sa situation était [...] si embarrassante que j’aurais voulu pouvoir me

dispenser honnêtement de prendre part à ses résolutions par mon conseil” (55). However, pressed by Mally, Mme Riding then begins to take over for her, first by coming up with a plan to send a servant to investigate (55). The servant returns and reports Cromwell’s attempt to get rid of Bridge by sending him to an orphanage, which Mme Riding, as narrator, refers to as a “récit” (54-56). The ability to contain an identifiable interpolated narrative qualifies “l’histoire de Mally Bridge” as a narrative entity. Mme Riding comes up with a plan to retrieve Bridge, and begins to pursue Mally’s interests on her behalf without her active participation (57). Mally then commits suicide after being raped by Cromwell’s thugs (56-60). This leave Mme Riding as the sole remaining protagonist of the story: she settles Bridge into Rumney-Hole and takes charge of him until his second meeting with Cromwell, which leads to his imprisonment (60-66). After telling the story of Mally Bridge and her son (“après avoir achevé son récit”), Mme Riding further explains her motivation for doing so: “Je ne vous ai raconté cette histoire que pour vous faire apercevoir dans le malheur d’autrui le péril où vous êtes” (66). One wonders, though, if Mme Riding has a bit of the desire for self-exposure that most of Prévost’s protagonists demonstrate.

The narrative structure of the first interpolated narration—that of Mally Bridge, recounted by Mme Riding—provides clues to the expectations regarding narrative framework that Prévost is putting into place for his reader. In this narration, a short introduction focusing on one character provides an introduction for a story focusing on the narrator. This structure echoes that of Cleveland’s narration as it is currently being constructed. The difference is that Mme Riding tells a story that begins with a brief

account of the titular character's life before continuing to focus on her own adventures, first as the titular character's agent, and then in her own right, while Cleveland, who is the titular character, tells a story that begins with a brief account of his mother's life before continuing with his own adventures, first within the sphere of his mother's influence, and then on his own. During the period in which Cleveland lives underground with his mother, he gradually begins to assume responsibility for his own education with help from Mme Riding (66-80). His first instance of taking charge comes when he attempts to use his mother's own teachings to cheer her up when the gloomy atmosphere of their new, subterranean refuge focuses her attentions on what she sees as her impending death: "J'entrepris de la consoler. Ce n'est pas la vie, lui dis-je, qu'il faut haïr, je l'ai appris de vous-même : ce ne sont que les misères auxquelles elle nous expose" (68). Cleveland's ensuing restatement of his mother's philosophy, which he has internalized and made his own prompts his mother's relay-summary of her life, which basically foretells her death, in which she summarizes Cleveland's life and contrasts it with her own:

Vous êtes jeune ; vous avez été élevé dans le repos d'une profonde solitude ; votre cœur n'a jamais senti de violente passion, et votre cerveau n'a jamais reçu de traces qui aient pu faire une impression trop forte sur votre âme. Ainsi les principes de l'innocence naturelle subsistent encore chez vous dans leur intégrité, tous vos désirs sont droits, et vous ne sentez rien dans vous-même qui s'oppose à leur exécution. Ajoutez le soin que j'ai pris de vous inspirer de bonne heure les plus saines idées de la vertu, et de fortifier ainsi la nature par le secours de l'éducation. (69)

Cleveland's life thus far, as portrayed by his mother, consists solely of his early upbringing and his education, and is defined by the lack of important events. Her own life, however, consists of three phases, with an important event associated with each



transition:

[1] J'ai été pendant longtemps la proie de mille passions animées, j'ai suivi le torrent du monde et de ses maximes les plus corrompues. [2] Ce fut un coup de désespoir, plutôt qu'une résolution délibérée, qui me conduisit à Hammersmith [...]. J'avais acquis assez de philosophie, non seulement pour y trouver le remède de mes misères passées, mais assez, comme ne m'imaginais, pour fournir à tous les besoins de l'avenir. Mes jours se passaient à Hammersmith vous savez avec quelle tranquillité. Hélas ! j'étais heureuse, si elle eût duré toujours. [3] Mais je confesse que nos derniers malheurs m'ont fait perdre quelque chose de ma constance. [...] Le souvenir du passé se renouvelle à chaque instant dans ma mémoire ; et si j'ai peut-être assez de force pour le supporter encore comme j'ai fait depuis quinze ans, je crains d'en manquer lorsqu'il se joint au sentiment de mes nouvelles peines. Ainsi, je souhaite la mort avec raison : non que je haïsse la vie, qui est un présent du Ciel ; mais parce que j'appréhende que tant de douleurs qui vont y être attachées ne me la rendent insupportable. (69-70)

The end of the first phase corresponds to Elisabeth Cleveland's fall from favor as Cromwell's mistress, and the end of the second corresponds to the negative outcome of her attempt to reconnect with him. Both Elisabeth's summary of her life and Mme Riding's recounting of the story of Mally Bridge offer examples of narrative structure that prepare the reader to receive the structure of the text to come. Both involve one narrative transitioning into another. Mme Riding's narration shows how one person's story can be taken over by another, giving this secondary narrator a chance to express herself, first as the agent of someone else, then in her own right. Elisabeth's story shows how one person's narration can provide a framework for someone else's: it begins with trauma that leads to a "golden age" of sorts followed by another unfortunate event that leads into a period of melancholic stasis, leading to the closure that can only come with her death, after which her story is continued by her son's story. Cleveland's own narration follows both models in certain ways and not in others.

### Second Narrative Model: Axminster

The death of Cleveland's mother is a major turning point in the narrative; not just because of the normal reasons that make such an event important in general, but because it offers a moment that draws readers' attention to a continuity that will guide their understanding of the text to come, and which they might miss if they weren't alerted to it beforehand. After his mother's death, Cleveland spends a few days evaluating his options for the future, within the framework of his philosophy, and he determines that he is not a "monster" incapable of loving his fellow creatures, but that he needs to find an appropriate companion in order to live in relationship to other humans; otherwise, he believes, he might not be able to withstand the stimulation of the multitude, although "On verra pourtant dans la suite que la timidité n'a jamais été un de mes défauts" (73). In fact, it is more important that Prévost takes advantage of this moment to talk about "la suite" than it is whether Cleveland remains as free from timidity as he claims at this point in the narration; merely *saying* that he did is enough to conjure up a virtual narrative progression in a reader's mind.

Cleveland's prayers for a likeminded companion following his mother's death appear to be answered when he gets lost during an exploration of the caverns of Rumney-hole, and discovers Axminster, a nobleman who also happens to be hiding out in the caves, although in a different part far enough away for the two families not to have encountered each other. The new arrival's story also provides another model of narrative structure and Cleveland's reaction to it serves as a model of reading for a narration like his own. The only piece of Axminster's writing quoted by Cleveland is an exhortation to a possible reader, despite the apparent extreme unlikelihood of anyone ever being in a

position to read the writing (74).<sup>91</sup> This is roughly analogous to the incipit of Cleveland's own narration. Cleveland's first reaction is to attribute it to Bridge, but his knowledge of Bridge's story modifies this initial conclusion (74).<sup>92</sup> Both Axminster and Cleveland appeal to readers who have the special personality required to enjoy melancholy; Axminster assumes that whoever his reader might be will necessarily be a "malheureux" in search of shelter/exile. Cleveland, on the other hand, refers to his expected/desired reader obliquely by gently mocking those who would not understand his desire to dredge up painful memories (41).<sup>93</sup> Unlike Cleveland, whose infamous father's reputation dispenses him from explaining his origin, Axminster must begin by providing the necessary details regarding his identity, parentage, and upbringing (41, 80).<sup>94</sup> Axminster, like Cleveland, manipulates his audience by making reference to the overall trajectory of

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<sup>91</sup> "Si la fortune amène après moi dans ces lieux quelque malheureux pour chercher un asile, qu'il se console en apprenant que ses maux ne sauraient égaler ceux que j'y souffre, ni ses larmes celles que je verse incessamment. Ainsi l'a voulu le Ciel, qui règle nos destinées par des jugements d'une profondeur infinie." (74)

<sup>92</sup> "Cependant, m'étant souvenu que, suivant le récit de Mme Riding, il n'avait commencé à connaître ses malheurs qu'après son retour du collège d'Eaton, je ne trouvai nulle apparence qu'il eût pu s'affliger à cet excès dans un temps où il ignorait entièrement son sort" (74)

<sup>93</sup> Ne me demandera-t-on pas quelle sorte de plaisir peut trouver un misérable à se rappeler le souvenir de ses peines par un récit qui ne saurait manquer d'en renouveler le sentiment ? Ce ne peut être qu'une personne heureuse qui me fasse cette question, car tous les infortunés savent trop bien que la plus douce consolation d'une grande douleur est d'avoir la liberté de se plaindre et de paraître affligé. (41)

<sup>94</sup> "Il est juste [...] que je vous apprenne avec qui vous êtes, et que je reconnaisse par une égale confiance l'ouverture que vous m'avez faite de votre malheureuse condition. Vous êtes né dans l'infortune, et l'habitude que vous avez d'y être depuis votre enfance vous empêche de la sentir. Vous prononcez le nom de *malheur* presque sans connaître ce qu'il signifie ; et je vois, à l'égalité de vos sentiments, que cette caverne même et l'affreuse vie que vous y menez altèrent moins votre repos qu'ils ne n'établissent. Il en est de moi tout autrement. J'étais le plus fortuné de tous les hommes. C'est par une aventure sans exemple que je suis réduit à vivre dans ces ténèbres, et chaque moment que j'y passe me semble un martyre cruel, parce qu'elles redoublent l'horreur qui règne continuellement au fond de mon âme. Préparez-vous à la compassion que méritent mes peines. Mon histoire est courte, mais il n'y en eut jamais de si funeste. Ces paroles, prononcées du ton le plus triste, et l'estime que je sentais déjà pour cet inconnu, me mirent dans la situation qu'il désirait pour l'entendre. Il commença ainsi son récit." (80)

his narration. Before analyzing the structure of Axminster's narrative, it is necessary to analyze its formal contours and to compare them to the previous narrations by Mme Riding and Cleveland's mother, and to Cleveland's own narration, which provides the frame for all of these interpolated narrations. First, it is worth noting that Cleveland uses the words "récit" and "histoire" to refer to the narration of his own misfortunes and uses "récit" to refer to Axminster's while Axminster uses the term "histoire." As for Mme Riding's narration, she refers to it as an "histoire," and Cleveland uses the term "récit" (42, 80, 53, 66). Both Cleveland and Axminster explain why they write in terms of personal emotional benefit, but Cleveland never explains the relationship of his writing to others, to any potential audience; rather, before explaining how he finds pleasure in writing about his misfortunes, he says "J'expose l'histoire de mes malheurs au public," and then after the explanation he says "Je commence donc mon récit" (41, 42).

We can also compare the stated motivation of each for sharing his story with his audience. Axminster, like Cleveland, *writes* his story to indulge in the pleasures of his melancholy, and also experiences consolation from an audience of sorts (although not an audience of his writing) (97).<sup>95</sup> A key part of this often-cited passage that receives relatively less attention than other parts is Cleveland's reference to the pleasure of *appearing or seeming to suffer or be afflicted (paraître affligé)*. Here Cleveland

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<sup>95</sup> "Je lis beaucoup ; la lecture adoucit ce qu'il y a souvent de trop furieux dans mes agitations ; elle les change en une mélancolie douce, qui me fait aimer ma solitude. Dans ces moments, si je mets le pied hors de la caverne, tous les objets que je découvre me paraissent sombres et obscures. Il semble que ma tristesse se répande sur la nature entière, et que tout ce qui m'environne s'afflige et s'attendrisse en ma faveur. Cette vue me jette dans des considérations qui renouvellent mes peines. Je rentre dans mon tombeau, j'en parcours toutes les vastes retraites, je trace mes malheurs sur les plus durs rochers, et j'arrose les caractères de mes larmes." (97)

constructs a parallel between communication between unhappy people and those who are compassionate enough to listen to their complaints, and implied potential communication through writing: writing about one's misfortunes is not *only* a means of expressing one's own personal melancholic reveries, but also to allow one to receive sympathy—although there is no explicit reference to sympathy it seems likely that the consolation of displaying one's affliction would come in the form of some kind of sympathy. Even the pleasure that comes from writing seems to be an internalized form of this display and sympathy, but which functions because of the idea of an audience.

The structure of Axminster's story can be divided into four parts. First, an introduction, including his childhood and adolescence, his marriage, the birth of his child, and his father's death (80-83). The end of this section is signaled by a dual-level narrational shift. The first aspect of this shift occurs on the level of the diegesis, when Axminster becomes a narrator within the events of his own story, and explains to his mistress, Theresa d'Arpez, how the residents of the Floridian colony of which his father was the governor came to kidnap her, without Axminster's knowledge, for the purpose of bringing the two lovers together in spite of the hostilities between Britain and Spain: "Je me justifiai facilement en lui expliquant le nœud de cette aventure ; et nous nous accordâmes bientôt à remercier le Ciel, qui avait amené notre bonheur par une voie si étrange et si inespérée" (83). This is the principal narrative structural division of Axminster's narrative, and is accompanied by an extensive summary. The couple marry, and as a brief period of blissful togetherness comes to an end after a single paragraph, the

transition continues at the level of the narration, with Axminster's regrets regarding his decision to unnecessarily abandon a good situation to return to England:

[1a] Les hommes savent-ils ce qu'ils désirent, [2a] lorsqu'ils se proposent des contentements de leur choix ? [2a] Ce qui leur paraît le plus propre à faire leur bonheur [3a] se change pour eux en une source d'infortunes et de misères. [2a] Ils abandonnent un [1a] repos assuré dont ils se lassent par inconstance, et [3a] l'ombre après laquelle ils courent les conduit à leur perte. C'est ainsi que j'ai contribué moi-même à ma ruine, en croyant travailler à augmenter mes plaisirs. [1b] Je vivais paisiblement à la Floride ; j'y étais estimé de mes amis, chéri de mon épouse et favorisé de la fortune, quel besoin avais-je de [2b] retourner en Angleterre pour y tomber dans un abîme de misère et de honte [3b] dont il n'y a plus de main assez forte pour me retirer ? (83)

This reflection sketches a structural framework for Axminster's narration that operates on an abstract, philosophical level (series "a") and on a personal, emotional level (series "b"). In both cases, a period of unappreciated bliss is followed by an ill-considered attempt to improve on that condition, leading to a melancholic stasis. The third part effects the transformation of Axminster's plans for happiness into a source of woe, which happens when, as a result of Aberdeen's infatuation with his wife, Axminster mistakenly stabs her in a jealous rage; he and his friends kill Aberdeen in retribution, and although Axminster is prevented from killing himself to punish himself for his own crime, he ends up alienated from himself due to the cognitive dissonance his violent act has created within his psyche (83-89). A review of the past initiates the fourth part, which effects Axminster's transition into the melancholic stasis in which he finds himself when he encounters Cleveland: "en me rappelant toutes les circonstances de mon malheur, il me vint à l'esprit que je n'étais vengé qu'à demi par la mort d'Aberdeen" (89). Axminster attempts to resolve the situation by killing Cromwell, which would most likely be a

way to end his own life while avenging his wife's dishonor and that of the realm; when he is unsuccessful in this endeavor he rejoins his wife and daughter and finds a place for them to all to hide in together (89-97). Axminster's story ends, then, in a state of equilibrium or stasis, but cannot be said to have reached a full and definitive conclusion. His wife's health is fragile, and his daughter's future is uncertain.

Both of these inserted narrations can teach us something about the narrative structure of Cleveland's narrative. A point of similarity between Cleveland's and Axminster's stories is the central importance of a tragedy arising from a misunderstanding. An apparent difference is that in Axminster's case the harm that results from the misunderstanding is irreversible, because of its physical nature, while in principle the end of Cleveland's and Fanny's misunderstanding should remedy the harm, which is merely emotional. However, the two cases bear more fundamental similarity than might first appear to be the case. While it is true that Axminster's wife's wounds are incurable, the correction of Axminster's misunderstanding leads to a complete emotional reconciliation, although the resulting equilibrium is much sadder than the previous one. In the case of Cleveland and Fanny, the eventual revelation of the source of conflict is not enough to bring about a full emotional reconciliation; there is an apparent return to happiness, but it is followed by another misunderstanding (parties, etc.), which is resolved in turn by Cleveland's conversion. One way in which both Mally Bridge's story (along with its continuation through Bridge's own story) and Axminster's stories resemble Cleveland's story is that they need to be enclosed within a larger narrative to reach a true conclusion. Mally Bridge's story cannot be said to be truly over until we find

out what happened to her son, but although Bridge's story provides a frame for giving Mally Bridge's story its own identity, it is not itself concluded until it merges with Cleveland's story, which provides a resolution through Bridge's death. (Although it is worth noting that just as Mally Bridge's story didn't truly end with her death, Bridge's story cannot truly be said to have ended until the story that encloses it, Cleveland's story, has ended. Cleveland's story never truly reaches an ending, though, and what limited closure it does achieve is ultimately guaranteed by the authority of the *homme de qualité*. A similar thing happens with Axminster's story: Axminster's story fuses with Cleveland's and then he dies. (Although Fanny does take over his narrative mantle to a certain degree.) These inserted narratives also provide a model of structure and closure for the reader, while affording some of the same pleasures of tension and resolution that the "finished" novel will provide. This kind of closure doesn't rely on complete resolution of all tension, given that the story is relayed by an enclosing narrative. In fact, what makes the reader care about the limited resolution the stories do reach is the very lack of complete resolution at the "end" of the story!

The first episode of the second narrative subunit begins with Cleveland's reflection on the last unadulterated joy of his life (169) and continues through Bridge's story (ends 297, with foreshadowing of Gelin's crimes). When Cleveland leaves in search of Axminster and Fanny, he forgets that they are angry with him, and imagines that they will share his happiness at reuniting with them:

Je n'observe cette courte joie, dont je fus redevable à mon imagination, que parce que c'était la dernière que j'aie goûtée sans mélange. Le cours de mes malheurs était commencé, et ce n'était plus que pour les augmenter de jour en jour que le Ciel y devait mettre du changement. S'il tenait



encore pour moi quelques plaisirs en réserve, ils devaient se changer en douleurs ; et, par une étrange disposition de mon sort, j'étais attendu par une félicité si bizarre qu'elle devait causer mes plus cruelles peines, et qu'elle ne pouvait être extrême, sans être accompagnée de tourments insupportables. (169)

This is in a way a preamble to Bridge's story, as Cleveland's reunification with his long-lost half-brother is how Gelin enters his life. Is this a transition into new unit of the romantic narrative structure or the philosophical one? Bridge's story is part of an episode initiated by narrative relay when Cleveland meets Captain Will: "Cependant, l'ayant reconnu d'un caractère solide, je ne fis pas difficulté, après quelques semaines de navigation, de lui apprendre qui j'étais, et de lui raconter une partie de mes aventures." (170)

### Third Narrative Model: Bridge

To understand the function of Bridge's story within the narrative and dispositive structures of the novel, it is necessary to analyze the various summaries, relays, before/after moments that accompany Cleveland's meeting with Bridge. When the two half-brothers meet, Bridge is eager to hear Cleveland's story from the very beginning: "Il me dit en m'abordant qu'il avait une extrême impatience d'être informé par moi-même de la vérité des accusations du capitaine Will" (174). Cleveland is caught between his fear of offending the captain of the vessel to which Captain Will has transferred him to be taken back to London for punishment as an enemy of the Protector (Bridge) by failing to confirm details of which he could have been informed by Will, and his fear of revealing too much about his involvement with Fanny and Axminster:

Je craignis de l'offenser si je ne lui répétais exactement tout ce qu'il pouvait avoir appris du perfide Will, et j'appréhendais encore plus de m'avancer trop en voulant être exact, et de lui découvrir, par rapport à

Mylord Axminster et moi-même, des particularités qu'il pouvait ignorer. Le parti que je pris fut d'être sincère jusque dans les moindres circonstances qui me regardaient, et de m'abstenir entièrement de lui nommer Mylord Axminster et de lui parler de ses desseins à moins que je n'y fusse contraint par ses interrogations. Je commençai par lui déclarer naturellement que j'étais le fils de Cromwell : mais un fils malheureux, proscrit par mon père, et abandonné même avant ma naissance. Je lui parlai des malheurs et de la fin déplorable de ma mère. (175)

Here, Cleveland is overwhelmed by his emotions and interrupts his narration, but before he can continue, he sees that Bridge is similarly affected, and this leads to the revelation of Bridge's true identity as Cleveland's brother. First, Bridge expresses a desire to find out more about Cleveland: "Faites-moi donc connaître par quel caprice les commencements de votre vie ont presque une entière ressemblance avec ceux de la mienne" (175). Bridge asks the name of Cleveland's mother and explains that the story of how his childhood will make it clear why he fails to recognize it. He reveals that he is the son of Mally Bridge, making it unnecessary for Bridge to tell the story of his childhood, and inspiring Cleveland to want to know more about Bridge. In his request, Cleveland refers to the story Mme Riding told him, although instead of naming the story after Bridge's mother, Mally, he shifts the focus to Bridge: "[N]e m'apprendrez-vous pas comment il se peut faire que vous soyez au monde, vous que Mme Riding a cru mort, et dont elle m'a raconté plusieurs fois la funeste histoire ?" (176). Bridge agrees to satisfy Cleveland's curiosity, but puts him off initially, asking to hear more of Cleveland's own story before he tells his own, and Cleveland summarizes his continuation of his story thus:

Il me pressa alors de lui expliquer l'état présent de ma fortune, et par quelle raison le capitaine Will m'avait livré à lui pour être conduit à Londres, et mis entre les mains de Cromwell. Je lui appris en peu de mots

[1] mes liaisons avec Mylord Axminster, et [4] le dessein qui m’amenait sur ses traces en Amérique. Je lui confessai que [3] ce seigneur était chargé des ordres du Roi pour tâcher de ramener nos colonies à son obéissance ; qu’étant absolument dans ses intérêts, [5] je m’étais efforcé d’y faire entrer le capitaine Will, et que j’y avais heureusement réussi ; mais que son amour déréglé pour une dame dont j’avais pris la protection m’avait attiré tout d’un coup sa haine, et l’avait rendu perfide. Je lui fis ensuite le caractère de cette dame, et [2] le récit de l’obligation que je lui avais [...]. (176)

This summary is supposed to explain the “present state” of Cleveland’s “fortune,” and in particular how he came to be arrested by Captain Will, but it is also necessary to put it into relationship with Cleveland’s earlier reference to his mother’s “malheurs” and her “fin déplorable,” mentioned above. These alternating requests for narration effectively divide Cleveland’s story into two main parts: 1) “les commencements de [sa] vie,” and 2) “l’état présent de [sa] fortune.” Because the first part includes the circumstances of the death of Cleveland’s mother, it covers the time period of Cleveland’s childhood, but it is interesting that Cleveland apparently omits the circumstances of his education in Rumney-Hole, because if he had mentioned them it seems unlikely that Bridge would have thought that his own childhood in the same place would explain his ignorance of Cleveland’s mother’s name. Nevertheless, it is clear that the “whole” envisioned here depends on the similarity between Bridge’s and Cleveland’s childhood experiences, although it is convenient to gloss over Cleveland’s here for dramatic effect. Cleveland, in turn, wants to hear Bridge’s story.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> “Le désordre du vaisseau de mon frère augmenta la curiosité que j’avais de connaître ses aventures, et le terme de son voyage. Il me satisfît en ces termes : Je ne vous raconterai point l’histoire de mes premiers malheurs, et de ceux de ma mère, puisque vous l’avez apprise de Mme Riding. | Je ne prendrais mon récit qu’aux dernières circonstances de la visite que je rendis à notre père, ou plutôt à notre tyran.” (176-77)

An analysis of Bridge's story can shed light on the structure of the novel as a whole by demonstrating that identifying narrative structure as a function of the narrator's evolution works both in pseudoworks and frame narratives. Bridge's story is an interesting case study for 18th-c. ideas about completion and closure because it continues a story that was "complete" in some ways, namely that of Mally Bridge, and is continued by another story, Cleveland's, despite being "complete" on its own in some ways. In their edition of the novel, Sgard and Sermain note that "L'histoire de Bridge est presque un roman à part ; elle fait néanmoins organiquement partie du roman de Cleveland parce que leurs histoires, toutes deux incomplètes, vont s'allier à partir de ce document"<sup>97</sup> (1087). Bridge's story is complete in the sense that the initial situation that prompted the telling, i.e. how Bridge survived Cromwell's persecution, is explained. It is incomplete, though to the event that Bridge's adventures continue, although they become part of Cleveland's story. Bridge's story and Cleveland's are each incomplete without the other; but whereas the rest of *Cleveland* provides the narrative context within which Bridge's story takes on its full significance, the boundaries of *Cleveland* itself are not defined by a larger textual entity. Rather, the current state of Cleveland's narration only makes sense within the imagined larger whole of Cleveland's *story*, which exceeds the boundaries of both the current published state of the text and its final form. To better understand the complex relationship between these narrations and the role of "completeness" and "incompleteness" in each of them, it is useful to compare narrative segmentation *within*

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<sup>97</sup> For a study of the thematic connections between Cleveland and Bridge, see Marc Labussière "Les doubles du philosophe anglais." Colas Duflo, Florence Magnot et Franck Salaün, ed. *Lectures de Cleveland*. Louvain: Peeters, 2010. La République des Lettres 39. 155 sqq.]

Bridge's story to that of Cleveland's own narration within the first installment and in the context of the whole novel.

Bridge constructs the structure of his story with remarks like "ce qui me reste à vous apprendre," which demarcates the first episode, in which he recounts his time in prison and his release from there, from the second episode, which begins when he meets Mme Eliot, the woman who will take him to the secret island protestant colony where the rest of Bridge's story unfolds (179). We can compare Bridge's meeting with Mme Eliot to Cleveland's meeting with Bridge, and the reader's meeting with Cleveland. Bridge talks about being deprived of the consolation of complaining about his misfortunes: "[J]e me trouve réduit à souffrir des maux que je n'ai pas mérités, et à me priver de la consolation même de m'en plaindre" (180). When Bridge meets Mme Eliot, he tells her his story many times: "Je fis à cette charitable consolatrice la relation de toutes les infortunes de ma vie, sans lui cacher même celles de ma mère." (180) Bridge also uses the term "récit" here to refer to his narration (180). She takes special interest in the part about Rumney-hole: "Elle me faisait répéter souvent mon histoire ; elle prenait plaisir à m'en faire expliquer jusqu'aux plus légères particularités. Ma longue retraite dans la caverne de Rumney-hole était l'endroit de ma vie qu'elle écoutait le plus volontiers." (180) This part of the story, then, seems to be important, and Mme Eliot's interest may parallel the interest of Prévost's reader for the analogous episode in Cleveland's story.

The main body of the story is structured around a series of explanations—however, unlike in Cleveland's case, the textual elements that signal the narrative's structure are not tied to any kind of evolution on the part of the narrator-protagonist.

However, they are tied to his changing status in the society to which he finds himself transported. Cleveland is educated partially in Rumney Hole and partially after leaving it, and Bridge is introduced to the society of the *colonie rochelloise* in several stages.<sup>98</sup> After that, the next transition is Bridge's warning about the remainder of his narration, which resembles Cleveland's comment on the absence of further unadulterated joys: "Ôtez de ma vie la nuit charmante où je me vis au comble de mes vœux ; tout ce qui a suivi ou précédé ce court intervalle de plaisir, n'a été qu'un enchaînement de misères et d'infortunes. Vous allez entendre le récit des plus funestes." (226). The portion of the text for which Bridge is responsible, then, is an account of a selection of events unlike Cleveland's, Mme Riding's or Axminster's, each of which purports to tell "the" "story" of its protagonist in its entirety. Like these other stories, though, it is circular in that it brings its protagonist to the situation he occupies at the moment of beginning the narration, but unlike them in that there is no shift in personality as a reflection of the protagonist's status in relationship to the events of the narration. Other moments of

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<sup>98</sup> The first of these structural elements occurs shortly after the arrival at the island, when Mme Eliot tells the story of the colony: "Je vous apprendrai maintenant [...] avec qui vous allez vivre, et à quelle espèce de bonheur vous devez ici vous attendre" (186). Mme Eliot's own story ends with the settlers' conclusion that the place where they have ended up is suitable for their colony: "La suite n'a fait que nous confirmer dans ce sentiment"; but Mme Eliot purposefully leaves out part of the colony's subsequent history: "Je ne vous parle point à présent [...] de l'ordre que nous mîmes dans notre conduite après avoir pris possession de ce fortuné séjour : je veux vous laisser le plaisir de vous instruire de tout par vos yeux"; after which she continues with the rest of the story as far as it impacts Bridge: "Il ne me reste à vous apprendre que les motifs qui m'ont fait entreprendre le voyage de l'Europe, et qui m'ont engagée ensuite à vous offrir mes services dans le vaisseau qui nous a apportés à Sainte-Hélène : c'est un point sur lequel il faut que vous soyez prévenu" (189). This explanation leads into an episode addressing the social order of the island (189-95). Then follows a story that explains the origins of the colony's marriage policy, and the episode continues until Bridge undergoes that ceremony (195-202). Bridge's proleptic reference during that ceremony to the trouble to come initiates a new episode that lasts until another prolepsis about the ill consequences of the decision of Bridge and his companions not to protest the colony's choice of spouses for them (202-212). The next transition is a reference to "l'aventure de M. Guiton" (217).

prolepsis serve to create a rhythm, but fail to indicate changes in Bridge's attitude toward the events of his narration: "comme vous allez voir" (235), "l'avenir" (241), "j'appris ensuite" (242), Gelin's "discours" (244-47). Bridge's evocation of before/after moments function similarly. When Bridge relates his and his companions' decision to wait until their wives' pregnancies become evident before pressing their cause before the elders of the community, he comments that "le même ascendant qui s'était opposé jusqu'alors à mon bonheur se préparait à consommer ma ruine" (250). This negative force coexists with "un reste d'influence heureuse de mon étoile qui me présageait des malheurs prochains auxquels mes idées ne pouvaient pas encore s'étendre" (252). The result is that Bridge traverses this period of trial without increasing his understanding of human nature.

Like Cleveland, Bridge also employs metanarrative commentary that encourages the reader to imagine the eventual overall shape of the story he's telling: "Pour en régler le récit par le temps de mes connaissances, je devrais le remettre après celui de ma propre aventure ; mais ma narration vous paraîtra plus claire en suivant l'ordre des événements" (258).<sup>99</sup> We can also compare Cleveland forgetting that Fanny and Axminster are angry at him when he goes off to find them with Bridge's lack of awareness of the bad things about to happen to him: "Oui, dans le temps même qu'on portait contre moi l'arrêt d'une mort injuste et cruelle, je me faisais ainsi des idées chimériques de bonheur ; j'étais le jouet de cette même puissance maligne qui m'a rendu malheureux dès ma naissance, et qui n'a pris soin de conserver ma vie que pour en faire un exemple de misère et

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<sup>99</sup> For more analysis, see Marc Labussière, "L'ordre narratif dans Cleveland."

d'infortune" (266). And we might also ask what we can learn from Bridge's summary, which can be divided into three main sections, starting with his childhood, continuing with his confrontation with Cromwell, and finishing with his adventures in the *colonie rochelloise*?

Hélas ! repassez toutes les circonstances de ma triste histoire. [1a] Arraché des bras de ma mère presque en naissant, [1b] privé d'elle par un accident que je ne puis rappeler sans honte et sans horreur, [1c] élevé ensuite dans l'obscurité d'une affreuse caverne, mes premiers regards ont été lugubres, et mes premières idées, funestes. [2a] J'ai désiré de voir mon père, mon cœur s'en était fait une joie ; [2b] je n'ai trouvé en lui qu'un ennemi cruel qui s'est fait violence pour épargner mon sang, et qui s'était proposé en m'accordant la vie comme une grâce, de la rendre si misérable qu'il me fût impossible de jouir longtemps du bienfait. [2c] J'échappe enfin à sa cruauté, il se présente quelque ouverture à mes espérances. [3a] Mais à quoi aboutissent les promesses qu'on me fait d'une vie plus heureuse ? à mettre le comble à mes misères en multipliant les causes de mes douleurs, et en me faisant trouver les plus cruelles peines dans ce qui fait ordinairement la félicité des autres. L'amour, l'amitié, tout se change pour moi en poison et en tourment. [3b] Un peuple entier, qui faisait profession de vertu, devient barbare lorsqu'il est question de me rendre malheureux et de me perdre. [3c] Un amour tendre et innocent est regardé comme un crime ; un saint mariage passe pour adultère ; on me condamne au dernier supplice ; et s'il me reste à l'extrémité deux amis fidèles qui s'intéressent à mon sort, mon infortune se répand sur eux, et je les entraîne dans ma ruine. (271-72)

Most notably, only the third section deals with the text that can be called Bridge's own story. The first two sections recapitulate events narrated by Mme Riding in the story of Mally Bridge. It is also worth noting that the second "section" corresponds to a much less substantial narration than either the first or second sections. Thus, Bridge's summary demonstrates the complex relationship between Bridge's narration, his "story," and the events of his life, all of which overlap, but none of which are entirely coextensive. Furthermore, Bridge's summary focuses much less on the implications of this



understanding of the events of his life for his interior development, in comparison to similar recapitulations from Cleveland.

### *Narrative Complements*

#### Angélique's Letters as a Narrative Structural Device

Angélique's letters and stories serve as a major catalyst and regulating factor for the the delayed resolution of the tensions active in the second super-installment. Angélique reports Fanny's presence and her suspicion of her innocence (615-19), she and Cleveland discuss (619-22), but he is still unaware of the "nœud" of Fanny's disappearance. First phase: vague intimations: Madame (745), Angélique (739), Mme Lallin (749, 751), the jesuit (746-47), all contribute to Cleveland's increasing but vague conviction that Fanny might be innocent (749-52). This phase begins with an explanation of Angélique's program of gradual resolution through letters in order to preserve Cleveland's health (739). The first letter contains no actual information, just lays out the program: "cette triste époque. Il fallait faire fonnaître la mesure de mes maux pour donner une juste idée du changement qui était prêt à les suivre" (748). Second phase: Cleveland actively seeks Fanny's innocence, but is still under the power of Cécile's attraction; Mme Lallin sympathizes with Cleveland's outrage, but urges him to reserve judgment (754), Cécile, Angélique, Mme Lallin, Mme & M. de R all gang up on Cleveland (754-58). When introducing the second letter, Cleveland mentions that it is "plus flatteuse que les précédentes"—note his use of the plural even though there has only been one letter so far, giving greater impression of gradual change—but still, "elle ne m'apprit rien de plus clair" (752). Cleveland replies, soliciting more details, but is still interested in Cécile. Third phase: Cleveland takes on the task of reconciliation, meeting

with Gelin, updating Mme Lallin (although he is misunderstood because she has heard that Angelique and Fanny blame her but he isn't aware yet that she thinks so). Cleveland tells us that the third letter is no longer vague, but he doesn't mention what details it contains; his comments are more about her attitude of certainty regarding Fanny's innocence (778). He also makes more references to multiple letters (779) despite only making specific reference to certain letters: this is a combination of discrete progression and gradual background action.

Cleveland's meeting with Gelin shows that inserted narrations are intended less to provide information than to highlight the narrative structure by contrasting different versions of the structure and by showing Cleveland's evolution as a character. Cleveland actually deduces most of Gelin's summary based on Gelin's revelation of Cleveland's apparent love for Mme Lallin (784-85). There is an explicit reference to Fanny's story (787), because Gelin's story is quasi-superfluous and only somewhat useful, as in the Madeira episode (789-91), which is followed by Cleveland's evaluation and summary and interjection (791-93). Cleveland refers to the next part (793-800) as "cette dernière partie de son discours", which includes events after Gelin's separation from Fanny. And while Cleveland claims that Gelin's story would be unrealistic if not for the proof of the continuation of the story, he never points out later what precise element of the narration is the proof he was referring to, and he doesn't specify it here or even hint at it (847). This resembles Prévost's procedure with *Cleveland* on the whole: the continuation justifies the current lack of verisimilitude, but that continuation never comes, or if it does partially materialize, it extends the need for justification continually into a continuation that can

never arrive. The fourth letter comes from Mme Lallin, and uses summary as a means of justification (802-804), followed by Cleveland's evaluation of her summary (802?) including an alternative path he could have taken.

In the midst of the narrative structure provided by Angelique's letters, Cleveland describes a new low in the emotional plot: insensitivity not even rising to the level of despair or pain (627). Cleveland also remarks on the order according to which he presents information: "Pour suivre la loi que je me suis imposée jusqu'ici de m'attacher à l'ordre des événements, je ne dois pas remettre plus loin des explications que je n'obtins moi-même qu'à la longue et par degrés." (630) Comments like these have two effects on narrative structure: 1) they focus readers' attention on the succession of events as a kind of misdirection that prevents them from being distracted by the succession of knowledge; 2) they also give Prévost a free hand in constructing the underlying narrative structure, which has to do with Cleveland's development as a philosophical and emotional subject: the plot, while obviously related to this development, is substantially independent from it, and almost any conceivable plot twist could be made to serve Cleveland's development, which, it is worth noting, is slow to the point of being nearly static. Here, Cleveland is preparing the reader for a tale that sets the stage for Fanny's story, namely Madame's coordination with Gelin, M. des Ogères and other witnesses:

Mais pourquoi tant d'art pour conduire mes lecteurs au récit que je leur prépare ? Veux-je leur ménager le plaisir d'une situation imprévue, et faire un spectacle amusant de ma douleur ? Ah ! je brise ma plume, et j'ensevelis à jamais au fond de mon cœur le souvenir de mes infortunes et de mes larmes, si j'ai besoin de secours et d'ornements pour les retracer. Reprenons plutôt les choses dans leur simple origine, et laissons à démêler dans la suite de ma narration comment j'ai été informé de mille circonstances, que je place dans un temps où je les ignorais. (633)

The reader encounters two different summaries from Madame's point of view. The first comes indirectly, as reported by Cleveland, when Fanny comes to her:

Le caractère généreux de Madame l'avait rendue extrêmement sensible à ce discours. Cependant, comme elle n'avait point oublié *le détail de mes plaintes qu'elle avait pris plaisir à me faire répéter plusieurs fois*, elle avait demandé naturellement à Fanny, comment elle pouvait être si touchée de mon accident, [1] après m'avoir abandonné dans l'île de Sainte-Hélène, [2] après les complaisances qu'elle avait eues pour un autre amant, [3] après m'avoir livré sans pitié à tous les excès de la douleur et du désespoir [...]. (618, emphasis added)

Cleveland reports the second one in her own words, as she narrates it to Gelin:

il parut un peu déconcerté, lorsqu'au lieu de l'interroger simplement sur les motifs de son assassinat, Madame lui parla [1] de ma famille, [2] de l'île de Cuba, [3] de l'île de Sainte-Hélène, et [4] de La Corogne, avec un détail des faits et de circonstances qui lui fit connaître qu'elle était informée de tous nos secrets. (634)

Madame brings together information that composes a new "whole" narrative, which she then takes measures to confirm by sending agents to investigate (636). This new way of seeing the narrative involves turning Gelin into an agent of good. Fanny's visit to Cleveland at this point in the narration mostly belongs to the "soap opera" narrative structure, with little philosophical or emotional reflection (636-49).

#### The Stories of Fanny and Mme Riding

With the narrations of Fanny and Mme Riding, we encounter what could be called "complementary revision." Fanny's story takes up the entirety of the ninth book and is confined within that book (649-737), while Mme Riding's occupies all of the thirteenth book and crosses the boundary into the fourteenth book, which contains the bulk of the story, but which continues after the story is over (911-44). I examine both stories as

examples of “complementary revision” of the preceding narrative structure. Fanny prefaces her story with an oblique reference to the reader’s impatience:

Mais je ne peux vous satisfaire l’une et l’autre qu’en reprenant mes tristes aventures dans leur origine, pour vous mettre en état de les comparer avec les funestes impressions dont je vois trop que vous êtes prévenue contre ma fidélité et peut-être contre mon honneur. Elle entreprit aussitôt cette intéressante narration, dont on ne sera pas surpris dans la suite que j’aie pu répéter ici jusqu’au moindre mot. (649)

Before beginning her narration, Fanny gives Mme Bridge a two-part “preview” of the story she’s about to tell. The first part is a summary of recent events, beginning with Mme Bridge’s revelation to Fanny that Cleveland still loves her, contrary to what Fanny had come to believe as a result of his apparently callous behavior toward her, which is in fact a result of his misunderstanding of her behavior: “Concevez-vous, ma sœur, [...] que le tour de votre discours ait eu plus de force pour me faire ouvrir les yeux que [1] la longueur insupportable de mes peines, que [2] le dernier crime de Gelin, et que [3] les reproches mêmes que j’ai reçus aujourd’hui de Cleveland ?” (651). The second part refers specifically to the narration she’s about to begin:

Mais, ma chère sœur, écoutez-moi. J’ai des choses incroyables à vous raconter. J’en suis effrayée moi-même à mesure que je les rapproche de mon imagination pour les mettre en ordre, et si je suis assez heureuse pour ne me pas tromper dans la manière dont je les conçois depuis un moment, je vais vous découvrir la plus horrible scène de malice et de cruauté dont on ait jamais eu l’exemple. (651)

She then harkens back to the time before she left, explaining her reasons for thinking that Cleveland might have been interested in Mme Lallin, but she takes care to assure her listener (and the reader) that “Je ne vous rappellerai point tout ce qui n’est pas nécessaire au récit que vous attendez.” (651). Fanny’s alternate summary begins 1) with a

justification for her worries about the connection between Cleveland and Mme Lallin (651-52), 2) leaving for America (652), 3) “tristes aventures” up to Axminster’s death, 4) her happy time with Cleveland in Havana (652), 5) everything after the arrival of Mme Lallin (652), 6) transition through reflection (654), 7) revelation of truth behind dressing-gown (662), 8) Fanny’s “illness” in response to Cleveland’s imagined treachery (664), 9) trying to win Cleveland back from Mme Lallin (667), 10) the most eagerly-awaited part and a major before/after moment is Fanny’s disappearance (page?), 11) “aventure” of Madeira (680-89) followed by a reflection (890) and another “aventure” or “détail” (691-92), 12) the “récit” of La Corogne, 13) the “aventure” of the infatuated officers (701-712), which begins with a mini summary and ends with “je n’ai plus d’aventures extraordinaires” (722). Here, it is important to emphasize that this is less a comparison of different *versions* of the narrative, than of different ways that characters *structure* the narrative. As the conclusion of her story approaches, Fanny distinguishes between the narration of events and the narration of feelings: “Je n’ai plus d’aventures extraordinaires à vous raconter ; car effrayée de celle que je venais d’essuyer en Espagne [getting embroiled with the Spanish officers, in particular Dom Thadeo], et rebutée du commerce du monde par l’expérience d’un moment, je ne songeai qu’à me dérober aux yeux des hommes, et j’ai mis depuis ce temps-là tous mes soins à me cacher. Mais que j’aurais de réflexions et de sentiments à vous retracer, si je ne vous avais moins promis cette triste peinture que le récit de ma conduite et de mes actions !” (723). She later describes understanding the “portrait de mon cœur” as a necessity for explaining her actions (727-30).

When Mme Riding finally tells her story, she separates it from Cleveland's and Fanny's story: "Je détache de mes aventures et de celles de Cécile tout ce qui peut avoir quelque liaison avec les vôtres" (911). Does the division between parts of Mme Riding's story really have more to do with book length than with plot? Or does Prévost manage to make the boundary between books correspond to a meaningful transition in the plot, as Mme Riding claims: "Mon récit n'a pu flatter jusqu'à présent que la tendresse de votre cœur par les douceurs de la compassion. Attendez-vous ici à la surprise que des événements merveilleux sont capables d'inspirer." (920) Mme Riding's auto-commentary points to how the circumstances of narration can make certain details necessary in the moment of telling when they would not be otherwise:

Ne me reprochez pas de vous avoir caché jusqu'aujourd'hui une circonstance si intéressante. Il était peu nécessaire de vous rappeler des souvenirs douloureux lorsque j'ai vu la fortune attentive à vous combler de ses faveurs ; mais je suis dans un moment où le même silence coûterait trop à mon cœur, et vous avez dû vous attendre à tout ce qu'il y a d'attendrissant dans mes aventures lorsque vous en avez exigé le récit." (929)

The fundamental mechanism of the plot of *Cleveland* is *who* knows *what*, and *when*. The interaction of dispositive and narrative structure capitalizes on this. We might ask how conclusive the novel's ending is from this point of view (1002)? We might also compare Fanny's obstinate silence in the first part of the work to her decision, at length, to come clean about her distaste for Cleveland's dissipation toward the end of the work (968-69). On these two occasions, Fanny serves as an agent of both the philosophical and the emotional narrative structures. Then there's Cécile's silence about the reason for her melancholy, which she reveals in the fifteenth book (1026-29), which takes place in the

same cottage where Cleveland tried to seduce Cécile earlier: “la vue d’un lieu aussi cher à mon souvenir qu’on a pu le trouver remarquable dans mon histoire” (1025).

Retrospective review is both a recurring theme of the novel and an implicit structural mechanism, as at the moment when Cleveland is about to embark on a program of scientific study after Fanny reveals that she doesn’t actually enjoy the glittering lifestyle Cleveland has created for their family.

### Self-Portrait of the “Text” as a “Work”

#### *Editorial References to the Work and its Parts*

In the preface to the first volume, Prévost draws a parallel between the entity he is introducing to the public and a newly discovered country to which a traveler intends to travel, which is why, according to him, it requires a preface: just as travelers must know more about their potential destination than just its name, readers should know more about the books they intend to read than just their titles (Grenoble 9). We should note that Prévost’s example, a newly discovered *pays*, seems to refer to the European practices of “discovering” and “exploring” lands that were previously “uninhabited” and claiming them as colonies. These practices involved naming areas that are still completely uncharted, or only partially charted, or whose outer contours were known but whose interiors remained unknown, and a traveler’s further exploration may uncover areas that lie beyond the furthest extent reached by previous expeditions, which may complement or contradict previous ideas about the region. In this way Prévost’s metaphor strongly resembles periodical fictions like *Cleveland*. In his persona as editor, Prévost indirectly evokes the possibility that the publication of future installments may bring with them



unforeseen developments or may fail to deliver certain expected events. By comparing novel titles and names given to newly-discovered places, Prévost suggests that both do provide a certain amount of information about their referents, although this information may be erroneous—or even intentionally misleading! It is also worth noting that the core parallel that Prévost establishes here is not between *places* and *publications*, nor even between *names* of places and publications, but rather between the *decision to read a work* and an *intended voyage*; accordingly, in Prévost’s mind the reason for providing information in addition to the title or name is to preserve “la satisfaction [que le voyageur] se promet sur la route” (Grenoble 9), not to make it more certain that the reader/traveler will make it to any particular *destination*, but rather to ensure that the *journey* is an enjoyable one.<sup>100</sup>

The specific terminology used in the preface to refer to the text highlights the text’s problematic status as an entity with ill-defined borders that nevertheless has an identity. The voice of the preface refers to both an “ouvrage,” a “manuscrit,” and a “livre” (Grenoble 2: 9), and the concurrence of these three terms suggests an underlying tension between the open-ended quality of the entity to which they all refer, and its integrity. The term *mémoires* refers both to a published work, the homme de qualité’s own memoirs, and to an unpublished manuscript: “Il avait lu mes *Mémoires*, et ce fut la plus forte raison qui le porta à me parler de ceux de son père” (Grenoble 2: 9; emphasis in original, see Didot 1731, Gallica) The use of emphasis for the memoirs of the homme de

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<sup>100</sup> The last philosophical-emotional narrative unit begins when Cleveland enters the “new country” of Clarendon’s guidance (862-67), but this is part of a multilayered and multi-step process of retrospective reevaluation of the narrative structure of the text.

qualité is interesting: although it resembles the modern practice of switching between normal characters and italics to designate the titles of works, the two practices are not identical, as shown by the use of emphasis for the first appearance of each newly-mentioned proper name (see Didot 1731, Gallica). In contrast, the terms *ouvrage*, *livre*, and *manuscrit* are not emphasized. The term “ouvrage” is used in connection with publication: “Je lui demandai quelle raison il avait de condamner aux ténèbres un ouvrage qui plairait vraisemblablement au public ?” (Grenoble 9). This question brings us to the question of the editor’s role in producing the text that makes its way into the reader’s hands. What prevents Cleveland’s son from publishing his father’s memoirs himself is “la difficulté de mettre le manuscrit en ordre, et de donner un air d’histoire et de narration suivie à des événements dont le fil était interrompu en quantité d’endroits” (Grenoble 9). This explanation emphasizes the importance of the editor’s role in the process of transforming an unpublished *manuscrit* into a publishable *ouvrage*, which is necessary if the resulting textual entity is to make it into the hands of readers as a *livre*. The process described here seems incompatible with modern ideas of editing, as it encompasses creative modification and addition as acceptable, perhaps even essential, editorial tasks. Such an attitude toward the editor’s role would seem to be another indirect allusion to the possibility of deviation from the stated plan in future installments. However, Prévost made very little use of the editor’s prerogative he assigns here to the *homme de qualité*, which points again to a fundamental tension in the structure of the work between openness and completion. The *homme de qualité* underscores this tension

later in the preface when, in the course of explaining a chronological error in the text, he contradicts his earlier stated attitude toward his role as editor:

Cet endroit des mémoires de M. Cleveland était interrompu : et je n'ai pensé qu'à joindre la narration, sans faire attention à remplir ou du moins à faire apercevoir le vide qui se trouvait entre le départ d'Angleterre et le séjour de Rouen. On voit que je me suis aperçu de ma faute : mais j'ai mieux aimé qu'elle subsistât que de mettre une interruption désagréable dans mon ouvrage, ou de la remplir par quelque aventure de mon imagination. (Grenoble 11)

The contradiction between these two attitudes suggests that, through the voice of the *homme de qualité* in his role as editor, Prévost is responding to two opposing expectations on the part of his readers: 1) that the works they read should flow smoothly and exhibit excellent linguistic style, and 2) that the same works reflect the reality of both the original text and of the real world in an authentic way. The first of these two expectations would be most perfectly met by a completed work resulting from careful authorial attention, while the second calls out for the unaltered production of a writer whose goal is not publication. Works of the former kind are compatible with the idea of the editor as co-creator, while those of the latter kind are more compatible with a minimal conception of the editor's hand in preparing the text. This contradiction indicates the simultaneous fictional and real sides of the discourse Prévost has put in the mouth of the *homme de qualité*. The fictional side is present to the extent that the ideas reflect the position of the *homme de qualité* as a *character*, while the real side is present to the extent that Prévost allows his own thoughts to come through his character's words: certain terms and phrases can have different meanings in the world of the diegesis and in the world of the reader.

The “Avertissement” to the sixth volume outlines the structure of the sixth volume in a way that complements the dispositive structure of the preceding books and volumes. Intending to refute his detractors’ accusations of promoting deism, Prévost lays out “le plan du *Philosophe anglais*” (610). Prévost acknowledges that keeping in mind the ultimate conclusion of the narrative is crucial when composing a work such as *Cleveland* when he takes his critics to task for seeing certain of Cleveland’s ideas as being against religion, which is, in Prévost’s words, “entrer mal dans la situation d’un homme d’esprit, qui cherche, qui délibère, qui raisonne sur ses lumières présentes, et qui a toujours soin d’ailleurs de faire entendre qu’il est arrivé dans la suite à des connaissances plus parfaites” ([iv] VI Utrecht: Néaulme, 1738). Although the twists and turns of Cleveland’s journey may not meet the nineteenth century’s standards for narrative necessity, they do provide the attentive and open-minded reader opportunities to follow Cleveland in his philosophical journey while accompanying him on his geographical journey at the same time. To the critics who complain that, given the fact that the later volumes had not yet been published, it was impossible for the reader to know that Cleveland would one day become a good Christian, Prévost replies:

[O]n pouvait le deviner si l’on eût fait attention que cela était annoncé dans la Préface et dans cent endroits de l’ouvrage, surtout au tome IV où M. Cleveland l’apprend lui-même à ses lecteurs, et où il parle avec douleur de ses faiblesses : ce qui suppose qu’en les écrivant, il est dans un état de lumière qui les lui fait condamner. (610-11)

The implication is clear: Prévost expects his readers to keep in mind at all times how the present moment of the text might eventually lead to the overall conclusion described in the original preface.

*Narratorial References to the Work and its Parts*

Another transitional prolepsis quickly follows, introducing Cleveland's love-at-first-sight moment with Fanny, which opens a parenthesis that Prévost *does* close, although that closure only provisional: "C'est une circonstance de ma vie que je veux expliquer avec soin, parce que, quelque légère qu'elle ait été dans son origine, elle a donné depuis naissance à des événements si considérables qu'ils composent la partie la plus intéressante de mon histoire" (106). It's worth noting that both of these transitional moments coincide roughly with the end of the first book, but that they both do precede it by an appreciable amount of text, although the transition that corresponds to the ultimately-open-ended narrative structure comes first and the one that corresponds to the more-or-less-closed dispositive structure comes later, and closer to the dispositive boundary. Here we see that dispositive transitions often correspond more closely to transitions in the relationship plot, which is the one that more-or-less closes, and this reinforces the ultimate feeling of closure in the work, to the degree that it achieves such a feeling, while the narrative structure follows the emotional-philosophical plot, which never truly closes, but which provides the true motivating force for continuing the narration.

Sgard and Stewart note that Marivaux shares the concern for justifying the inclusion of apparently insignificant details that Prévost demonstrates in his preamble to the story of falling in love with Fanny: "Toutes ces petites particularités, au reste, je vous les dis parce qu'elles ne sont pas si bagatelles qu'elles le paraissent" (1084). I would argue, though, that the two authors have different reasons for reassuring their readers in this way, although each one does so in the service of his narrative project. Whereas

Marivaux wants to draw his readers' attention to his intricate portrayal of the human psyche, Prévost highlights this transition to evoke a possible narrative horizon as an orientation for readers' interpretation of the narration as building a text that will eventually be part of a work; a work that Cleveland can only produce once he has reached a certain point in the evolution of his personality. Just what is meant here by "partie" is an interesting question to reflect on. Seeing that this comment precedes what could be considered the last narrative unit of the first book, i.e. Cleveland falling in love with Fanny, it seems likely that it refers to everything that is to come afterward, but then why "*la partie la plus intéressante*?" Why not "*la continuation de mon histoire*" or some other formula for designating the rest of the work in its entirety? When Cleveland refers to "a part" of "his story," does he mean a part of the narrative of his life, or a part of the text that later calls itself that? The fact that Cleveland himself was not involved in publishing his memoirs would support the conclusion that he means the narrative, not the text, but as narrator Cleveland does make comments that imply a reader, so he could very well have the text in mind. The lack of a clean differentiation between the narrator and the author also makes this question difficult, as one of Prévost's main ways of communicating with his reader was by using his narrator's voice. In the end, there may not be a definitive answer, and the term may be more evocative than referential: Prévost's purpose is to stimulate his readers' imagination, not to impose a single authoritative interpretation on them.

Having made use of his philosophy to determine that his love for Fanny, itself, cannot be considered criminal, but that human laws can limit the expression of that law,

he resolves not to constrain his love, but to keep himself from expressing it in any inappropriate way (111). However, with the benefit of hindsight he is able to explain the fault in his logic: “J’avais trop peu de connaissance de la nature du cœur pour prévoir ce que me coûterait un jour ma constance à [...] observer [ces deux résolutions] ; mais c’était assez que j’eusse reconnu mon devoir pour ne pas demeurer un moment indéterminé à le suivre” (111-12). How is the reader to understand Cleveland’s ominous reference to this fateful day, which is to come at some undefined point in the future of the narration? One way to read the novel would place that day not far off, when Cleveland gives in and reveals to Fanny that he is in love with her (150-51), but that reading, while technically accurate, is quite anticlimactic. Does Cleveland mean to refer to one of several occasions in the future when he determines that he must keep some piece of information to himself in order to fulfill his responsibilities? If so, then the declaration itself loses its accuracy, since those situations fail to meet the exact description. Rather than expend energy on proving that Prévost’s narrative construction methods were less than perfectly precise, which is probably true, it is better to focus on how this statement influences readers’ ideas about the possible future course of the narrative from the point of view of the present moment of narration, and how perception of the narrative to come is influenced by the residual impression of those ideas, which persists even if they fail to materialize exactly as the reader expected.

The transition from Bridge’s story back to the main narrative sets up a relationship between the two narrations that emphasizes each one’s status as a

“whole.”<sup>101</sup> Bridge’s story concludes right before the fourth book begins, when Bridge suddenly notices that his “récit” has gone on too long, prompting the following metanarrative commentary from Cleveland:

J’ai donné à cette narration une étendue qu’elle n’aurait point si je l’eusse rapportée sur le seul secours de ma mémoire. J’avertis mes lecteurs qu’elle n’est point de moi. Elle est de mon frère, qui a eu dans la suite assez de complaisance pour la mettre par écrit, à ma prière ; et je n’ai fait que l’insérer dans mon Histoire. Ainsi, c’est lui-même effectivement qui a raconté ici sa propre aventure. (284-85)<sup>102</sup>

This aside implies that the stories told by Axminster and Mme Riding could have been longer, which underscores the importance of first-person accounts, suggesting that Prévost may have expected his readers to want to understand the overall structure of the text, which is why it would have been important to them to know where to situate the boundaries between Cleveland’s narration and Bridge’s. Though there is in fact a rough correspondence between dispositive and narrative structure here, it is more a means of creating the impression of narrative progress than it is a way to effect actual progress, because this is more of a continuation of the unit that is already in progress when Cleveland and Bridge met than it is the beginning of something new.

When Cleveland meets Bridge’s companions, he realizes that “Il fallut leur expliquer en peu de mots mon aventure” (287), thus reestablishing connection with the

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<sup>101</sup> Bridge’s first audience is the governor of Saint-Hélène, to whom he and his companions recount “le fond de notre aventure” to his great pleasure, but apparently without overly exciting his curiosity: “Il avait pris plaisir à nous faire raconter les circonstances de notre aventure, et à se faire expliquer l’origine et l’état de la colonie ; mais il ne nous avait jamais marqué que sa curiosité le portât à tenter de la découvrir” (280).

<sup>102</sup> Bridge is thus identified as an author of sorts, in similar fashion to Axminster and to Cleveland himself. Not all narrators are portrayed as authors, though, Cleveland makes no reference to having recourse to a written version of either of Mme Riding’s narrations or of Fanny’s narration. It would be interesting to investigate the implications of this disparity using the lens of gender, but I won’t be able to do that here.



narrative framework of the narrative subunit that was underway when Bridge began his narration, and which continues here, while simultaneously initiating a transition into a new episode of that subunit. This requires a summary:

Je leur appris les motifs de mon départ de France ; les raisons d'honneur et d'amour qui m'appelaient à la suite du vicomte d'Axminster ; les obligations que j'avais à Mme Lallin, qui ne permettaient pas de tarder à la secourir ; enfin, la résolution déterminée où j'étais de profiter des premières occasions de continuer ma route vers l'Amérique" (288).

However, the second episode of the second narrative subunit truly begins with Cleveland's foreshadowing of Gelin's crimes (297) and continues until Cleveland's philosophical reflection after all of the first set of various reunifications have happened (419). More has happened during the first episode than just a simple narration: Cleveland has changed, and his narration changes as a result. Prolepsis can serve less to predict actual future events than to signal a transitional point in the narrative: "Ils eurent lieu de le reconnaître encore mieux dans la suite, et de se reprocher l'inconstance qui les fit changer de résolution" (291). Here we see evidence that the overall structure of the narration is presented as a descent followed by a rise, but it's more like a circle or helix because at the end Cleveland has changed in some ways, but is still the same melancholy person he must be for the narrative structure to stand. The more-or-less continually mounting tension of the narration is periodically punctuated by climactic moments, which are occasionally paired with references to the rest of the "mémoires," indicating an overall structural vision of the work: "Dieux ! dans quelle description suis-je obligé d'entrer ici ? Et comment mes lecteurs croiront-ils après l'avoir lue, qu'il puisse me rester quelque chose de plus triste et de plus attendrissant à leur raconter dans ces mémoires."

(313). This comment recalls one made by Bridge: “Qui s’imaginera qu’après tant de transports et de douleurs dont j’ai fait le récit jusqu’à présent il pût y avoir quelque chose de plus terrible pour moi que tout ce que j’avais éprouvé ?” (276). Cleveland’s reflection on the awfulness of the tale to come and the reader’s doubt of anything worse possible after what has already happened marks the tale as an apparent possible climax: once readers have experienced it, it will be impossible for them to imagine a continuation. In Bridge’s case, the implied contrast is between the entirety of the preceding mounting tension of his narration and the apparent impossibility of further increased tension. Interestingly, while Bridge’s narration does continue after this reflection, it does not continue for long, while Cleveland’s story has much farther to go before reaching its eventual conclusion. In both cases, the effect is to imply that the narration has reached a new stage of development, and that, despite the apparent impossibility of further development, the overall shape of the eventual whole that will result from the process of narration currently underway will be able to accommodate the upcoming peak of dramatic tension without having to make that peak serve as its climax.

By interrupting the main narrative for the quasi-pseudowork of the episode of Serrano, Prévost brings the part-whole relationship to the reader’s attention.<sup>103</sup> Cleveland introduces the episode by situating it with regard to the rest of his narration: “Il m’arriva, avant la fin de cette année, de prendre part à une aventure si extraordinaire qu’elle mérite

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<sup>103</sup> Sgard and Sermain note: “La façon dont cet épisode est introduit, exceptionnelle dans ce roman où tout se tient, témoigne d’un changement de plan ; il est clair que Prévost a décidé de l’étendre, ou du moins de ne pas procéder en ligne droite vers la conclusion. Il écrit d’ailleurs à son éditeur Nœulme en février 1731 qu’il peut le prolonger à volonté. Cependant l’insertion n’est pas gratuite, car elle répond à l’indication donnée dans la préface.” (1098)

bien que j’interrompe un moment le récit des miennes pour la faire servir d’ornement à mon histoire” (421). This interruption underscores the constitution of *Cleveland* as a work: “Je ne l’ai pas vu depuis ; mais j’apprends, dans le temps même que j’écris ces mémoires, qu’il est à Guernesey depuis longtemps, et qu’il y mène une vie douce et tranquille” (435). Mentioning Lambert’s retirement brings Cleveland’s eventual retirement to mind and evokes the work’s eventual conclusion. Reunification with Bridge and Gelin provides both closure of Bridge’s narrative arc from Part I and clues about the conditions for the eventual closure of the entire work: “Ils eurent le temps, en marchant vers la ville, de me raconter la conclusion de leurs aventures” (436). Cleveland encapsulates this conclusion with his own account: “Pour éclaircir tout ce qu’on a pu trouver d’extraordinaire dans la description que j’ai faite de cette mystérieuse colonie, je dois rapporter ici ce que j’en ai vu moi-même en retournant en Europe” (437), but this account is based on Bridge’s own narration: “Sa présence m’avait pénétré de joie ; son récit excita ma plus vive reconnaissance” (440). We can observe an interaction between the philosophical-emotional plot and the relationship plot when Cleveland’s renewed dedication to study places the two narrative structures into conflict with each other (cf. 442), and there is continued interaction as Cleveland acts as an experimenter (444-45). A similar phenomenon occurs when Cleveland is reunited with Mme Lallin: “Elle me fit un long récit de ses aventures, qui étaient assez touchantes pour intéresser beaucoup ma compassion” (447). This is also the result of “un dessein que je dois regarder comme l’époque du plus horrible de tous mes malheurs” (445). How does the conjunction of reference to specific, clearly-delimited anterior portion of the text, on one hand, and an

undefined posterior portion of the text shape the reader's perception of the present moment? Speaking of Gelin, he reminds the reader that "On a vu dans la relation de son aventure de Sainte-Hélène qu'il était adroit et fertile en inventions." (453) Then with reference to knowledge of details he might not seem to have had access to, Cleveland says "J'entre ici dans un détail dont on s'étonnera de me voir si parfaitement informé. Mais demanderai-je trop à mes lecteurs, si je les prie de suspendre leur jugement et leur attention ?" (453).<sup>104</sup> All of these examples show how the text begins to evoke not a specific conclusion, but the idea of a conclusion.<sup>105</sup>

Various references to philosophy in Cleveland's discussions with Madame show that the relationship plot is really just an incident in the philosophical-emotional plot, and while that episode is resolved by the end of the text, the underlying narrative structure of which it is a part remains unresolved. Foreshadowing of episode with Cécile "Je déroberais sans doute à mes lecteurs cette honteuse partie de mon histoire, si j'avais la gloire pour but en écrivant. Mais ce n'est point mon éloge que j'ai promis ; c'est le récit

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<sup>104</sup> Other examples: "Si je n'avais à donner, dans la suite, des preuves claires et sans réplique de la vertu inébranlable de mon épouse, il paraîtrait incroyable qu'avec la confiance et l'affection qu'elle avait pour Gelin, elle eût pu se défendre si longtemps contre ses séductions" (457). Also Fanny's vague premonition of disaster, which Cleveland dismisses (456).

<sup>105</sup> Cleveland's retrospective and prospective meta-narratorial commentary at this point in the narrative shows how the relationship plot benefits from previous philosophical-emotional narrative development: "Si l'on se rappelle tout ce que j'ai rapporté, dans plus d'une occasion, du caractère de Fanny et de cette délicatesse inquiète qui la portait naturellement à la jalousie, on entrera sans peine dans le sens de tout ce qui me reste à raconter. Qu'on se souvienne de cette profonde tristesse dans laquelle elle s'était comme obstinée chez les Abaquis ; de ces alarmes qu'elle n'avait pu cacher, même dans les premiers jours de notre engagement ; de ses distractions, de ses pleurs même et de ses soupirs ; et quiconque lira | cette funeste partie de mon histoire sera bien mieux instruit de la cause de mon malheur que je ne l'étais moi-même au temps qu'il m'est arrivé. Qui le comprendrait, sans cette clef ? Mais après le soin que j'ai pris de préparer de si loin mes lecteurs à ce récit, ils ne trouveront rien d'obscur dans les ténèbres où ils me verront marcher. Ils jouiront clairement du spectacle de mes peines. Hélas ! que n'avais-je alors pour les éviter, les lumières que je donne ici pour les faire entendre !" (449-50).

sincère de mes malheurs et de mes faiblesses” (542). As climax of this part approaches: “Je sens trembler ma main, en commençant le récit d’une des plus funestes aventures de ma vie” (556). The next narrative episode begins with Cleveland’s designation of the upcoming narrative as “une partie de ma vie” and ends with Cleveland’s realization of his error and his narrative hindsight (875, 974-77). This subunit contains Fanny’s revelation of her distaste for parties (968-69), Mme Riding’s story, the materialist episode, and the partying episode. Here we can see that the narrative structure is not always organized by the plot; rather, plot events may precipitate shifts in narrative structure that have already occurred or are in progress. There seem to be clusters of indications about structure, referring to different transitions in multiple structural systems around the same point in the text, e.g. 1) “l’époque de la perfection de ma joie, comme j’ai pris soin de faire remarquer celle de mes plus affreuses douleurs” (874), and here we might wonder if Cleveland is referring to his near-suicide or to his apathy attack (627); 2) “une partie de ma vie que je n’annonce pas comme la plus glorieuse” (875); which follows 3) the reunification ceremony, in which “aventures” are presented as “épreuves de fidélité et tendresse” (870), mixed with a reflection on emotion and “force de mon esprit” and a reference to Cécile (871), following a commentary on the idea of symmetry in the narrative (869).

### *Shaping and Reflecting Perception of the Whole through Summary and Relay*

#### Narrative Summary

Cleveland’s definitive assumption of responsibility for himself, relieving Axminster and Fanny, comes in response to his grandfather’s attempt to take charge of his future, which initiates a new narrative unit (141). Interaction between the

philosophical-emotional plot and the relationship plot begins when Axminster is happy about Cleveland's rendezvous with Mme Lallin but Fanny is displeased (130). The transition begins when Cleveland meets his grandfather, resulting in a narrative relay. First, Cleveland's previous male authority figure, Axminster summarizes Cleveland's "récit" for the king's benefit: "Il lui fit ensuite un abrégé de l'histoire de ma mère et de la mienne," after which Cleveland's grandfather takes over, summarizing what he had already told the king about his daughter (141). Cleveland is able to foresee the difficulties that will arise from his increasing responsibility for himself:

Je pressentis toutes les difficultés que j'aurais à essayer, ou de la part de M. Cleveland, à qui j'étais devenu si cher qu'il ne consentirait jamais à me voir partir avec Mylord Axminster, ou de la part de mon propre cœur, qui me permettait encore moins d'abandonner Fanny, ma souveraine maîtresse, et de me détacher un seul moment de son père, mon tendre et bien aimé protecteur. (144)

An indication of this growing responsibility comes when Cleveland tells Fanny about the origin of his love for her—although he does so at the instigation of Mme Riding, he has begun to take on the role of narrator in his own story:

Je lui racontai l'origine de ma passion, ses effets, mes timides et respectueuses espérances ; le dessin que j'avais formé de les cacher pendant toute ma vie, ou d'attendre du moins pour les expliquer d'heureuses circonstances que je ne prévoyais point, et que j'avais à peine la hardiesse de désirer. (150)

This summary focuses on Cleveland's own acts of self-determination, leaving out the influence of his various guardians. Ultimately, Cleveland's grandfather's attempt to take charge of his grandson ultimately fails because Cleveland has come into his own enough as a result of his three-phase education at the hands of his mother, Axminster, and Fanny, that now he retains responsibility for the remainder of his own education.

At this point, the end of the second book is approaching rapidly, and several textual indications of narrative transition accompany its arrival. However, these indications relate more to the superficial details of Cleveland's relationship with Fanny, and have less to do with actual developments in Cleveland's emotional and philosophical evolution, which is the motor of the novel's most fundamental narrative structure. The transition between books does correspond to a narrative development, namely King Charles' removal of the social barrier to Cleveland's marriage to Fanny by making him a knight, but despite Cleveland's protestations to the contrary as narrator, this event does not occupy as important a place in the novel's narrative structure as a transition between volumes does in the dispositive structure. There is a narrative transition in progress, and it accelerates in the second volume, but it is already in progress before the end of the first volume, and continues after the second volume has begun. The transition begins when Cleveland falls in love with Fanny (cf. Cleveland's mother's comment about Cleveland's not yet having been subject to a violent passion), and continues after Axminster summarizes the preceding narration for the king, Cleveland takes responsibility for his affairs into his own hands, but the two structures put into place by the two phases of his education. Just as Mme Riding continued the educational phase initiated by Cleveland's mother, Fanny continues the educational phase initiated by Axminster, and each woman represents the continued residual influence of her associated educational phase as the novel continues after the point when Cleveland has taken on full responsibility for himself (e.g. Mme Riding: "Voilà donc notre philosophe [...] !" [148]). Cleveland's summary at the end of book two appears to indicate a break in the narrative structure, but

closer analysis shows that the structure evoked does not involve a substantive transition at this point. Rather, Prévost is taking advantage of a dispositive transition to build the reader's anticipation, and to encourage the reader to think about the shape of the overall narrative that is in the process of constructing itself here. In the following paragraph, I have identified partially overlapping references to five different narrative phases indicating that the present moment is not one of narrative structural transition:

On voit par tout ce que j'ai rapporté jusqu'à présent de mon histoire, qu'il n'y avait rien eu d'absolument malheureux dans mes premières aventures. [1] J'avais éprouvé dès ma naissance les traits de la mauvaise fortune, mais presque sans les sentir. J'en avais même formé une espèce d'habitude, [2] jusqu'au temps où je commençai à connaître Mylord Axminster. Sa compagnie et son amitié m'avaient fait mener une vie fort douce. [3] Ma passion pour sa fille avait fait beaucoup plus : elle m'avait rendu heureux. L'espérance prochaine de l'épouser allait mettre le comble à mon bonheur. Ainsi [1, 2, & 3] je n'avais pas lieu de me plaindre beaucoup du passé, et [4] je ne trouvais dans ma situation présente que des justes sujets de joie. [5] Quelque obscur que fût l'avenir, j'aurais eu tort de m'en défier, puisque mon bonheur était prêt à s'établir sur les fondements les plus solides. Enfin, j'étais content de ma condition. Mon âme était tranquille, ou du moins elle n'était agitée que par les délicieuses émotions du plaisir. (152-53)

The first summary refers to three phases corresponding to the first three episodes of the novel's first narrative subunit, in which Cleveland relates his childhood education, first at the hands of his mother ("J'avais éprouvé dès ma naissance les traits de la mauvaise fortune"); then under the guidance of Axminster and Mme Riding, although he only mentions the former ("[le] temps où je commençai à connaître Mylord Axminster"); and finally in response to Fanny's influence ("Ma passion pour sa fille [...] m'avait rendu heureux"). These first three episodes do not complete the process of Cleveland's education and assumption of adult status. The completion of that process takes place in



the fourth episode, which Cleveland refers to as “ma situation présente” because it is ongoing at the current point in the narration (cf. Mme Riding “je m’imaginai qu’il ne vous manquait qu’un peu de connaissance du monde pour vous perfectionner” [145]); this is in opposition to “[le] passé,” by which Cleveland means the first three episodes. Further analysis of the transition between the first and second volumes shows that the fourth episode does not end at this dispositive boundary, and that the fifth narrative phase Cleveland mentions (“l’avenir”) does not begin until later.

The appearance of this auto-commentary at a moment of narrative transition is not an accident. Rather, the process of marking the evolution of the narrative structure involves an account of Cleveland’s philosophical and emotional evolution. This pairing is clear in the summary that Cleveland uses to bring Axminster up to date on his doings since their separation:

Apprenez-moi par quel hasard vous vous trouvez dans cette solitude. Je lui fis connaître, autant que je le pus dans le désordre où j’étais, que ce qu’il appelait un effet du hasard, en était un de [1] ma tendresse immortelle pour lui et pour sa fille ; que c’en était un du désespoir où [2] son départ de France m’avait jeté, et de [5a] la résolution inébranlable où j’étais d’employer mon sang et ma vie à son service. Je lui appris que [3] je n’étais demeuré en France après lui qu’aussi longtemps qu’on m’y avait arrêté dans une prison ; [4] que depuis plus de six mois je parcourais les mers et les déserts de l’Amérique, en cherchant ses traces, et en m’affligeant de la difficulté de les trouver, [5b] résolu de passer toute ma vie dans cette recherche et de compter pour rien tous les périls et toutes les peines. Enfin, je m’expliquai assez pour le persuader de mon innocence, et de l’injustice qu’il m’avait faite de la soupçonner. (317)

This summary presents a particular perception of the path that reunited Cleveland with Axminster and Fanny, one that relies on two possible outcomes, and an out-of-order presentation to achieve its rhetorical aims. The structure thus evoked has five parts.

Cleveland indirectly refers to the whole first portion of his narrative using his love for Fanny as a synecdoche, implying that that relationship is the ultimate purpose of his childhood and adolescence (part 1). Cleveland then refers to the period following the departure of Axminster and Fanny, which he describes as a cause of despair (part 2). Then, however, Cleveland jumps to the moment of his narration, referring to his resolution *at the moment when he is relating these event to Axminster*, to serve him to the utmost of his ability. These three emotions, love, despair, and devotion, are described as the cause of the following events, namely Cleveland's departure from France as soon as possible (part 3), and his attempts over the past six months to search for Axminster and Fanny (part 4). The same emotions that are responsible for Cleveland's emotional state *at the moment of narration*, i.e. his devotion to serving Axminster and Fanny, are portrayed as being responsible for his commitment to die searching for them if necessary. However, it is interesting that Cleveland mentions the current, lasting effect of those emotions [5a] as the first effect at a moment in his narration when that effect could not have obtained, while he mentions the effect that would have been appropriate for that moment in his narration [5b] at the end, when it no longer applies.

A major transition in the philosophical-emotional plot comes when Cleveland has to make a decision about the education of his and Bridge's children (477-78). Cleveland mentions that his experience demonstrates that the same educational methods do not necessarily produce the same results in all cases, which is an important consideration for him now that he finds himself in the same role that his mother played for him when he

was a child. This decision gives rise to a retrospective redefinition of the narrative's structure based on the use of reason:

Tout ce qui ne subsiste plus, peut être oublié : [1] le ressentiment des outrages, celui de la perte des biens et d'une condition misérable, s'éteint par la succession des années qui en affaiblit le souvenir. [2] La perte même des personnes chères, quelque douloureuses qu'en aient été les circonstances, n'est point un mal à l'épreuve du pouvoir du temps [...]. Mais [3] l'infidélité d'une épouse, avec les noires circonstances que j'ai rapportées, une douleur aussi juste que je m'imaginai la mienne, dont la cause toujours subsistante se présentait sans cesse à ma mémoire, pouvait-elle cesser un moment de m'affliger ? Quel temps ma raison pouvait-elle choisir pour arrêter les plaintes continuelles de mon cœur, ou pour se faire entendre parmi tant de tristesse et de confusion ? (479)

This summary establishes a three-part division of the narrative based on three significant events that influence Cleveland's emotional development: 1) the fall of Cleveland's mother from Cromwell's good graces, 2) her death, and 3) Fanny's supposed infidelity. However, the lack of precise detail coupled with references to complex circumstances ("quelque douloureuses qu'en aient été les circonstances," "avec les noires circonstances que j'ai rapportées") enlists the weight of the preceding narrative in service of a particular view of the present state of the narrative and its future course, one that may or may not be accurate, but which is important for inducing the appropriate esthetic response in the reader at this particular point in the progression of the text. Cleveland also refers to the persistent influence of his childhood education when situating the events of the past in reference to the present of narration:

C'est ainsi que l'ancienne habitude que j'avais formée de modérer mes passions me soutenait encore contre celles qui n'avaient pas pris tout à fait l'ascendant de ma raison. Jamais la haine et la vengeance n'ont eu la force de répandre leur poison dans mon cœur. Il n'y a que la douleur et l'amour qui y aient disputé l'empire à la sagesse. Mais ces deux tyrans n'y ont fait

que trop de ravage, et *j'ignore encore* quand il plaira au Ciel de me délivrer tout à fait de leur pouvoir. (480 emphasis added)

What follows is Cleveland's last successful use of reason to fight back his passions (477-80). Cleveland imagines a summary of challenges to the strength of philosophy (482) and reflects on them (482-84), and on the foundations of philosophy (484-92), and its application to pain (492-95). This reflective process includes a summary of Cleveland's philosophical narrative trajectory including the education he got from his mother (484, 492) and results in Cleveland's decision to reject philosophy in anticipation of receiving "more certain" help from heaven at the conclusion of the narrative (495). This sequence ends with a reference to an "aventure" (496), which may be the next stage in the philosophical-emotional plot, and a metanarrative reflection on not leaving out unflattering parts, especially Cleveland's attempted suicide (496).

Cleveland presents a vision of his narrative trajectory when he describes the workings of his new system, which requires two new groups of associates: one composed of all the sociable savants (1020-21) and one composed of people with just the right combination of temperament and life experience to be able to appreciate Cleveland's new way of living (1021-22). The way he describes this second new group of companions suggests a certain way of understanding the narrative framework of the text. He contrasts them with his partying friends and his materialist associates: "Ce n'étaient point ces gens dissipés par le bruit et les amusements du grand monde, dont M. Briand avait peuplé ma maison de Paris, ni ces esprits téméraires et révoltés contre tous les principes, qui s'étaient efforcés de m'entraîner dans leurs nouvelles opinions" (1021), which has the

effect of designating Cleveland's partying phase and his materialist phase as two important complementary stages in the narrative of his life. He then describes them as

quelques personnes des deux sexes, dont les passions n'étaient plus assez vives pour faire illusion à leur esprit, mais [1] qui les avaient assez connues pour raisonner juste de leur nature, et pour en expliquer judicieusement les effets ; [2] gens exercés par l'usage du grand monde, dans lequel ils avaient passé leur jeunesse, [3] et dont les embarras leur étaient devenus insupportables dans un âge plus avancé ; [4] qui en avaient pris par conséquent ce qu'il a d'estimable sans en avoir contracté les ridicules et les folies, et [5] qui s'entretenaient du goût qu'ils avaient eu pour lui comme d'un péril auquel ils étaient heureusement échappés. (1021)

This description outlines a five-part progression: 1) the experience of passion, 2) a youth marked by worldly experience, 3) a mature age marked by an increasing distaste for the world, 4) coming to appreciate the good aspects of worldly life, and 5) an appreciation for having "escaped" worldly life and a desire to discuss that with other likeminded individuals. This progression describes Cleveland's own perfectly, although it is not the only way to describe it. The beginning of the period associated with this new system is also accompanied by an important reflection on happiness on Earth and in the afterlife, in which Cleveland speaks of himself as someone who has learned through experience that the only chance a "cœur sensible" has of any enjoyment in life comes from moderation, not excess, but that this moderation, which he associates with his efforts to achieve happiness, aren't immune to death: "Après avoir travaillé comme moi à se rendre heureux, où en était leur ouvrage ?" (1023).

The three final stages of Cleveland's conversion each include a summary of the past, and each of these summaries frames the overall narrative in a slightly different way. The first of these stages is a narrative episode recounting Cécile's contribution to

Cleveland's conversion (1023-40). Cleveland's reminiscences when confronted by the cabin where he and Cécile had their fateful encounter (1025) puts the current state of the narrative into relationship with the early period of this major narrative unit, which came near the end of the first super-installment. Cécile reconstructs the narrative to reflect her perception of events (1026-29). The subunit concludes with Cleveland's realization of the change that has occurred (1040). The climax of Cécile's death and related events recalls the end of the first installment; each moment constructs its own "whole." How does Cécile reconstruct the narrative? "Le récit des infortunes de ma famille et l'image de tant de tristes aventures, dont ma vie n'avait pas été plus exempte que celle de toutes les personnes auxquelles j'appartenais par le sang, me fit naître des sentiments aussi sombres que ces tragiques idées" (1027). Cécile's story pushes back the horizon of origin back to the end of the first super-installment, when Cleveland met Cécile (1026-29). Cleveland's reaction to Cécile's death paints a picture of his character's narrative arc:

Que les temps étaient changés ! Quelle différence de cet abattement à la force d'esprit qui m'avait fait résister si longtemps à mes anciennes infortunes, et qui m'avait fait trouver assez de ressource dans moi-même pour soutenir toute ma famille par mes conseils et par mon exemple ! La vigueur de l'âme, comme celle du corps, dépend de certains principes de vie et d'action qui doivent être employés sans cesse à l'entretenir et à la renouveler. Elle ne se répare point quand cette source de force est épuisée. Il ne me restait rien de mes anciennes maximes ; et l'habitude que j'avais formée d'une vie sensuelle et voluptueuse avait achevé de m'amollir. Ma tendresse pour Fanny, le seul de mes sentiments qui fût à l'épreuve de toutes sortes d'altérations, pouvait bien me faire partager ses peines, et me les rendre même beaucoup plus douloureuses que les miennes ; mais je n'en étais que plus à plaindre, avec cette double sensibilité, qui m'exposait aux attentes le plus redoutables, sans me fournir les moindres armes pour m'en défendre. (1040)

By focusing on the moments at which the change can be perceived, even though the

changes themselves occur prior to those moments, this summary puts Cleveland's philosophical tests of the first major narrative unit into relationship with the conclusion of the second major narrative unit. This eternally sad future is directly contrasted with the "golden age" that Cleveland, Fanny, and Cécile experienced at Saint-Cloud before Cleveland embarked on his project of luxurious living in Paris:

Que Saint-Cloud me parut changé, à mesure que j'approchai du centre de ma tristesse ! Cette retraite enchantée, ce délicieux séjour où j'avais fait le plus doux usage de ma fortune, et que j'aurais préféré quelques jours auparavant aux plus vastes possessions de la terre, ne me parut qu'une affreuse demeure où la mort avait étendu ses voiles, et quelle semblait obscurcir de ses plus noires couleurs. (1042)

Here, Cleveland speaks of a different sadness than the one that has been the driving force behind the narrative of his life for the majority of the text. Rather than being the victim of his father's reputation, he is now the victim of fate. His sadness no longer comes from his problems with Fanny, but from the death of his daughter. This line of thought continues later: "Mais je songe à la vie ! [...] Hélas ! ce qu'elle me promet à l'avenir n'est-il pas plus cruel que le malheur de la perdre ? Que me sera-t-elle sans toi, chère Cécile ? Et que dois-je espérer désormais qui puisse remplir le vide que tu laisses dans mon cœur ?" (1043). This is an important before/after moment, which suggests that Cleveland's melancholy persists even after his conversion. When Cleveland summarizes his life to Fanny in the wake of Cécile's death, he restructures his narrative by means of an out-of-order retrospective summary: 1) childhood, 3) materialism, 4) everything in-between, 2) parties, 5) reduced company, 6) return to state of melancholy from childhood (1046-47). Note that the sixth stage brings the narrative back to the first one. By presenting the narrative in this way, Cleveland highlights the circular nature of his story, and this return

to melancholy is necessary for the text to come into being in the first place.

The novel's philosophical-emotional plot ends with this new order of behavior, or "nouveau plan de conduite" (1065), and the rest of the text wraps up the relationship plot. Cleveland starts to return to his old habits, but in the service of religious faith: "L'ardeur que je sentis croître de jour en jour par ses entretiens et par ceux du comte, aurait peut-être emporté trop loin un cœur aussi facile à émouvoir que le mien, si l'habitude que j'avais de raisonner ne m'eut fait découvrir dans leurs principes même autant de règles de modération que de motifs de zèle" (1064). This reasoning leads him to develop his "nouveau plan de conduite" (1065). Cleveland's questions about Fanny's previous behavior in light of his new beliefs refer to "ses anciennes disgrâces, et [...] la mort de sa fille" (1063). How does this retrospectively define the novel's narrative structure with respect to its dispositive structure? The narrative structure presented here is one of contrast between both Cleveland's past and present and Fanny's past and present: both have changed; but the comparisons are sufficiently vague to apply to whatever the reader may think of: there are a few possibilities for each; some may be better than others, but what is important here is that the reader has an opportunity to recall the past.

### Narrative Relay

In terms of plot, a large portion of this episode is taken up by the account of Cleveland's time among the Abaquis, which is framed by two sets of reunifications.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> These begin with Cleveland's reunification with Axminster and Fanny at the beginning, then another reunification with Axminster, for his death, at the end. Thus the first half of the episode consists mainly of retellings of events that have already occurred, and the various "récits" that make up this part of the text track the progression of Cleveland's reunification with Axminster and Fanny (301, 306-307, 309, 312, 315-16), while the second half, following the central portion that recounts Cleveland's government of the



The first of these “*récits*” brings Cleveland up to date on Axminster’s initial doings following his arrival in America, but the sight of Captain Will’s vessel diminishes the enthusiasm Cleveland initially feels when he hears this news, and the juxtaposition of these two contrary impulses elicits a philosophical metacommentary in which Cleveland contrasts his unique personality, which allows him to retain the use of his reason even when under the influence of extreme emotion, to that of normal people (303).

The second major narrative unit of the philosophical narrative structure begins when Cleveland retells his story to Clarendon (518), and the analogous unit within the emotional narrative structure begins when he retells his story to Madame (520, 524), and to Cécile (571). These three retellings are preceded by a long philosophical reflection from Cleveland (484-92), which is in turn preceded by a summary (482), which is in its own turn preceded by a statement about the continued suffering that results from love and pain. Although these anchor-points occur relatively near to each other (in terms of the scale of the whole work), their proximity seems to be somewhat artificial, or intentional, as shown by the fact that Cleveland’s introduction to Clarendon is a stand-in for the real beginning of their friendship, which occurs much later. However, by placing this stand-in at this earlier point in the narrative, Prévost unifies the three aspects of the novel’s narrative structure. One notable aspect of this structure is its similarity to that of the first installment of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, which was published as a “finished” work, despite the supposed lack of coordination between the first and second super-

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Abaquis, consists of another series of “*récits*” leading up to Fanny and Cleveland’s reunification with Axminster just before his death: (355, 376, 385, 405, 409, 412).

installments. We might also ask how the structural reflections of the second major narrative unit reflect the evolving structure of the narrative, and guide the reader's interpretation of the previous state of that structure, its current state, and its future course. Most focus on the relationship plot. Prévost seems to be laying the groundwork of a narrative structure amenable to a conclusive ending, but at the same time he needs to preserve Cleveland's melancholy. Whereas in *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* retirement provided an ending that left Renoncour with the necessary attitude to take on his role as narrator, in *Cleveland* it is not enough because the tension comes from Cleveland's personality as it plays out in interpersonal conflict, so an interpersonal resolution would be needed.

#### Combined Summary and Relay

One sign of this second major narrative unit is the coexistence of *complete* and *partial* relay, a narrative technique that evokes a variety of "wholes" that are not always closed off. For example, the latter occurs when Cleveland tells Clarendon *part* of his and Axminster's stories at their first meeting. The incomplete relay suggests a *redefinition* of the progression of the narrative to reach the desired outcome, although the bulk of this redirection takes place in the second super installment. Here we see an emphasis on *gradual* resolution: "un juste effet de prudence; qui ne permet pas de se livrer tout d'un coup" (518). This first meeting is a moment of transition with delayed effect: "je puis regarder cette première conversation comme le fondement de la tendre amitié dont il n'a jamais cessé de m'honorer" (518). Both types of relay take place when Cleveland meets Madame. Cleveland's retelling of his story to Madame at the beginning of the second major narrative unit, coupled with his later mention of the fact that she remembers that

retelling, serves as a sign of an emphasis on continuity of narrative structure despite the intervening relationship plot events with Cécile (524, 618).

The novel's narrative structure has two threads: one based on Cleveland's relationship to philosophy and one based on his relationship to his emotions. Before entering into the emotional realm, Cleveland effects a partial narrative relay focusing on his time in Saumur and Angers with a limited recapitulation of prior events, and Madame's recognition of Fanny from the information he provides sets up an opportunity for the reader to compare the two (520). The section with Madame begins with Cleveland exposing "le fond de mes sentiments," indicating a return to the emotional structure of the plot (524). He then brings her up to date on his story, offering

une relation exacte [1] de la manière dont j'avais été élevé, et [2] des principes par lesquels je m'étais conduit pendant toute ma vie. Je ne lui cachai même ni mon nom ni ma naissance ; je me contentai de lui apprendre en même temps le conseil que m'avait donné Mylord Clarendon, et la résolution où j'étais de le suivre à l'égard de tout autre qu'elle. Enfin, après m'être montré à elle à découvert, [3] tel que j'étais avant l'infidélité de mon épouse et les malheurs qui l'avaient suivie, je me représentai avec la même ouverture [4] tel que j'étais devenu à Sainte-Hélène, à La Corogne, et à Saumur. Voilà, Madame, ajoutai-je, l'abîme où m'a jeté mon épouse. (524)

After this he characterizes the ideas at stake in this version of his story, and mentions his desire to die, in an oblique reference to his suicide attempt. The way in which Cleveland summarizes his story for Madame divides the narrative into two main parts: everything that came before Fanny's supposed infidelity, and everything that followed. Cleveland also presents an overly favorable view of his philosophy's effectiveness prior to Fanny's disappearance, claiming that it kept him "tranquille," whereas previously he only claimed that it allowed him to maintain a calm exterior despite his interior turmoil, although it is

unclear whether narrator-Cleveland agrees with what protagonist-Cleveland says at this point to Madame or not, and how this might relate to a later rationalization of the “calm” provided by religion that he never truly seems to find. Cleveland provides some clues about the conclusion, such as the reference to Madame’s future death, which suggests that Madame will die before the end of the text (526). Still, references to future events that remain unresolved at the end of the text provide for the fuzzy boundaries necessary for maintaining the reader’s interest. Maybe Prévost meant to use the reference to Madame’s death in the second way before writing the second super installment and then changed his plan, but the point is that he could have used it either way. Terwill’s arrival frames the narrative in terms of Axminster’s family (528).

The culmination of Cleveland’s retrospective reflections as narrator (556, 558, 561, 563) comes at the height of his passions for Cécile, and prepares the ground for a “self portrait” (571-72). This apparent narrative climax begins with Cleveland telling his story to Cécile:

Apprenez l’histoire du plus malheureux homme qui fût jamais. [...] Je commençai par lui apprendre [1] qui j’étais, avec une partie des tristes circonstances de ma première jeunesse. Je lui racontai ensuite [2] ce qu’on a vu de plus attendrissant jusqu’ici dans mon histoire, pour la conduire au malheureux dénouement de l’infidélité de mon épouse. [...] Enfin j’arrivai à [3] cette malheureuse partie de mes aventures à laquelle elle devait prendre le plus d’intérêt. [...] Je finis mon récit. (571)

Cleveland specifies that “ma narration avait duré presque une heure” suggesting a connection between the summary and the self portrait: this view of the narrative trajectory corresponds to Cleveland’s position vis-a-vis Cécile and the reader’s idea of the text as a “work.” Cleveland implicitly divides the narrative into two parts when he

reflects on his intrigue with Cécile: “si je juge de tout ce que j’ai senti jusqu’à présent par ce que j’éprouve au moment” (597). When Fanny sends the chaplain of the convent where she’s staying to take a message to Cleveland, she tells him “toutes ses aventures et les miennes” (598)—this may signal the reunification of Cleveland’s and Fanny’s split plot lines—and Cleveland takes this as her attempt to rewrite their story’s trajectory to preserve her reputation at the convent by shifting the blame to him (601).

The narrative episode of the final stage of Cleveland’s conversion (1050-64) includes a before/after and summary/comparison phase (1053-54); a relay phase, with Clarendon’s story (1050-52); and a retrospective redefinition of the boundaries of the preceding narrative structure (1055-58). Clarendon’s story is a key part of this episode (1050-52), and Cleveland’s commentary on Clarendon’s story includes an interesting reflection on a structural decision not taken: “Sa relation aurait mérité toute entière de trouver place dans un autre lieu de mon histoire ; mais ici, où l’intérêt même du plus cher de mes amis refroidirait la compassion que je demande pour le mien, je ne m’arrêterai qu’au petit nombre d’événements qui sont liés avec le fond de ma narration” (1050-51). Clarendon, like Cleveland, decides to write the story of his misfortunes: “Il écrivait ses réflexions pour les graver dans son cœur, et pour les rapprocher plus souvent de sa mémoire” (1052). Also important when thinking about this summary is the preceding comparison between Cleveland’s “system” and the one he imagines Clarendon to have:

Je cherchais avidement dans quelle source il avait puisé les principes d’une philosophie si héroïque, et je me rappelais quelques légères ouvertures qui lui en étaient échappées dans d’autres temps. Mais des systèmes d’imagination, tels que je me figurais encore le sien, étaient-ils capables de soumettre les sens avec cet empire ? Celle du comte, disais-je, est peut-être plus vive et plus ardente que la mienne. [...] D’ailleurs,

ajoutais-je, quelle comparaison de son cœur au mien, et dois-je juger de ce qu'il éprouve par ce qui se passe au-dedans de moi-même ? Le comte est un homme affaibli par l'âge et par l'application du travail. Peut-être a-t-il ignoré toute sa vie ce que c'est qu'une passion violente ; je sais de lui-même qu'il n'en a point connu de plus forte que l'ambition. (1053)

Cleveland's conversation with Clarendon is a way of retrospectively (re)defining the work as a whole, but this process of (re)definition goes beyond simply "hiding" Prévost's mistakes.<sup>107</sup> Cleveland then sets up a new set of conditions for satisfying the requirements for narrative closure, this time based on a narrative horizon staring with Fanny's return:

Mais à ne compter mes misères que depuis l'heureux retour de Mme Cleveland, quelles plaintes ai-je à faire de mille désirs importuns, qui ne m'ont conduit qu'au trouble et à l'ennui lorsque j'ai entrepris de les satisfaire, et qui m'ont laissé moins de repos encore quand je les ai combattus ? [...] [1] Je n'ai senti que de la langueur dans les plaisirs que je vois rechercher avidement à tous les hommes, dans la bonne chère, dans les concerts, dans la continuité des jeux et des spectacles, enfin, dans tout ce qui passe aux yeux du monde pour le comble de la félicité. [...] [2] les charmes d'une courtisane ont excité une révolte imprévue dans mes sens, et, ce que j'ose à peine vous révéler, leur trouble a fait passer un moment le poison dans mon cœur. [3] Mais j'arrive à la plus insupportable de mes peines. Le souvenir du passé n'est pas nécessaire ici pour grossir mon objet. J'ai perdu ma fille." (1057-58)

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<sup>107</sup> Summary: "Je cherche depuis le premier instant de ma raison ce port heureux où vous êtes parvenu. Après mille efforts, j'ai désespéré de le trouver ; et lorsque je me suis flatté le plus témérairement d'en approcher, un orage imprévu n'a pas manqué de me repousser dans le sein des tempêtes, qui m'ont précipité aussitôt dans quelque nouvel abîme." (1054). Reference to future: "Un air de complaisance et de bonté qui se répandit aussitôt sur le visage du comte fut comm l'aurore de tous les beaux jours que la faveur du Ciel me tenait en réserve" (1054). Summary and interpretation from Clarendon: "Vous vous êtes rempli dans votre jeunesse de mille maximes auxquelles vous avez donné le nom de principes, et qui vous ont soutenu dans plus d'une épreuve. Elles vous ont manqué. Mais je n'ai pas reconnu qu'en vous plaignant de leur faiblesse, vous ayez pensé à vous en former d'autres. Le discours que vous m'avez tenu à Saint-Cloud, et le parti que vous avez pris presque aussitôt de vous livrer au tumulte du monde dans votre séjour à Paris, m'avait fait juger que si vous n'étiez pas retombé dans vos anciennes erreurs, vous étiez peut-être dans un état encore plus triste, qui est celui de renoncer à toute lumière." (1055) This long-range retrospective summary is followed by a summary of recent events: "Songez-vous que depuis plusieurs années toute mon étude est de fuir la vue de moi-même, par la crainte d'y trouver sans cesse un ennemi, dont je n'ai pu obtenir presque un seul moment de composition. [...] La variété des établissements humains qui portent le nom de religion m'a toujours ôté l'envie de les connaître [...]. Un point m'a jeté dans quelque embarras ; encore n'ai-je dû mes doutes qu'aux raisonnements captieux d'une société de gens d'esprit, qui s'étaient fait comme un bonheur de m'entraîner dans leurs opinions" (1056).

Clarendon's impatience to hear the end of Cleveland's story suggests that the events of the entire narrative are unimportant: the remedy is the same, regardless of what has caused the emotional pain. By summarizing Cleveland's past in this reductive way, Clarendon makes it possible for him to start over, but the remedy may not be as complete or as durable as Cleveland hopes, given that it leaves room for permanent melancholy. Cleveland calls attention to this portion of his story, which seems to be the climax of a narrative of trial before reward:

Je pèse avec raison sur cette époque du changement de mes principes, ou plutôt sur ce renouvellement de mon âme, qui lui fit reprendre insensiblement toute la vigueur qu'elle avait perdue dans un si long oubli d'elle-même, et qui l'éleva enfin au degré de connaissance et de force où le Ciel l'appelait par tant d'épreuves. À l'esprit juste et sincère qui s'est persuadé une fois de la nécessité de la religion, par sa convenance avec l'idée que nous avons des droits du Créateur, et avec celle que notre propre cœur nous force de prendre de la nature humaine, le chemin est court jusqu'à la conviction de toutes les autres parties de la vérité auxquelles le parfait repos du cœur est attaché. La créance des mystères, celle des points historiques, la soumission aux règles de mœurs et de discipline, ne sont plus que des conséquences qui sortent d'elles-mêmes du principe. (1061)

What can we tell about Cleveland's later life from this commentary? It would seem that the person writing these lines might not be completely convinced of what he's saying, or rather might believe it but only wish it were true of himself, or perhaps remembers when it was true, but regrets that it no longer is, as he remembers almost achieving happiness through religious faith. When Cleveland speaks of his ever-increasing respect for religion that makes him regret having devoted more space to doubts than to explanation (1062), the editors suggest that he does so because he won't turn his book into an apology for Christianity (1120), but it also has to do with Cleveland's character, which remains melancholy even after his conversion. We also know that Cleveland has read enough

Christian devotional books after the end of the events narrated in the text in order to be able to know that Clarendon's proofs aren't new, but his *method* is (1061). Cleveland begins to *teach* this method, implicitly, to the reader (it consists mainly of fully representing both the arguments for and against his object).

### *Before-After Moments*

#### Prospective and Dynamic

While an important before-after moment occurs at the boundary between the first two books (115), the next narrative structural transition does not occur until primary responsibility for Cleveland's education moves from Axminster to Fanny (128). In the third episode of the first narrative subunit, Fanny takes over responsibility for Cleveland's education from Axminster. After Axminster's last direct supervision (122-25) he asks Fanny to help (125). Cleveland explains the importance of Fanny's contribution to his education:

Un lecteur éclairé demanderait sans doute où j'ai pu prendre toute la fermeté qu'on verra dans la suite de ma vie, si je n'avertissais pas par quels degrés je perdis les faiblesses et les timidités de mon enfance.

Fanny contribua beaucoup à me guérir de ces imperfections puériles [...]. Mon ardeur s'accrut extrêmement par une heureuse rencontre qui donna naissance, à quoi dirai-je ? disons à la félicité de ma vie : car tous les tourments et toutes les agitations dont elle fut en même temps l'origine ne sauraient entrer en comparaison avec les torrents de joie et de bonheur dont elle m'ouvrit la source. (128)

This is the first candidate for the moment to which Cleveland was referring when he spoke of a day when his resolutions would cost him a lot, since up until this point, he reminds the reader, he has been faithful to his resolution to keep his love for Fanny hidden (128).



One main reason why the boundary between the first two volumes should not be considered a major narrative transition is the multiple repetitions of Cleveland's foreshadowing of disaster. It occurs multiple times before the transition and after the transition, and each time Cleveland identifies the point in the narrative at which he makes the comment as a decisive transitional point. The first of these prolepses comes when Cleveland foresees the conflict that the division of his loyalty between his adoptive family and his birth family, as mentioned above (144). The second comes right before the transition into the second volume:

Cependant, tout cet édifice de tranquillité et de bonheur était un vain fantôme, qui s'était formé par degrés pour s'évanouir en un moment. Mon nom était écrit dans la page la plus noire et la plus funeste du livre des destinées ; il y était accompagné d'une multitude d'arrêts terribles que j'étais condamné à subir successivement. Mon bon génie avait lutté inutilement pour m'en garantir ; il n'avait pu réussir pendant près de dix-huit ans qu'à les suspendre. Ô Dieu, qui m'as donné la force de les supporter, donne m'en assez maintenant pour les rappeler à ma mémoire ! Je me suis fait violence pour les en écarter pendant le récit de cette première partie de mon histoire ; c'est une trêve que j'ai eu la force de faire avec mes douleurs. Je les sens qui renaissent, et qui viennent se présenter en foule à ma plume. (152-53)

This reflection serves mostly to shape the reader's ideas of the overall form that the narrative is beginning to take on, which consists of a "first part," in which not much bad happens, followed by a continuation of uninterrupted tragedy. However, while that idea of the narrative has imaginative force, it does not completely reflect the events of the first part, which see Cleveland deprived of his access to a normal life and the death of his mother, which are represented as unfortunate. It's true that Cleveland has learned to get used to this kind of misfortune, and that the misfortune he will deal with in the rest of the narrative is more intense, but the choice of a moment at which Cleveland's "misfortunes"

can be said to have begun in earnest is arbitrary. Is their source to be found in his passion for Fanny, in which case his meeting with her could be called the turning point? Or is it his mother's disgrace that is to be blamed? And if it is indeed the machinations of Cleveland's grandfather that truly set Cleveland on a road to ruin, why identify the beginning of those machinations with his actions in the second volume, when his reasons for engaging in them occur in the first volume? Indeed, Cleveland's foretelling of woe continues at the beginning of the third volume, continuing the rhetorical move begun as the second volume began to approach its conclusion. And although this means that the dispositive structure is not in sync with the narrative structure here, the limited amount of narrative transition that does coincide with this dispositive boundary allows Prévost to remind the reader of what has come before, and to suggest how that material will eventually come to form part of a narrative whole:

J'entre dans la mer immense de mes infortunes. Je commence une narration que je vais accompagner de mes larmes, et qui en fera couler des yeux de mes lecteurs. [...] Développons cette malheureuse suite d'aventures, ou tendres ou tragiques, mais toutes si tristes et si intéressantes qu'elles me répondent de la compassion de mes lecteurs. (155)

Further evidence that this foreshadowing does not correspond to a true moment of narrative transition comes later, when Cleveland reports learning of Axminster's approaching departure with Fanny, and exclaims: "Jour fatal ! d'où je dois commencer à compter le cours de mes déplorable aventures" (164). If Cleveland refers to the text to come as "une narration" at the beginning of book three (155), what are the confines of the entity designated by that term, and how do they relate to the Cleveland's "déplorables aventures," which begin here? There seems to be a certain amount of calculated

ambiguity in Prévost's use of the term, since there are times when "narration" designates a clearly delimited portion of the text, and other times when the term's referent is much more nebulous. Also, if that *day* marks the beginning of Cleveland's adventures, why should he bring that fact to his reader's attention at this point, and not when he comes to the day itself in his narration? Prévost uses dispositive transitions to alert readers to preceding and approaching transitions in the two narrative structures. Cleveland's famous reflection at the beginning of the third book signals the structural transitions in both the philosophical plot and the romantic plot that begin toward the end of the second book, and which reach completion as the third book gets under way.

Unlike Cleveland's (failed) attempt to keep his feelings for Fanny secret, which was the first test of his philosophical education, the challenge to his self-control posed by the arrival of Mme Lallin's letter is not the result of a premeditated plan on Cleveland's part; rather it is a reaction to a sudden change of events, and therefore does not reflect his conscious philosophical and emotional evolution, as does his next test, which defines the narrative structural core of this episode. This philosophical test is Cleveland's commitment to keeping his emotions secret to protect Fanny when, after Axminster fails to return from a long voyage, Cleveland and Fanny find out that he has been taken prisoner by a group of "savages." Cleveland describes his thought process thus:

La résolution que je pris donc en ce moment, de me rendre maître de tous les témoignages extérieurs de ma peine devint une règle que j'ai suivie depuis avec une incroyable constance. Je ne prévoyais point à quoi je m'engageais. La considération de mon épouse, dont je voulais soutenir le courage par mon exemple, m'engagea à former intérieurement cette espèce de vœu, qui renfermait peut-être trop de témérité. J'ai eu néanmoins la force de l'exécuter ; mais qu'il m'en a coûté ! et que le souvenir même que j'en conserve est encore rempli d'amertume ! (378)

Over the course of the rest of this episode, Cleveland's determination is tested on several occasions. Abandoned by the majority of his followers after the band is struck by disease, he unburdens himself when alone (385), and then manages to keep his feelings hidden in front of Fanny when he tells her the bad news, accepting the burden of responsibility solely on himself: "Ce fut ainsi que tout le poids de cette terrible aventure tomba sur moi seul, et que je m'accoutumai plus que jamais à prendre un front de philosophe, au milieu de mes plus cruelles douleurs" (387). Cleveland seems not to count his reaction to his separation from his daughter as a violation of his vow because, although his reason, "comme obscurcie par l'émotion de tous [s]es sens," abandons him to the point where he bites the ground out of despair, by that point Fanny has already fallen unconscious (396).

The second episode of the third narrative subunit is a transitional unit: it operates on both the emotional-philosophical and the "relationship" aspects of the narrative structure. It begins with a retrospective summary of Cleveland's misfortunes that brings across the emotional side. Cleveland points out that previously he'd always had warning of his coming misfortunes and that after losing something precious there had always been something more precious left to him:

Ici, sans pressentiment, sans réflexion, et presque sans le moindre intervalle, la fortune en deux tours de roue me précipite au fond de l'abîme. Elle m'y fixe sans retour. Elle m'ôte l'espoir, le remède, les consolations ; enfin, elle me rend tel qu'on va voir, et qu'on aura peine à le croire. (459).

Further reflection brings across the philosophical side when Cleveland discusses his state of mind following Fanny's disappearance and his use of philosophy for maintaining a

calm exterior (464-65). Cleveland makes a comparison between himself and Bridge that evokes the possible future evolution of the narrative, but without obligating Prévost to any specific plot events:

Mais, loin de recueillir les fruits que j'avais lieu d'espérer quelque jour de son amitié, telle fut la barbarie de mon sort, qu'il servit lui-même de catastrophe à mes tristes aventures d'Amérique. On va voir par son exemple si c'est ici-bas que la vertu doit s'attendre d'être récompensée ; et par le mien, qu'il peut y avoir un progrès sans fin dans l'infortune, puisqu'on peut devenir plus malheureux qu'on n'était lorsqu'on croyait déjà l'être infiniment. (465)

By referring to the increasing severity of his misfortunes without providing details, Cleveland describes the present more than he does the future, but that description evokes a framework that is to be constructed as the narrative continues. Cleveland also puts the present narration into relationship with the rest of the narrative structure when he alludes to its eventual resolution in connection to the tragic fate of Bridge, who dies at the hands of Gelin after an argument that fails to provide the information that would have cleared up the understanding between Cleveland and Fanny.<sup>108</sup> When Bridge relates his encounter with Gelin, he summarizes the current state of affairs as regards both himself and Cleveland: “Voilà, mon cher Cleveland, reprit-il, l'état de votre fortune et de la mienne” (471).

Cleveland's various overt warnings to the reader—e.g. “Mes lecteurs peuvent se préparer ici à une nouvelle scène d'infortunes” (580)—are more reflections of the

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<sup>108</sup> Cleveland's reflection is as follows: “Quoique je n'y visse pas plus clair que lui lorsqu'il me les rapporta, j'ai conçu longtemps après, qu'avec un peu plus d'explication, elles eussent peut-être servi à me faire pénétrer dans ce fatal mystère ; et si cette connaissance n'avait rien changé à mes malheurs, elle aurait pu me donner un peu plus de force pour les supporter” (468).

relationship plot, as here, when Cleveland is referring to a love intrigue, although there is a loose connection to the philosophical-emotional plot: “le récit d’un événement sans exemple, et qui fera juger avec raison que mon caractère est unique” (586), which shows that the two plots are not entirely independent of each other, but are more like two aspects of a single narrative structure. The emotional plot operates on both a superficial narrative level and on a deeper level. The superficial side is manifest in certain dramatic aspects of Cleveland’s and Fanny’s relationship, including Cleveland’s intrigue with Cécile, and other similar dramatic events, such as the reunification with Mme Riding. The deeper aspects show up in the evolution of Cleveland’s personality, his education, philosophy, emotions, conversion, etc. There are differing degrees of interconnectedness at various points in the text; sometimes the two aspects are fairly distinct, while at others they rely on each other heavily. These semi-independent narrative elements are occasionally subdivided explicitly with terms like “scène” (580), “aventure” or the context of the “scène” (585), “événement” or a change/development (586), “dénouement” (588), or préambule (589). Cleveland’s comparison of himself at two points in the narrative at this point demonstrates the important transition that is occurring in the philosophical-emotional aspect of the narrative structure (591-92).

During the narrative episode that recounts Fanny’s stage of Cleveland’s conversion Cleveland describes his newfound distress in the face of adversity, which replaces his earlier strength, as the marker of a two-part progression: one part characterized by philosophical strength, and one marked by weakness in the absence of that strength. Yet it is worth noting that these two parts are coextensive with Cleveland’s

love for Fanny, meaning that the period of Cleveland's life that preceded his love for her is not an important part of his story. Fanny's reaction contrasts Cleveland's innumerable promises of future happiness with the unhappy future she now expects:

Est-ce là le bonheur dont vous m'avez flattée ? Est-ce là le fruit de tant de promesses et d'espérances ? Il faut donc recommencer une malheureuse vie, pour être condamnée à la passer dans l'amertume et dans les larmes ! Ne m'avez-vous pas dit cent fois, ajoutait-elle, que j'étais à la fin de toutes mes peines, et qu'il ne me restait qu'à faire un bon usage de notre fortune ? (1041)

While Cleveland's conversion is still to come, this evocation of a possible miserable future does point to a context outside the published text that maintains Cleveland's necessary melancholy. Cleveland's ploy to keep Fanny from going to Saint-Cloud to see Cécile's body, which Cleveland thinks would be too emotional for her, also points to this extra-diegetic future:

Il n'y a pas d'apparence, lui dis-je, qu'après le coup dont le Ciel nous afflige, vous puissiez trouver beaucoup d'agrément à Saint-Cloud, et je vous confesse que si le vôtre est encore à naître, le mien l'a déjà prévenu. Je ne reverrai jamais d'un œil satisfait ce qui servira éternellement à me rappeler ma perte. En un mot, je vous propose de passer en Angleterre ; et comme il nous en coûterait trop de laisser derrière nous le trésor dont nous pouvons conserver les restes, j'aurai soin que notre chère fille soit précieusement embaumée, pour être notre fidèle compagne jusqu'à Londres, d'où nous la ferons transporter en Devonshire dans le tombeau de ses pères. (1042).

Cleveland's return to England, predicted by the original preface, thus becomes an effective indicator of his future beyond the bounds of the text.

### Retrospective and Static

Mme Riding's repeated advice to go to France (113) shows lack of narrative progress since the death of Cleveland's mother, when she gave the same advice (100-101). The dispositive boundary corresponds to a significant narrative event, i.e. leaving

the cave, but it's not a transition in the narrative structure, which is already in the middle of a transition; still it's an occasion to remind the reader of the evolving narrative structure, and if need be to redefine it retroactively. Thus, it is necessary to ask what narrative structure Cleveland's narratorial reflection modifies:

Ma vie avait commencé trop malheureusement pour m'attendre dans la suite aux faveurs de la fortune. L'exemple de ma mère et celui du vicomte, qui subsistait devant mes yeux, étaient deux présages sinistres qui m'annonçaient ma destinée. Je voyais en général, et confusément, mille raisons de craindre pour une seule d'espérer. Où vais-je ? dans quelles vues ? avec quel espoir ? Telles étaient les questions que je me fis cent fois à moi-même le jour de notre départ, sans qu'il s'offrît rien à mon esprit pour y servir de réponse. Je comptais sur l'assistance certaine de Mylord Axminster ; mais ses espérances étaient-elles beaucoup mieux établies que les miennes ? Ce n'était point l'expérience, comme on l'a pu voir, qui me suggérait ces difficultés : elles venaient de quelque solidité d'esprit que j'avais reçu de la nature, et qui me faisait raisonner du moins sur les possibilités dans les choses que je ne connaissais point par elles-mêmes, faute d'usage du monde et de commerce avec les autres hommes. (115-16)

By reviewing his past, Cleveland highlights the opposition between the *beginning* of his life and its *continuation*, implying greater continuity between the remainder of the first installment and the rest of the novel than might be expected given the apparent disconnect between the first and second installments. In addition, by emphasizing his mother and Axminster as formative examples, Cleveland implies a direct transfer of educational responsibility between them, leaving out Mme Riding. Cleveland's further reflection on Axminster's role suggests the possibility of similarity between the future course of Cleveland's narrative and the past trajectory of Axminster's narrative. Cleveland begins to shift the emphasis away from his education at the hands of others, and accordingly there is no reference here to either his mother's philosophy or to the



“worldly” education he received from Mme Riding and Axminster. This shift begins the transition into the episode in which Cleveland pursues his own education.

At this point in the narration, signs of a major narrative structural transition begin to appear, but they coexist alongside signs of narrative structural stasis. This is the appearance of the central problem of the relationship plot, which is presented as governing the structure of the entire text. Cleveland presents his life as an inexhaustible source of material for his memoirs, whose only practical limit is his death: “N’anticipons point sur cette nouvelle source de peine. Quoique je n’en aie guère essuyé de plus sensibles, elles ont été précédées par un si grand nombre d’autres infortunes, qu’en suivant simplement l’ordre des événements de ma vie, j’aurai toujours de quoi soutenir l’attention de mes lecteurs” (331). Although this is a transitional point in the narrative structure the transition does not hinge on the plot implications of Fanny’s persistence in hiding the cause of her melancholy, but rather in the combination of Cleveland’s reflection on the nature of emotions in his role as narrator and his evolving relationship to philosophy and emotions, in his role as protagonist:

Je remarque ainsi, à chaque occasion, les seules lumières que j’aie jamais eues sur un des plus terribles événements de ma vie. Fanny était tendre et fidèle ; mais avec ces qualités qui la rendaient capable d’une grande passion, il lui en manquait une essentielle pour être heureuse du côté de l’amour. Mon bonheur était attaché au sien. Ainsi nous étions destinés tous deux, elle à me rendre malheureux sans le vouloir, et moi à l’être sans le mériter. (336)

Cleveland’s reflection on emotions marks the simultaneous similarity and difference between his personality at the time of the events of the narration and at the time of narrating those events. In hindsight he recognizes that certain signs could have alerted

him to the fact that something was going wrong, but he failed to notice them because he lacked an “*esprit tourné naturellement aux soupçons*” (336). Bridge also failed to foresee the dangers he fell into because of his generous spirit, but unlike Cleveland, he never had the opportunity to develop a more realistic understanding of human nature. Cleveland’s short-term foreshadowing here gives greater apparent gravity to the arrival of Mme Lallin’s letter, which appears to occupy a chief turning point in the novel’s plot, but which serves to set up the possibility for endless continuation, while Cleveland’s ongoing evolution as a philosophical and emotional subject is what provides the motive force for the novel’s narrative structure. Cleveland’s failure to disclose the fact that Mme Lallin accompanied him to America may be the “*triste nœud*” of the misfortunes that he and Fanny experience, because it leads her to believe mistakenly that he is romantically involved with her; it may therefore be an important turning point in the relationship plot, but on the scale of the underlying philosophical-emotional narrative structure, it is one of several factors that determine Cleveland’s evolution. Cleveland’s “failure” of his first test, when he told Fanny how he felt about her, was a more “generous” fault: true, Cleveland was unable to use his “philosophy” to hide his feelings, but the reason for his failure was his care for another person. In the case of Cleveland’s attempt to control his reaction to Mme Lallin’s letter, and in the upcoming tests, while Cleveland professes to be acting out of concern for others, he becomes more and more slavishly controlled by his commitment to “philosophy” above all, meaning that his success at these tests indicates a failure to connect to others.

Both this episode and the subunit of which it is part end with a series of metanarratorial comments following Axminster's death, which mark a moment of transition in Cleveland's philosophical evolution both within the narration, and as a narrator. And yet, while Cleveland changes and the narrative structure grows, the actual plot of the novel enters a holding pattern. Speaking of the surprising power of his and Fanny's love for each other, which has managed to withstand "deux ans de mariage, et une chaîne continuelle de malheurs" without fading, Cleveland asks, rhetorically, if the reader will be surprised to see such a love "produire après cela les effets terribles qu'on doit s'attendre à lire, et que je me suis engagé à raconter?" (415). This presents the reader with an indefinite narrative horizon without any indication that the two lovers will eventually reconcile. There is a nexus of transition in both the philosophical-emotional narrative structure and the relationship one, as we can see in the following metanarrative reflection by Cleveland:

Je ne sais quel triste plaisir je trouve, à mesure que j'avance dans cette histoire, à m'interrompre ainsi moi-même, et à prévenir, comme je fais, mes lecteurs sur ce qui me reste à leur raconter. Chaque événement de ma vie n'a-t-il pas de quoi les attacher par des singularités touchantes, et l'un a-t-il besoin du secours de l'autre pour se faire lire avec quelque attention ? Non ; mais c'est le goût de ma tristesse que je consulte, bien plus que les règles de la narration et que les devoirs de l'historien. En quelque nombre que soient mes infortunes, et quelle que soit leur diversité, elles agissent aujourd'hui tout à la fois sur mon cœur ; le sentiment qui m'en reste n'a point la variété de sa cause ; ce n'est plus, si j'ose parler ainsi, qu'une masse uniforme de douleur, dont le poids me presse et m'accable incessamment. Je voudrais donc, si cela était possible à ma plume, réunir dans un seul trait toutes mes tristes aventures, comme leur effet se réunit dans le fond de mon âme. On jugerait bien mieux de ce qui s'y passe. L'ordre me gêne ; et ne pouvant représenter tous mes malheurs à la fois, les plus grands sont ceux qui s'offrent le plus vivement à ma mémoire, et que je souhaiterais du moins de pouvoir exposer les premiers.

Je continuerai néanmoins de suivre le cours des événements. (415-16)

This reflection speaks volumes about Prévost's efforts to produce a psychological portrait, but it also contrasts the *psychological* uniformity of the events of Cleveland's narrative, with their *temporal* variety. Each event has its own interest in the telling of it, but their ultimate effect is collective, and the variety disappears from the perspective of that effect.

The first of these two episodes is initiated by a series before-after moments beginning when Fanny's grandfather, Dom Pedro, the governor of Havana, starts treating her and Cleveland as his "chers enfants," an attitude that, Cleveland informs us, he never abandoned "dans la suite" (417). Cleveland contrasts the current state of affairs with the eventual future: "nous nous regardions chez lui comme des étrangers ; de sorte que nous étions bien éloignés de nous attendre qu'il dût nous instituer, comme il fit dans la suite, ses seuls et universels héritiers" (421). These moments of contrast establish a unit boundary, but the subunit truly begins with Cleveland's description of how he spends his time in Havana, which includes both a summary of the past and an evocation of the future:

Mes anciens principes, ce précieux héritage que j'avais reçu de ma mère n'étaient pas sortis tellement de ma mémoire qu'il ne me fut encore aisé d'y en découvrir les traces. Si mon esprit s'en était moins occupé depuis quelques années, parce qu'il avait été rempli presque continuellement d'une infinité d'autres objets qui avaient partagé mon attention, j'en avais conservé la racine dans le cœur, et l'on a vu jusqu'à présent qu'il s'en était toujours répandu quelque chose sur ma conduite. Je me les rappelai tous, dans le même ordre que je les avais appris. Je me remis en même temps dans toutes les situations où je m'étais trouvé, depuis que j'avais abandonné la caverne de Rumney-hole, et le tombeau de ma mère. Je comparai toutes mes actions, mes vertus et mes faiblesses, mes peines et mes plaisirs, mes bonnes et mes mauvaises fortunes, l'usage que j'en avais

fait, avec ces règles de morale dont j'avais autrefois reconnu si clairement la sagesse. J'examinai dans quelles occasions, et par quel motif il m'était arrivé de m'en écarter. Était-ce ma faute, ou la leur ? faiblesse d'âme, emportement de passion de ma part, ou de leur côté défaut pour me conduire, et de force pour me soutenir ? Je démêlais mieux que jamais la source de tous mes mouvements, et les ressorts les plus secrets de mes passions. Enfin, je ne me contentai point d'avoir porté le flambeau au fond de mon cœur pour le connaître ; je n'y découvris rien que je ne m'efforçasse d'en bannir si c'était un mal, ou d'y établir d'une manière encore plus ferme si je trouvais que ce fût quelque chose qui appartînt à la vertu. Tâchant même d'étendre mes soins jusque dans l'avenir, je me fis comme un magasin d'armes morales et philosophiques propres à me servir dans des situations inconnues, et dans mille circonstances que le temps pouvait faire naître, et que je ne prévoyais point. (419-20)

Here, Cleveland addresses the beginning and middle of this episode, which puts the past into relationship with the near future of the narrative. The vagueness of this summary is juxtaposed with Cleveland's apparently detailed review of his past: we are denied access to his evaluation of each event and situation, but the detailed description of the process implies that the progression is important. We, the readers, could perform the same analysis as Cleveland, but it is much more likely that we will take his word for it.

The episode concludes with an anchoring cluster: reference for comparison to Cleveland's earlier religious dispositions in general (506), and to his institution of a religion during his government of the Abaquis (507). After long meditation on the nature of the soul and the utility of philosophy, Cleveland meets a protestant minister who undertakes his religious education. To explain his uneasiness, Cleveland reminds the reader of his religious upbringing, or rather his lack thereof:

On a déjà vu dans cette histoire de quelle manière j'étais disposé en matière de religion. Ma mère ayant pris à tâche de ne m'inspirer aucun préjugé dans mon enfance, je m'étais trouvé, comme j'ai déjà dit, toute la liberté qu'il fallait pour faire un choix désintéressé lorsque j'avais eu le

parfait usage de ma raison. Mais c'était cette liberté même de choisir qui m'avait alors empêché d'en embrasser une. (506)

Then follows Cleveland's infamous "fifty religions" argument against choosing one religion over another, which so offended the author of the *Bibliothèque Belgique*.

Cleveland also remarks that:

Je dois ajouter que j'avais tiré assez de lumières de la philosophie pour me composer une religion dont ma raison était satisfaite. C'est ce que j'ai déjà fait remarquer dans le récit de mon gouvernement d'Amérique, et dans le plan des cérémonies religieuses que j'y traçai à mes sauvages. (507)

Here we see the "work" as an "histoire" capable of containing a "récit," and centered on Cleveland's hesitation between religion and philosophy. This commentary is part of a retrospective definition of the text as a "work" whose resolution will come with the triumph of religion, but the qualities that make Cleveland a compelling character, narrator, and source of narrative material can't end too soon, so that resolution never truly arrives.

#### Prospective and Static

At this point of near-climax, Angélique continues to regulate the progression of events, but this time it is the *absence* of her letter that furthers the action of the plot (816).

Cleveland's reported anticipation of supreme joy as a counterweight to the previous supreme sadness should put the reader on guard:

J'avalais à longs traits de si douces espérances, et quoiqu'en rapprochant toutes mes idées du présent, je ne découvrisse rien qui pût m'aider à pénétrer plus loin, j'avais assez de mes connaissances et des promesses d'une sœur si sage pour abandonner toute l'étendue de mon cœur à la foi. Il nageait déjà dans un torrent de plaisir, dont il n'y avait plus de défiance ni soupçon qui lui fit sentir les bornes ; et ce qu'on lui promettait encore au-delà lui formait comme un espace infini, dans lequel il se perdait délicieusement. (829)

Given Cleveland's persistent melancholy as narrator and his unsatisfying references to philosophy in the latter pages of the book, the reader should not expect Cleveland's happiness to last. Even whatever solace he finds in religion is not enough. Angelique uses a certain interpretation of what philosophy is that allows her to use it as a way to convince Cleveland to agree to her plan for reuniting him and Fanny, which she does by stating her belief that it is more difficult to use philosophy to withstand the stress of good fortune than to use it to withstand the stress of bad fortune; and although Cleveland points out that he didn't understand that this was a strategy at the time, which means he figured it out later, and this later realization points to an eventual negative outcome.

Angelique loses control of Cleveland's gradual exposure to the truth when Cécile's carriage arrives before Fanny's: "Elle crut toucher, malgré elle au dénouement" (833). Once Cleveland and Fanny are reunited, and Cleveland finds out Cécile's true identity, the major difficulty of the emotional plot is resolved (except for the ultimate fate of Cécile and Mme Lallin), but the true underlying narrative structure is based on Cleveland's relationship to philosophy and emotions, which goes through a false resolution with the "high life" episode & Cleveland's interactions with Clarendon. While Cleveland's conversion does seem to resolve the difficulties on the surface, his continued melancholy along with earlier references to enjoying sadness prevent that resolution from reaching the underlying tension, which comes from Cleveland's unique personality as a character, which exposes him to this kind of sadness, and without which the novel would not be compelling. Also compare M. de R's hyperbolic prediction of future bliss (834). The importance of a story's *dénouement* is further underscored when Cleveland points

out that Clarendon makes the point of telling him that the story he's about to tell turns out well before he tells it allows him to listen to it (860), but readers of *Cleveland* have been getting mixed messages all along: both Cleveland and the editor insist on Cleveland's eventual conversion, but don't give the details, and they allow the impression of Cleveland as incurably melancholic to persist despite their emphasis on his conversion.

The unification ceremony is another important event in the narrative structure (870). Thadeo in reunification ceremony: "Il avait composé, presque sur-le-champ, un discours fort ingénieux, où par une allusion agréable à son rôle il rappelait toutes mes aventures, en les faisant passer pour autant d'épreuves auxquelles il avait voulu mettre ma fidélité et ma tendresse" (870) Cleveland says he was "frappé de plusieurs circonstances sur lesquelles il pesait particulièrement. Rempli comme il était lui-même de sa passion pour Cécile, il ne put toucher cette partie de mon histoire sans relever mon bonheur par des figures éclatantes" (871). This moment is a crucial transition: "Ce moment fut décisif pour une partie de ma vie que je n'annonce pas comme la plus glorieuse, mais qui doit entrer dans la composition d'une histoire où j'ai promis de ne pas déguiser mes faiblesses, non plus qu'on ne m'y verra ravalier mes vertus" (875). Once again, vague summary allows Cleveland to recast the entirety of the narrative and gives Prévost an opportunity to provide the reader the esthetic pleasure of a climactic moment without necessarily ensuring that the moment is, strictly speaking, a climax.

### *Symmetry*

With the approach of the end of the text, the idea of symmetry appears as part of the text's multi faceted self-evaluation. Cleveland points out the symmetry of "les



progrès de mes lumières et de mon bonheur” and “ceux de mes malheurs et de mes peines” (811). The progression of his understanding and happiness begins with his reunification with Mme Riding (811), which is followed by his introduction to M. and Madame des Ogères as witnesses to Fanny’s purity (813). After hearing their “récit” Cleveland rejoices, “Je vois mon bonheur prêt à se rétablir. Puisse-t-il être aussi durable que je commence à le croire réel et plein de charmes !” (814). This is also the “époque” of Cleveland’s nadir, at least in the context of the current structural paradigm (748). And while not much actually happens in the latter portion of the text, and while it is illuminating to examine just how Prévost prolongs the resolution of the plot, thereby allowing the reader’s pleasure to last longer, it is also important to observe how Prévost takes advantage of this prolonged conclusion to shuffle the various components of the narrative structure into place. The first climax comes with the reunification of Fanny and Cécile, which is a preparation for the second climax, Cleveland’s reunification with Cécile and Fanny, which begins before Angélique’s letters. It is worth noting that Clarendon has also experienced mistreatment by a ruler, as he reports in the story about the confiscation of his daughter’s letters, which led to his disgrace (884-89). Maybe the subunits leading up to Cleveland’s conversion with Clarendon, starting with their first meeting back in the first super-installment, can explain a progression that isn’t immediately apparent, which has led to the idea that it’s a hasty conclusion. The rapid-fire developments of the end do satisfy the underlying tension, but as a result of long-building pressure, and even so they don’t provide a complete resolution.

The function of “symmetry” in the narrative structure, whether in terms of relative length or of personal change, is brought into question at the beginning of book 12, which displays Cleveland’s evaluation of his progress in emotional and philosophical terms (862-67). The previous book ends with the conclusion of the inserted narrative, which gives the impression of narrative transition, but the plot is still in the same place, and the emphasis on Cleveland’s philosophical and emotional development demonstrates the importance of that element of the story in creating the structure of the narrative. The beginning of this part of the narrative structure is important for dealing with Cleveland’s sketchy (literally “esquisses” [1059]) treatment of his conversations with Clarendon:

C’est ici que je regrette la loi que je me suis imposée de ne faire entrer aucune de ces discussions dans mon histoire. Ceux qui cherchant de bonne foi la vérité, n’attendent qu’un guide qui les éclaire, et ne demandant que de solides raisons pour se rendre, trouveraient ici dans le discours du comte une source d’instructions et de lumières. (1060-61)

The lack of detail could be taken as a sign of an ambivalence coming from his continued emotional struggle and lack of total confidence in religion following the end of the events he narrates, i.e. beyond the boundaries of the text; this forward-looking tension supports the reader’s interest in him as a compelling character and narrator.

Notably, in their first conversation Cleveland describes his newfound joy as a *new country*, which recalls the preface to the first volume. This meeting also evokes Cleveland’s status at the time of their first meeting at Orléans namely, Cécile’s return is “un gage de la fortune, qui ne lui permet plus de se démentir en votre faveur” (865), but Cécile eventually dies, so Cleveland would have been wise to heed Clarendon’s warning about the fragility of present happiness, which points to the tension between *symmetry*

and *equilibrium* as narrative structural devices. Clarendon reminded Cleveland of Cécile's and Fanny's eventual deaths. In light of this, Cleveland's statement "Prodige de la joie, qui surpass tous ceux que j'ai racontés de la douleur" is to be taken with a grain of salt, and Cleveland's observation that it was not his *reason* that allowed him to remain calm recalls his earlier narratorial comments about still being susceptible to agitation from remembering the past (871). If this period is truly "l'époque de la perfection de ma joie" then the rest of the text is anticlimactic, but it is necessary because durable happiness is incompatible with Cleveland's narratorial persona. Also remember Cleveland's much earlier comment about a moment of unadulterated joy in his youth, which was to be the last one (169). This part of the text requires that the present happiness be just as unadulterated so that the fall from it can be significant enough to end the novel on it. Cleveland as narrator reports himself as thinking about the future at the time of the events he's narrating, as when he considers Thadeo as an acceptable candidate for marriage to Cécile because of the difficulty of marrying her off once the family returns to England.

The two major difficulties to resolve, plot-wise, for the last major narrative unit (900) are a) Fanny's dissatisfaction with Cleveland's proposed life of pleasure, and b) Cécile's lack of interest in marriage to Dom Thadeo or anyone else, both of which are caused by lack of communication and Cleveland's lack of insight into the minds of his wife and daughter, just as the major difficulty of the second major narrative unit was Fanny's sadness in the face of Cleveland's apparent betrayal, which was caused by lack of communication on Cleveland's part and perpetuated by lack of communication on

Fanny's part. The beginning of a solution comes with Cleveland's "non-excuse excuse" for why he embarked on the project of a life of pleasures, namely "it was all to amuse Cécile and Fanny," and continues with a representative anecdote ("accident") of Dona Cortona's reappearance (904-10, 945-53). Cleveland's lack of insight into the negative effects of his dissolute lifestyle despite being able to advise Thadeo also adds to the reader's appreciation of this evolving aspect of the narration (953).

It is important to examine the attitude of the later parts of book toward the earlier parts, which is manifested in two main attitudes toward the world: Cleveland's hedonistic and materialistic phase, and his scientific phase. Cleveland recalls his childhood education when confronting materialism:

Mes principes étaient toujours ceux que j'ai exposés dans une autre partie de cette histoire. L'exemple et les leçons de ma mère avaient servi plus que mes propres recherches à m'y attacher constamment, et lorsque je les avais traités d'inutiles, dans un excès de douleurs auxquels il n'avaient pu servir de remède, je ne les avais pas moins regardés comme les vérités spéculatives dont le seul faible était de ne pouvoir servir à régler les sentiments du cœur. (956)

The intervening time is stripped away. The way Cleveland evaluates his materialist period after it comes to a close identifies it as a stage in his path toward finding a new source of strength to replace philosophy, which had never succeeded in providing him more than an outer appearance of calm in the face of danger, which was important for protecting others from the harm that he could cause by appearing to despair, but which never provided him true inner peace (964).<sup>109</sup> Cleveland then compares himself to his former materialist companions: "J'aurais du moins, de plus qu'eux, le droit de faire valoir

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<sup>109</sup> For a discussion of this episode, see Colas Duflo, "La tentation matérialiste de Cleveland."

l'ignorance où j'avais vécu jusqu'alors sur tout ce qui s'appelle lumière de religion. Mais élevés dans d'autres principes, par quels degrés avaient-ils pu parvenir à les effacer dans leur cœur et dans leur esprit ?” (964). This reflection puts the current state of narrative progress into relationship with the beginning of the text, when Cleveland recounts his childhood education.

Cleveland then reports Fanny's and Cécile's charitable activities, which provide a counter-example to his hedonistic excesses: “que je lui portai envie, dans la suite, en apprenant qu'elle avait senti plus tôt que moi la douceur qu'on peut trouver à faire le bonheur d'autrui !” (965; 966). This reflection points to a future of religious happiness, which is not what happens. This first stage of transition is completed by Fanny's revelation that she and Cécile don't enjoy the dinner parties Cleveland has been throwing (968-69). This is the major transition of the last major narrative unit: it's the smallest Russian nesting doll, after which the tensions remaining from earlier units are all that remain to resolve for the narrative to be "complete." Fanny's and Cleveland's ignorance of the source of Cécile's melancholy is a resolution of her aborted illicit romance with him that began at the end of the first super installment. Cleveland believes his “repos mieux établi que jamais” but he hasn't understood the true desires of his wife and daughter. Perhaps the apparent simplicity of the tension here (“Oh, *that's* what you wanted? No problem! Here you go, now we can be happy!”) is necessary for an unexplained tragedy or disappointment after the text ends, which is necessary for Cleveland to remain the melancholic narratorial voice that propels the narrative and transforms the text into a “whole” work (974). To this point, consider Cleveland's reflection:

Les aveux que j'ai faits dans vingt endroits de cette histoire doivent avoir accoutumé mes lecteurs à l'humble opinion que j'avais de moi-même. [...] Après m'être convaincu plus fortement que jamais, par une courte revue du passé, que la vérité et la sagesse philosophiques sont des chimères de l'imagination, je me figurai que l'étude de la nature ayant du moins un objet réel et sensible, elle pouvait attacher l'esprit avec d'autant plus de satisfaction, qu'elle roule sur les objets qui nous environnent. (976-77)

Fanny's role in this false dénouement of the philosophical-emotional plot is similar but not identical to her role in the resolution of the relationship plot: the latter is resolved at least on the surface by her revelation of Gelin's trickery and her misunderstanding of Cleveland's relationship to Mme Lallin, while the former reaches a surface-level resolution through her revelation of her true feelings about living the "high life."

Cleveland implies that although once he fell in love with Fanny his happiness was forever linked to hers, perhaps he might have been able to be happy living a life of lively pleasures with someone less melancholy than she and more susceptible to being moved by such pleasures (974). These pages contain a lot of foreshadowing and reflection, so it would be worthwhile to come back to them (974-76). Neither narrative structure reaches total definitive resolution because Cleveland's life continues beyond the boundaries of the text, and this continuation is both alluded to and makes itself felt in the tone of Cleveland's narrative voice. The narrative episode covering Cleveland's scientific period begins with a "courte revue du passé" and ends with a description of his "nouveau système" (977-1023). This revelation causes a revolution in Cleveland's attitude, which marks a major narrative transition accompanied by a retrospective retelling of his own story to himself to confirm his discounting of philosophy as a source of strength for facing up to the challenges of life, as a result of which he decides to study math and

science instead, since if they lead him astray at least it will only be in reference to physical things, not mental ones that can lead to deep despair (977); he also devotes himself to giving charity (977-78), and together these pursuits form his “nouveau système.”

One way in which Prévost sets up the non-concluding conclusion of the text is to highlight the dramatic tension of the love triangle between Cécile, the Duke of Monmouth, and Thadeo, which he does by situating a dramatic event from that subplot at the end of book 14, which closes with the tragic conclusion of the party at Cleveland’s house in Saint-Cloud (which is itself the “last hurrah” of his attempt to make the most of life by “living it up”) which he has decided not to cancel, at Fanny’s urging, in order not to cause social problems by going back on his word. The tragic duel provides a sense of climax to accompany the dispositive unit boundary, but the narrative transition has effectively already taken place, when Cleveland establishes a “new system” to replace his prior brief adhesion to materialist philosophy, which came about as a result of his embracing of a dissolute lifestyle (977). As he is trying to figure out the reasons behind Thadeo’s duel, Cleveland reviews Cécile’s character to dismiss his initial hypothesis that Thadeo might have perished as the result of an interrupted tryst between Cécile and the Duke of Monmouth, but Cleveland is convinced that Cécile is too innocent to have hidden such a thing from him: “Enfin, plus je revins à m’occuper d’elle et à réunir tout ce que je me souvenais d’avoir vu moi-même ou d’avoir appris de ses sentiments et de ses inclinations, plus je trouvai de faiblesse et d’injustice dans les raisonnements qui m’avaient conduit à tant de noirs soupçons” (993-95). This retrospective reflection leads

into the next book which begins with “[c]e changement d’idées rendit un peu de tranquillité à mon esprit” (997). While it’s clear that the change in question is Cleveland’s turn away from suspicion and return to trust vis-a-vis Cécile, it also hearkens back to his change in systems. It’s also worth noting that Cécile falls ill and fruitlessly receives the visits of all the famous doctors of Paris during Cleveland’s scientifico-medico-mathematical phase (1016-17).

A good question to ask is whether the various wrap-ups correspond to all of the open-ended plot-lines (e.g. 1074). Asking this question provides an occasion to assess the text’s own presentation of itself as a “whole” entity that forms a “work” at the end. Several plot-lines are wrapped up from the second super-installment: Monmouth’s intrigue with Fanny and Cécile (although his feelings may continue, and the resolution is connected to Cécile’s plot, which begins in the first super-installment, although it’s not absolutely certain that Cécile was always intended to be Cleveland’s daughter). Plot-lines are also wrapped up from the first super-installment: 1) Mme Lallin’s connection to Captain Will (but the tension is unresolved), 2) the succession of Axminster’s inheritance (but with an altered timeframe of 30 years), 3) Gelin’s reformation. The last several pages of the text do a credible job of presenting the narrative as closed, at least from the perspective of the major difficulties presented in the text from Bridge’s story on, with the notable exception of certain forecasted events from the preface to the first volume. Yet while these difficulties do reach a sufficiently definitive state, key aspects of the eventual equilibrium remain unsatisfying. Captain Will is reformed, but Mme Lallin prefers to spend the rest of her life cloistered, rather than accept Will’s offer of marriage, which



seems justified to the modern reader, who wouldn't expect a woman to agree to marry a man who had raped her; and although Cleveland attempts to reassure Will ("Vous devez être tranquille, lui dis-je, si la paix de votre cœur dépend de moi"), his reassurance does not take Mme Lallin's evident lack of forgiveness into account (1067-69, 1077-78). The material security of Cleveland's family is secured by the definitive retention of Fanny's inheritance from her father, the viscount Axminster, with the help of the Count Clarendon and M. and Mme de R..., in spite of the machinations of the duke of Monmouth, who wishes to extort closer connection to Cleveland and therefore to Fanny through their dependence on him that would ensue from losing the inheritance (1069-73). Cleveland recognizes their sons' tutor as the now-reformed Gelin (1073-77). Monmouth's bad behavior doesn't end, though, until after he faces an emotional harangue from Fanny, which is reported in almost the very last words of the memoir text, when Fanny demands to see her daughter's remains, which have just arrived, and even then, his passion remains unaltered:

Toute l'assemblée s'empessa de l'accompagner dans cette triste visite, et le duc de Monmouth qui était venu nous joindre dès l'arrivée de mes enfants, ne fut pas le plus lent à suivre. C'était à lui qu'elle rapportait ses vues sans les avoir expliquées. Après avoir arrosé quelques moments le cercueil de ses larmes, elle se tourna vers lui, et lui montrant de la main ce lugubre spectacle, elle en prit occasion de lui adresser un discours si touchant sur l'indécence de ses sentiments, et sur la vanité de ses espérances, que si elle n'éteignit point sa passion dans son cœur, elle se délivra du chagrin d'en essuyer plus longtemps les marques. La confusion qu'il en eut lui fit quitter sur-le-champ l'assemblée et la maison du comte. (1079)

Also, as Sgard and Sermain point out, Cleveland's reference to the "trente ans" during which Terwill and his family had been taking care of Axminster's lands on behalf of his

heirs does not fit the timeline of events as recorded in the text; rather the timespan has increased to increase the feeling of narrative closure (1070, note 1119). The first thing to note is that this self-portrait is fundamentally self-contradictory, due to the nature of the memoir-novel format. The text ends with an editorial note that points out that although the narrative of Cleveland's life is incomplete, the manuscript itself is complete:

Le manuscrit de M. Cleveland ne contient que ce qui se trouve renfermé dans les sept volumes, dont celui-ci fait la conclusion. C'est dans cet état que je l'ai reçu de son fils. Mais les événements de sa vie chrétienne ont été écrits par ses enfants et seront donnés quelque jour au public. (1079, emphasis in original)

Here, two questions need to be asked. First, what is the narrative to which this ending corresponds, and where does it start? This line of inquiry brings us back to the opposition of the emotional-philosophical narrative structure and the relationship narrative structure. Second, what are the boundaries of the last narrative subunit that ends here? Maybe it begins with Cleveland's last new plan for how to live his life, the "nouvelle philosophie" that he outlines earlier (1064)? Maybe that unit never truly ends because Cleveland never has an opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness? Did he stick with it? Or is it the foundation of his continued melancholy? While others have pointed out that using the memoir as the basis for the form of a novel allowed writers to escape classical constraints, since the contours of the memoir are dictated by the life of the memoirist, not by ideals of composition, it is worth noting that here Prévost has not allowed himself to be limited by the life of his memoirist-protagonist, since a large portion of Cleveland's life does not make it into his memoir. If the end of the memoir need not coincide with the end of the memoirist's life (even taken in the sense of "retirement" or "withdrawal from

the world,” as in the case of both endings of *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*), then it is clear that the sense of closure, if any, comes from another source. Still, the reference to Cleveland's *Christian life*, recorded in a different text written by his children, suggests that perhaps the text of Cleveland's memoirs does conform to the boundaries of *one of* his lives, namely his *non-Christian* one. Yet Cleveland earlier refers to his memoirs as infinite as long as his life continues.

## Conclusion

*Cleveland* is not the only long novel that Prévost was unable to complete without a significant delay at some point during the publication process, and a brief look at *Le Doyen de Killerine* suggests that the same kinds of conclusions could be made about it by means of a narrative–dispositive comparative analysis as I have made about *Cleveland* using these methods. There is much to be learned from analyzing the various clues to Prévost's changing plans for the novel in response to the two interruptions of its publication. After the first part was published in 1735, the second part remained unpublished until 1739, although it was most likely already written (Principato 193). This differentiated delay led to an interesting variation on the scenario represented by *Cleveland*, which was written and published in two distinct periods. Yet while *Le Doyen* was written in two periods, like *Cleveland*, the periods of writing do not correspond exactly to the periods of publication. It is likely, then, that it is “l'emploi de matériaux composés à différentes époques et auxquels l'auteur s'est efforcé d'ajouter un tissu connectif, qui a permis à certains commentateurs de parler de récit décousu” (Principato 195). Such observations are crucial for understanding how Prévost worked and his place

in literary history, but they fail to fully account for the reader's experience of the text, since they did not have the benefit of this behind-the-scenes information. However, an analysis of the interaction between narrative and dispositive structure in the novel would allow modern critics to begin to understand how contemporary readers may have understood the changing identity of the novel as it was being published, and even how they might have enjoyed it.

## Chapter 4: When the Second Part Redefines the Whole: Narrative and Dispositive Structure in *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*

### Continuation, Plagiarism, Reboots and Retcons

According to modern standards, it is clear that the Abbé Prévost was both a victim and a perpetrator of plagiarism. Neither Prévost's willingness to appropriate the work of others nor the diametrical opposition between his responses to two very similar "offenses" against him make Prévost unique among his contemporaries. Rather, given his prominence among French novelists of the first half of the eighteenth century, his embodiment of these seeming contradictions indicates the divide that separates us, modern readers with very firm attitudes toward plagiarism, from eighteenth-century readers, who, without condoning plagiarism, tacitly accepted it as part of the literary landscape of their age. Here, I narrow that divide by examining the similarity between a case in which Prévost failed to oppose another author's appropriation of his work, and two modern narrative phenomena: the "reboot," which is a continuation of a pre-existing fictional work that discards some or all of the elements of the original diegetical continuity, and the "retcon," which is a continuation that includes additional details intended to resolve inconsistencies in the pre-existing work. Viewing Mauvillon's appropriation of Prévost's work in the context of these two techniques can help us understand the differences between modern and early modern ideas about artistic appropriation, which continues to influence creative endeavors today as it did in the eighteenth century.

So what does it mean to say that Prévost was both a plagiarizer and a victim of plagiarism? We see evidence of Prévost's "guilt" in the journal *Le Pour et Contre*, where

he published fictional pseudo-documentary articles like the “Histoire de Donna Maria,” which were sometimes based on ideas borrowed from other writers without acknowledgment, and in *Voyages de Robert Lade*, a novel in the form of a travel journal consisting mostly of authentic historical and geographical texts renamed, reattributed, and recombined within an original narrative frame. We see evidence of Prévost’s “victimhood” in two instances in which his works were continued by other authors without his permission. In the case of *Cleveland*, after writing five volumes of the memoirs of Oliver Cromwell’s imaginary illegitimate son, Prévost took a break, during which he wrote *Manon Lescaut*. While we may sympathize with Prévost, his publishers lost patience after seven years of waiting, and hired someone else to finish the book. When he was ready to resume work on the novel, Prévost simply denied the legitimacy of the apocryphal fifth volume and proceeded to write three more of his own. However, when Éléazar de Mauvillon published a new installment of Prévost’s *Mémoires d’un honnête homme* in 1753, eight years after the installment written by Prévost was published in 1745, Prévost abandoned the novel, although he may have repurposed some of the material intended for its conclusion in his last novel, *Le Monde moral*, which he was still working on when he died in 1763. Prévost’s assertion of his authority over *Cleveland* makes intuitive sense to us, which is why here I focus on his failure to react in the case of *Mémoires d’un honnête homme*.

The novel contains the text of an unnamed count’s memoirs, written while imprisoned in Austria. The count tells the story of his introduction to Parisian society and his love for Mme de B..., which is unfulfilled, but not because she is married, since her

terminally ill and bedridden husband likes the count enough to invite him to engage in a platonic *ménage à trois*. Rather, they are kept apart by Mlle de St. V..., a woman who claims that before the count left his family's estate he promised to marry her, and who pursues him to Paris in an attempt to make him honor his promise. Prévost's version concludes with a dramatic deathbed marriage scene as the count lies dying of gangrene after a duel with Mlle de St. V... 's brother, and fails to explain how the count ends up in an Austrian prison—in fact, the dangerousness of the count's condition would appear to preclude the possibility of any further exploits that might lead to his imprisonment. Mauvillon's count makes his prison appointment after a miraculous recovery, and (predictably) marries Mme de B... after overcoming a series of challenges, but Mauvillon's principal change is the addition of a third amorous intrigue centering on a young woman named Lizon, who becomes the count's ward after the death of his estate's parish priest. After achieving his goal of marrying Mme de B..., the count loses interest in her and falls in love with his former ward, who eventually marries his best friend instead of him, and while the count ends up remarrying at the insistence of his well-meaning friend, his immature second wife soon dies of brain fever after being spurned by a duke who seduces her, at which point the count is free of all social demands, and is finally able to retire.

#### *Representation of Narrative Structure Within the Text*

The key to understanding the narrative structure at work in Prévost's version of the text is the count's insistence that nothing his captors could ever say would provide him a better understanding of the crimes of which they accuse him, because his heart has nothing for which to blame itself. This attitude, which is the sum of the entire range of

experiences that make up the count's narrative, suggests that the journey that brings him to imprisonment in Innsbruck is one that begins with ignorance of the disparity between reality and appearance, and ends with denial of any link between the two, in favor of complete trust in internal reality, after passing through varying degrees of trust in the connection between truth and appearance, and various understandings of the nature of that connection. Thus, the structure of the novel, as conceived by Prévost, can be seen as a process of bringing the count's two perspectives on himself into alignment. The question posed by the text is not merely, "How did the count end up in prison?" but rather "How did the young count come to see himself as the older count does?" This is a moving target, though, because the older count's views change. As it nears the end of the second volume, there is both movement toward coincidence and a beginning of separation.

In each of the major narrative units that make up Prévost's text, the count's ideas about the relationship between reality and appearance are challenged, and the results of those challenges determine the evolution of the count's ideas in the following unit. This procedure results in a tiered narrative structure in which the movement between units forms a dialectical progression, the thesis of each unit provoking an antithesis, after which the thesis–antithesis pair takes on the role of a single unit, provoking a synthesis, which, in turn, provokes its own antithesis.<sup>110</sup> The progression is also one of amplification. Thus, the first major narrative unit contains one major division opposing

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<sup>110</sup> For a similar but different understanding of this phenomenon, see Peter Tremewan, "Character and Theme: The Binary Gentleman of Prévost's *Mémoires d'un honnête homme* (1745)."



two periods of change, each of which is relatively short, and the second major narrative unit approximates the length of the first major unit's two components taken together, after which the first two major units together are opposed by a third, which also is also roughly equivalent in length to the preceding opposing components put together. However, because each new unit is roughly equivalent in length to the previous ones combined, the scale of narrative progression dilates with each new unit, and the complexity of each new unit's internal narrative structure increases each time as well. This dilation can obscure the overall structural movement, which becomes harder to detect as the transitions between units start to occur at increasingly longer intervals. Because Prévost never did conclude the novel, it is impossible to say with any certainty how many times he would have repeated this process of dialectical amplification, but the point to be made here is that it is potentially infinitely iterative. Perhaps it is a structure that does not admit of a definitive closure, and in fact any continuation, whether by Prévost himself or by anyone else, would have required the introduction of some kind of structural defect. In Mauvillon's continuation, the defect is the fact that the count does not end up in an Austrian prison, and therefore cannot have composed the entirety of his memoirs in captivity, as Prévost's preface to the first installment implies.<sup>111</sup>

Just as fans of modern serialized narrative often enjoy the phenomenon of "retconning," or adding details in later installments to explain inconsistencies and other narrative difficulties in earlier installments, it may have been pleasurable for eighteenth-

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<sup>111</sup> For more on closure, see Frank Kermode, *A Sense of an Ending*, Barthes, "Le Plaisir du texte," Armine Kotin Mortimer, *La Clôture narrative*, and D.A. Miller, *Narrative and Its Discontents: Problems of Closure in the Traditional Novel*.

century readers to compare expanded novels to their original versions. Mauvillon's title lends credence to such a hypothesis by emphasizing not only the additional material ("augmentés d'un second volume"), but also the changes within the original text ("revûs, corrigés") and the involvement of a new "editor" ("publiés par Mr. de M\*\*\*").

Mauvillon makes sure to let the reader know that both Mme de Milvois and her new husband, M. Dubois, will return in the continuation of the story: "Mme de Milvois ne fut point ingrate à mon égard, & j'ai toujours eu en son mari un ami extrêmement zélé.

J'aurai occasion dans la suite de parler encore de l'un & de l'autre." (1: 161). Tremewan emphasizes the changes Mauvillon makes to increase the importance of money and to maximize the quick succession of dramatic events, which he sees as detracting from Prévost's subtler psychological analysis ("Editions" 334). It is worth noting that even in Prévost's version, the eponymous *honnête homme* likens honesty itself to a mine of precious metal: "qui en découvre une veine, peut s'assurer, comme dans les mines du plus riche métal, qu'elle a ses communications avec quantité d'autres canaux" (245). I would like to further argue that while Mauvillon's *honnête homme* may be more down-to-earth (or vulgar) and less subject to internal psychological conflict than Prévost's, he more often finds himself placed in situations that emphasize the adversarial, even martial nature of the conflict between himself and the rest of the world.

We can also compare Mauvillon's continuation of *Mémoires d'un honnête homme* to the recent phenomenon of "reboots." Part of the esthetic pleasure of the recent *Battlestar Galactica* television series and J.J. Abrams' *Star Trek* and *Star Trek: Into Darkness*, at least for certain viewers, is the contrast between the original version and its

reimagining.<sup>112</sup> Mauvillon's reworking of Prévost's work is similar, in that it takes the original characters in new directions whose interpretation remains within the initial framework. However, unlike Abrams, Mauvillon has the ability to prepare the new directions in which he intends to take his version of the fictional universe that he has appropriated from Prévost, because he can add to the original text in its republication. The comparison with the modern phenomenon of the reboot appears even more apt when one considers the change in the count's father's attitude. While in Prévost's version, the count's denial of Mlle de St. V... 's claim regarding his engagement with her is somewhat ambiguous, in Mauvillon's version the count positively denies ever having had any feeling for Mlle de St. V..., and his father is so completely satisfied with this explanation that not only he ceases combatting his son's opposition to his marriage, he asks his son to treat him as a confidant, eliciting a positive statement from the count that he never loved her and only ever treated her as all gallant young men treat women who are at least somewhat attractive, and claims that she must have tricked his father into believing that there had been something more serious between the two of them. He then goes on to reveal his passion for Mme de B..., characterizing it as completely separate from any physical attraction, despite his comments regarding Mme de B... 's beauty in Prévost's version, and his father approves of it (Mauvillon 1: 9-15). Readers now have the gratification of seeing a character voice the objections and concerns that have been

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<sup>112</sup> This phenomenon distinguishes itself from the "remake" and from the various "Sherlock Holmeses" and "James Bonds" given life by new authors after the death of the original authors by the fact that the author of a "reboot" intentionally creates a contrast between the original work and the new one, whereas the contrasts may be intentional or unintentional in the other scenarios.

bothering them during the whole first part of the novel, and while some aspects of the new version may seem somewhat out of character with the original, the first part still provides the framework within which those changes have meaning and which provides those changes the power to affect readers.

*Beginnings: Sketching Narrative Contours*

To understand the structure of the novel as presented in Prévost's text we must remember that regardless of his intentions regarding a possible continuation, he was producing a text within a context in which such a continuation would always be possible, whether by his own hand or someone else's. Accordingly, even if Prévost never intended to continue the novel, it does not necessarily follow that the apparent telescoping of the initially intended plot was intended to be definitive. Conversely, the signs of Prévost's efforts to preserve the possibility of a continuation do not indicate that he definitely intended to continue the work, or that he or his contemporaries would have considered him to have "given up" on "finishing" the work if he never got around to writing a continuation. Tremewan cites Trapnell's argument that *La Vie de Marianne* should not be considered "unfinished" because the information necessary for the reader to figure out the rest of the story is provided at the beginning, noting that this could apply to *Mémoires d'un honnête homme* as well, except that neither Marivaux nor Prévost explicitly invoke such an explanation ("Chronology" 48). Tremewan also points out that the count "has not only finished his memoirs, he has written them out twice," and that Prévost's contemporaries expected him to complete the novel, before going on to suggest that Mauvillon's continuation of the novel may have led Prévost to repurpose the material for

*Le Monde moral* ("Chronology" 49). We can better understand this attitude toward completing the work by comparing Prévost's version of the introductory section of the text to Mauvillon's. In the former, the count begins his narration with a reference to an undefined future:

Je sors d'un profond cachot, ou j'ai passé- trois semaines sans apercevoir la lumière. J'y étais attaché contre le mur par une grosse chaîne qu'on m'avait passée autour du corps, et qui me laissait à peine la liberté de m'asseoir. Ceux de qui j'ai reçu ce cruel traitement, m'ont supposé des crimes que j'ignore. Ils ne me les feront jamais mieux connaître, car mon cœur ne se reproche rien. J'aurai toute ma vie, pour fidèle escorte, l'infortune et l'innocence. (211)

This reflection implies an open-ended narration that tends toward a future much like the present, since the narration and the narrator's life are coterminous; he even goes further two paragraphs later, saying that even in his prison new, more comfortable prison, he has lost hope of ever being freed, and since he expects to spend the rest of his life in this prison, he can consider himself dead already, meaning that for the purpose of outlining the overall structure of his narrative, the conclusion has already occurred, since it can only come with his death, given that the narrative and his life are coterminous, and he now considers himself to be dead.

The count goes on to lay out the contours of his life story by describing two ways of understanding the path that lead him to the situation in which he finds himself when he begins to write his memoirs. Each of these can serve as a lens for reading the text, and each points to a different aspect of the work's narrative structure. The first is the count's own retrospective evaluation of his own personality, the fruit of an internal process of self-discovery:

Un goût, peut-être outré, de la vérité et de la justice, joint malheureusement aux faiblesses d'un cœur trop tendre, a causé toutes les infortunes de ma vie. Je suis parvenu à pouvoir peindre ainsi mon caractère d'un seul trait. Mais de quelles épreuves et de combien d'années n'ai-je pas eu besoin pour me le développer à moi-même ? (212)

This portrait of the count's character provides half of a framework necessary for forming a mental picture of the work's narrative arc. It invites readers to look for signs of the count's tendency toward truth and justice, and to form their own opinion as to whether it exceeds the normal bounds. It also encourages readers to be on the lookout for interactions between the count's tendency toward truth and justice, on one hand, and, on the other, his tendency toward tenderness. Prévost's readers are thus in the position of evaluating the accuracy of the count's retrospective conclusion based on his experience, and to identify how he came to that conclusion.

The second possible interpretation is the prediction of the count's tutor regarding his pupil's future. The count's own description of his life evokes an opposition between two forces, the attraction of truth and justice, on one side, and the power of emotions, on the other. The tutor's prediction, however, focuses on the possibility of continued equilibrium between two opposing forces, rather than the likelihood of reaching a more stable equilibrium by means of one force overcoming the other:

On me l'avait prédit dès mon enfance. Un homme sensé, qui se trouvait chargé de mon éducation, observant avec quelle vivacité je me livrais au plaisir et combien il était facile néanmoins de me rappeler à la sagesse, ne se lassait pas de répéter qu'entre deux penchants si déclarés, qui ne pouvaient être longtemps de la même force, celui qui emporterait la balance irait nécessairement à l'excès ; ou s'ils conservaient quelque égalité, j'étais né pour être le plus malheureux de tous les hommes. C'est la seconde de ces deux prédictions qui s'est vérifiée. (212)

This view of the count's life invites the reader to evaluate the count's actions in terms of

whether he, in fact, does continue to be more-or-less equally susceptible to his penchant for pleasure as he does to his penchant for good behavior. The count's view of his own life's trajectory emphasizes the static nature of his personality: he continues to be attracted by both justice and emotions. The tutor's view presents stasis as an untenable status to be followed by an evolution, although the count maintains that no such evolution occurred. It is also worth noting that in the tutor's characterization of the count's personality, only the count's penchant toward pleasure is spontaneous, whereas his penchant toward good behavior needs to be stimulated in order to become active. This difference between the two penchants would imply that if they do remain in equilibrium, it will be because of continual or repeated external reminders of the count's duty. The tutor's prediction, then, invites readers to be on the lookout for these external reminders.

Mauvillon's first intervention is more definitive regarding the end of the narrative, which is to be expected, given that it was written with the benefit of knowing the ending at the time of writing, since the entirety of his text, which included the ending, was published in a single installment. Mauvillon sets up different expectations for the reader as to how the structure of the narrative is to unfold, but still provides no details:

C'est une consolation, qui ne diminue pas les maux, mais qui vous donne le courage de les supporter avec plus de patience, dans l'espérance de les voir finir : Il est assez naturel aux âmes vertueuses de croire que dans l'ordre de la justice divine, l'innocence doit tôt ou tard triompher de la malice des persécuteurs. Cette supposition, si conforme d'ailleurs aux principes de la foi & de la raison, se trouve trop souvent fausse ; mais l'expérience ne détruit pas le préjugé surtout s'il est favorable ; & j'avoue, qu'à l'égard de mon état actuel, je l'en crois plus volontiers que tous les faits que je pourrois me rappeler, & que mon esprit écarte pour ne pas me priver de la seule ressource qui me reste pour me soutenir contre un changement de fortune si inattendu, & si peu mérité. Si la méchanceté de mes ennemis l'emporte sur mon innocence, jusqu'au bout, je croirai que la

providence a des raisons particulieres qu'il ne m'appartient pas d'examiner. Mais j'ai tout lieu de croire que mes malheurs vont finir, ou du moins s'adoucir. (2)

Whereas Prévost's narrator outlines an unchanging course for his future, Mauvillon's is more optimistic, and seems fairly confident that there the future will bring about a definitive change in his current condition. Like Prévost, Mauvillon invokes two possible outcomes, but whereas Prévost collapses the uncertainty of the narrative's final destination, leaving the path toward it open, Mauvillon leaves some doubt about the destination, although he leans toward one, and focuses more on subjective analysis of the signs of the path. The use of "*on*" engages the reader more directly, extending an invitation to hypothesize about whether the count will indeed reach the destination that Mauvillon implies he will, and how he will arrive.

### Prévost's Narrative Structure: Plot as Dialectic Cycle

The dialectical narrative structure of Prévost's text can be discerned almost from the very beginning, and its pseudo-fractal nature becomes clear as one follows the dialectical thread through the novel. The first major unit expresses the thesis of the novel's overarching dialectical process, and it contains three subunits that effect the internal dialectical process of the first major unit itself. In most cases, these subunits, in turn, contain narrative episodes corresponding to each of the three phases of the dialectical process, and in many cases, each episode contains a dialectical process of its own, although sometimes a single unit will function in more than one dialectical process, some of these processes apparently "incomplete," while in reality they simply overlap with others. By contrast, the novel's second major narrative unit is truly incomplete, since



it has not reached its conclusion by the end of the first installment, although there are signs of its eventual continuation. Both the first and second major narrative units cross over boundaries between dispositive units, and are not entirely dependent on the events of the plot, although the narrative structure and the plot do cooperate. By analyzing these two parts of an unfinished narrative structure it becomes possible to gain a deeper understanding of Prévost's version of the novel that goes beyond definitions of completion driven by plot, since it is always possible to find a way to continue the story, and beyond definitions based on disposition, since the end of a book, chapter, or installment does not necessarily indicate a narrative turning point.

*Thesis: Accurate perception of reality can lead to social satisfaction*

The first major narrative unit relates the count's exhaustion of the first two social circles he encounters, the first being that of the wife of his provincial *intendant*, which he thinks is the only one until one of his father's military acquaintances, a marquis, introduces him to the second, a circle of *petite maison* party devotees, and ends with the count's introduction to the "société du vrai mérite," a group of intelligent and worthwhile people more suited to the count's disposition. Just as the count's introductory remarks show that his long-term personal evolution follows a circular path over the course of his entire narrative, this major narrative unit, the first structural element of the narrative, leads the count along a circular path from naïveté, through apparent sophistication, through revelation of that sophistication's insufficiency, back to the intuition he had abandoned in favor of the sophistication that ultimately proved insufficient. The socially naïve count arrives in Paris with only his intuition to guide him, then undergoes a process

of discovery that appears to provide the key for translating that intuition into acceptable social behavior. However, when he attempts to apply this new realization, he finds that he still does not understand the relationship between his understanding of the world around him and the reality of that world, and ends up falling back on his intuition, renewing a problematic relationship to society. This circular evolution results from a dialectical process that mirrors the mechanism undergirding the structure of the entire novel: first, the count finds himself in a situation where his beliefs about the relationship between perception and reality turn out to be incorrect, so he adjusts his beliefs accordingly; second, he learns that his new adjusted beliefs are still incorrect, so he readjusts them; finally, he finds that neither his original beliefs nor his adjusted beliefs are wholly correct or incorrect, so he finds a balance between the two positions. The first major narrative unit focuses mostly on the count's introduction into the world of Parisian high society, in terms of plot, but the unit's main point in the narrative structure of the novel is to explore the possibility of reaching a satisfactory social arrangement by means of accurate perception of reality. The count begins his life in Paris unaware of the lack of correspondence between appearance and reality, and while this naive attitude might suggest that he himself is exactly what he seems to be, as the novel progresses the reader learns that things are not so simple. While the count maintains that he never encouraged Mlle de St. V... to believe that he had any special feelings for her, he never entertains the possibility that he might have been perceived in a way that did not accurately reflect his true feelings—assuming that he is, in fact, being honest with himself (and with the reader). This unit, then, serves as the thesis of the novel's narrative structure by setting up

the conditions for the count's love intrigue: ultimately there can be no satisfying way to interact with the world that is based solely on interpreting appearances; there is no secret code that would allow the count to live in harmony with himself and others by revealing the true relationship between appearances and reality.

The fractal and dialectical nature of the novel's narrative structure first appears with the first narrative subunit of the first major narrative unit, which begins with the count's journey to Paris and continues until he has undergone two social tests and had an opportunity to reflect on their conflicting lessons. The first narrative subunit expresses the internal thesis of the first major narrative unit, which is that it is possible to develop a formula for interpreting appearances to determine the reality behind them. Much of the subunit's narrative material consists of the count's various attempts to develop such a formula, although by the end of the subunit he discovers that it is impossible to do so.<sup>113</sup> The first narrative episode expresses the internal thesis of the first subunit, which is that while the count believes himself adequately prepared to enter Parisian society, the social education he has received prior to arriving in Paris is insufficient. The count mentions that he has spent several years in Paris before returning to his father's estate at age 17, but specifies that his experience of the city was limited to life "dans un collège ou à l'académie, sous les yeux d'un sage gouverneur qui [l]'avait contenu dans les bornes de [s]on âge" (212). Moreover, the limits of this experience were too great to be overcome by anything provincial life could provide, even if, as the count mentions, "le commerce

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<sup>113</sup> This subunit also begins to bring up issues that will play a greater role in the second major narrative unit, namely the meaning and purpose of "honnêteté," especially whether it can be taken to excess.

des plus honnêtes gens de la Province [lui]’avait assez formé l’esprit et les manières, pour [l]e rendre capable de paraître d’un air libre dans les meilleures compagnies” (212). The ideals of this provincial way of life are embodied by the count’s father’s social circle, where all of the local notables pay the count’s father his due respect: “Les manières nobles et aisées de [s]on père les y attirant plus encore que sa dépense, c’était une petite cour, où l’esprit et le goût n’étaient pas plus étrangers que la joie et la bonne chère” (213). However, the count has no way of knowing that his social preparation is woefully inadequate until he encounters a test of his social acumen in the form of a dinner party.

The count faces his first test when he first encounters the disparity between appearance and reality that characterizes Parisian society, and he is completely unprepared for it. The day after his arrival in Paris the count is invited to a dinner at the home of his provincial intendant. The dinner constitutes a test of the count’s social perspicacity, which he fails, forming the thesis of the subunit’s dialectical process: the count is unable to accurately determine the relationship between appearance and reality when judging the character of his Parisian acquaintances. Thrust into the circle of the *intendante*, the count finds himself lost in an unfamiliar world in which the accepted way of looking at things is completely unfamiliar to him:

J’appris les histoires courantes de la ville, les modes et les plaisirs, le caractère des nouvelles pièces de théâtre et des livres nouveaux. Le fond de cette multitude de sujets ne m’était pas inconnu, mais la manière de les traiter m’était nouvelle. Les détails ouverts sur certains faits qui semblaient demander un voile, et les décisions sur divers points que je ne trouvais pas bien approfondis, me surprenaient souvent jusqu’à me causer de l’embarras. Cependant j’attribuai ma surprise à mon ignorance [...]. (213)

As the count himself makes clear, what is new about this milieu is not so much the

content of their discussion, but the assumptions about relationship between reality and representation that the group's conversational style implies. The dinner is revealed to be a test of the count's social perceptiveness the next day when the count returns again to visit the *intendante*, who reveals what she claims to be the true personalities of certain of her guests, which run completely contrary to their appearances. The series of portraits she paints of her guests' true personalities constitutes a "correction" of the count's "incorrect intuitions" through an "education" about the true nature of the relationship between reality and appearances. The count, having no reason to disbelieve his hostess, understands that he has much to learn if he is to discern the truth behind appearances in Paris, although he points toward the next step of his evolution when he mentions that "Sans être porté à la soupçonner d'injustice, il me sembla que l'amitié dont elle faisait profession pour tant d'honnêtes gens, l'aurait dû rendre un peu plus réservée sur leurs défauts" (214). The count's preference for considerate discretion over complete disclosure of the truth hints indirectly at a question that will form one of the novel's main subtexts: namely, what personal characteristics constitute "honnêteté," and how can an "honnête homme" embody them? By the end of this subunit the count has "learned" that positive appearances often hide negative truths, and that he should therefore distrust his intuition when forming first impressions. This distrust is the thesis that the second episode will bring into question with an antithesis. The very first step of the overarching dialectical process of the whole novel, is itself a dialectical process of its own: test, correction, reflection.

After failing the first test of his social abilities in the thesis phase of this subunit, the count becomes wary of his intuitions about first impressions, but rather than adopting a critical stance toward both his own assessment of reality and others' assessments he exchanges his initial unquestioning faith in himself for an equally unconsidered faith in the *intendante*. In the antithesis phase, he learns the importance of the source of information—and, as it turns out, the *intendante* is a poor one. The internal antithesis of the first subunit's dialectical process is that while the count's intuition may be faulty, due to his inadequate provincial social training, the inaccuracy of the *intendante*'s information demonstrates that it is up to him to discover the truth behind appearances for himself by seeking out trustworthy sources. The count's first revelation comes in the second episode, when he visits a *président* who was at the *intendante*'s dinner, whom the *intendante* described as boring and unintelligent:

Ce président, par exemple, chez qui nous soupons demain, est un homme qui n'a pour lui que la figure : soixante mille livres de rente lui tiennent lieu du reste. A la vérité, il les mange avec ses amis ; mais ôtez-lui sa table, il n'a pour ressource dans la société que cinq ou six vieux contes que vous entendîtes hier, et qu'il tourne assez bien, parce qu'il les a mille fois répétés. (213)

At first, the count takes the *intendante* at her word, and as a result fails a second test of his social acumen when he makes incorrect assumptions about the *président* under the influence of the *intendante*'s portraits. In a one-on-one conversation, however, the *président* reveals himself to be a well-educated and sensible man whose public demeanor is the result of reserve and consideration for others, not of any defect: “[J]e n’eus pas de peine à comprendre, qu’un homme si éclairé ne daignât point entrer dans les idées frivoles qui font la matière des entretiens de table ; ou que par le tour supérieur de son

génie, il n'en fût point aussi capable qu'une infinité de femmes et d'hommes superficiels" (215). This interaction is the count's first attempt to put his new knowledge into practice, and thus constitutes another test of sorts. At first the count is wary, and then he is surprised to learn the *président's* true character, and perhaps a bit flattered by the *président's* praise of his intelligence. A reference to the count's past education turns this into a summary moment and marks the end of the first narrative subunit (215). Thus, the count initially takes the accuracy of the information people provide as an indication of both their truthfulness and their character, which turns out not to be an appropriate assumption to make in all cases, as he will later learn from the example of the libertine marquis. The count's narrative reaches a point of structural transition when, after thus assessing the inaccuracy of worldly opinions regarding people of true intelligence (*esprit*), the narrator-count evaluates the progress of his narration by comparing the diegetical present with the present of narration: "Ce ne fut qu'après quantité d'autres expériences, que je démêlai le fond et la cause de cette injustice" (216). The next paragraph begins with another analeptic comment from the narrator-count, "mes réflexions n'allaient point encore si loin" (216), which points to this moment as a beginning of a long process of personal evolution. The count's reflection after his encounter with the *président* is the synthesis of the *intendante's* thesis and the *président's* antithesis, and prepares the way for the next narrative episode, which combines the synthesis of the first subunit and the thesis of the second subunit (the first subunit does not have a third episode to provide a synthesis of its own).

The second narrative subunit expresses the antithesis of the novel's first dialectical process, which is the idea that it might be possible to correct the errors of society by substituting truth for rumor, an idea that ultimately proves to be false. The first episode of this new subunit serves as both the synthesis of the previous subunit and as the thesis of the new subunit. In its role as the synthesis of the previous subunit, the episode demonstrates the count's openness to information that conflicts with the *intendante's* portraits of her guests, when he meets the marquis and learns the noble origins of the financier. In its role as the thesis of the new subunit, the episode demonstrates the count's lack of understanding of the degree to which Parisian society is based on deception and distortions of the truth, as is clear from his handling of the practical side of his burgeoning military career and his romantic problems.

As this new subunit begins, the count discovers the inaccuracy of another of the *intendante's* portraits of one of her dinner guests whom she described as a vulgar nouveau-riche: "Le financier [...] a beaucoup d'esprit, de douceur et de politesse ; mais avec des entêtements faux et ridicules de noblesse, qui le font gémir d'être réduit à la profession qu'il exerce, et sans laquelle néanmoins il serait bien éloigné de la fortune dont il jouit" (214). The count makes this discovery during a discussion with one of his father's friends from his days of serving in the army, a "vieux marquis", who happens to mention that he and the financier descend from the same ancestor, and are therefore each as noble as the other. The count is now less trusting of the *intendante's* portraits, and as a result has less difficulty accepting the marquis' revelation of the financier's true character than he did the *président's* revelation of his own true character. Yet, the Marquis is proof



that a good source of information is not always a good person: the count's interpersonal sense is not accurate when exposed to duplicitous individuals. The case of the *président* demonstrates the count's willingness to admit his errors and to learn from them, while that of the financier shows his ability to make connections between similar situations and to apply what he has learned when it is appropriate, and it provides an example of the kind of reflection of which he was capable at that point in the development of his observational faculties. In both cases, the count's initial acceptance at face value of a positive or neutral appearance was at first replaced by the *intendante*'s exposure of the negative truth hidden by those appearances, which is in turn replaced by a truth that is positive, but more complex than appearances alone would allow a naive, uninformed observer such as the count to perceive at first. The second time that the count learns this lesson provides the impetus that brings the first major narrative unit to a close, to the count's first attempt to apply what he has learned through a synthesis of the two opposing responses to his performance at his first test in Parisian society: a thesis proposed by the *intendante* and an antithesis proposed by the *président* and the marquis.

However, while the count is fairly adept at applying his new skills to his understanding of others, he is less skilled in applying them to himself, as is shown by his reaction to a letter from Mlle de St. V..., "cette jeune personne a qui j'avais rendu quelques soins dans ma province" (217), and who is now engaged to marry his father. In this letter, Mlle de St. V... criticizes the count for ending what she sees as their burgeoning romance: "Elle me marquait que mon départ précipité ne lui avait pas causé moins d'étonnement que de douleur" (217). Because the novel's narrative structure is

based on the count's evolving personality, it is important that Mlle de St. V... mentions the count's character as her reason why she cannot believe that he would leave without being under his father's orders (217). The description of the events leading up to the count's departure that the count gave at the beginning of his narration makes it clear to the reader that the count will not agree with Mlle de St. V...'s characterization of their relationship: "c'était un simple goût de jeunesse que l'idée de mon voyage avait fort affaibli, et qui se dissipa sans violence, lorsque j'approchai de Paris" (212). In fact, the count's reaction to the end of any possibility of romantic interaction with Mlle de St. V... contrasts strongly with the latter's reaction: "J'appris la résolution de mon père avec moins de peine que d'étonnement" (212). And yet, the count does admit that his feelings for the young woman were strong enough to merit informing his father of them: "J'étais si éloigné néanmoins de prévoir ce mariage, que peu de temps avant mon départ, je lui avais marqué de l'inclination pour la personne dont il pensait à faire ma belle-mère" (212). Thus, even before the count reacts to the letter, he has made an effort to minimize the importance of his feelings for Mlle de St. V... and to discount the significance of his actions taken on account of those feelings. However, already certain inconsistencies point to contradictions between the count's true feelings and his representation of them, and between the reality of the count's relationship with Mlle de St. V... and his understanding of it at the moment of narration. These inconsistencies deepen with the count's reaction:

J'avais vu plusieurs fois Mlle de St V... Je lui avais fait les politesses qu'on doit à son sexe. Elle n'était pas sans agréments. L'oisiveté de la campagne et l'ardeur de la jeunesse m'avaient fait trouver du plaisir à la voir, et peut-être n'aurais-je pas senti d'éloignement pour elle, si d'autres

vues ne m'eussent empêché de penser au mariage : mais ne lui ayant jamais prononcé le nom d'amour, je cherchais sur quoi elle avait pu fonder l'opinion qu'elle marquait de mes sentiments. Les siens devaient être bien vifs, pour lui avoir sitôt inspiré le désir de me suivre. Après quelques réflexions, je trouvai du danger à différer un moment ma réponse. J'avais cru remarquer dans son caractère plus de vivacité que de raison. Quand j'aurais eu plus de penchant pour elle, je n'aurais pas été capable de la disputer à mon père ; et je l'étais encore moins de prendre plaisir, comme la plupart des gens de mon âge, à triompher d'un cœur dont je n'attendais rien. (217)

Here, the count emphasizes the relative infrequency of his interactions with Mlle de St.

V..., the visual character of their interactions, and by downplaying the character of those interactions as if they had been restricted to the customary minimum level. It seems clear, though, that the two young people have conversed, since otherwise why would the count feel the need to insist that he had never used the word "love" in speaking with her?

Similarly, the fact that the narrator-count mentions Mlle de St. V...'s attractiveness, even if only to minimize it, suggests that he was, in fact, attracted to her. Moreover, the narrator-count's retrospective view seems evident in his insistence on the influence of the ardor of youth, given that he is older at the time when he is writing, and in his characterization of the countryside as a place of leisure. Thus, while the narrator-count makes all of these comments in the context of reporting his reaction to Mlle de St. V...'s letter as a younger man, some of them must be attributed to the narrator-count and not to the protagonist-count. Taking this confusion of registers into account, all we know about the protagonist-count's reaction to the letter is that he believed that although he had been attracted to her and had not attempted to hide that attraction, he believed that having never explicitly mentioned "love" he was completely free of any obligation to her. The count's reaction to Mlle de St. V...'s letter is also an occasion for marking the progress

accomplished thus far in the novel's narrative structure, by means of a prolepsis in which the count justifies his inability to see the significance of the letter at the time when he received it, while simultaneously reporting a vague premonition of ill consequences.<sup>114</sup>

The second narrative episode expresses the antithesis of the second subunit, which is that it is impossible to correct the errors of the *intendante*'s social circle because the circle depends on willful disregard for the truth, which becomes clear when the count's attempt to disabuse them of their misperception of the financier fails. The novel's structure depends to a significant degree on the count's progression from one social milieu to the next, but it also reflects the count's increasing personal implication in the culture of the circles into which he is successively initiated. When the count attempts to correct the erroneous assumption of the intendant's wife and her circle regarding the financier's lack of nobility, they refuse to believe him, and the president "termine cette scène en disant qu'il ne connaissait point la naissance de M. de... mais qu'il connaissait Paris pour le règne de la légèreté et de la médisance, et qu'il ne croyait rien d'impossible dans ces deux genres" (218). Here, the vocabulary of stage directions indicates a point of articulation in the novel's narrative structure. The precise referent of the "scene" in question is the discussion of the financier's family background, but given the summative nature of the president's remark and the fact that there is no further account of the dinner, it makes sense to see this "scene" as a stand-in for the whole of the narrative thus far.

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<sup>114</sup> Tremewan claims that this letter and all of the episodes in which Mlle de St. V... appears do not fit into "the pattern of contrast and compromise" that structures the novel ("Narrative point of view" 49). It is also possible to understand them as participating in the dialectical processes that move the count's personal development forward.

Thus, the count's understanding of the president's reserve in public is actually the beginning of his apprenticeship in duplicity: the president joins the "torrent" of the company in which he finds himself, rather than crush everyone with his superior intelligence, even though the result is that everyone thinks he isn't very clever. The count attempts to defend the reputation of the financier, and in doing so attempts to correct others' misperceptions, as his were corrected, by simply providing correct information unavailable previously. However, he is unsuccessful, and his reflections following this failed attempt mark an antithesis that prepares the way for a third narrative subunit.

The third narrative subunit expresses the synthesis of the novel's first dialectical process, which is that while the count's provincial social education may have been inadequate preparation for dealing effectively with the deception that runs rampant in Parisian society, it might simply be an issue of finding the right circle to join. In this subunit, we see the count's continued participation in the *intendante's* social circle while he begins to look for more serious people and attempts to harmonize his principles, desires, etc. with this community. Failing at that, the count transitions out of the *intendante's* social circle and into the *petite maison* circle, in which he remains until just before his introduction into the "société du vrai mérite." The first episode of this subunit serves as both the synthesis of the previous subunit and as the thesis of the new one. In its role as synthesis of the previous subunit it places the count in another situation where he learns the truth about one of the *intendante's* guests, but this time it does not inspire him to correct the error: sometimes revealing the truth can be harmful, even if the lie is also harmful. In its role as thesis of the new subunit it introduces the count to a new segment

of Parisian society, that of the *petite-maison* party set. Yet, while the count recognizes that this is not his “scene,” he finds himself forced to engage in deception in order to fulfill his social role without compromising his own virtue or that of another person: sometimes lying is necessary for self-protection; yet, whether this lessens a person’s “honnêteté” is a question that remains to be addressed.

The thesis phase of this episode prepares the count for the *petite-maison* party by combining the lesson the count has learned from the *président*, a model of probity, with a similar lesson from the marquis, the personification of excess. The marquis reveals the true cause of the commandeur’s lack of interest in women (a hernia, not homosexuality), and confirms the lesson that the count learned when he tried to defend the financier’s reputation:

Je vous dis la vérité, reprit le marquis ; mais il la cache, et je fais peut-être une indiscretion de vous l’apprendre. Je lui racontai là-dessus l’opinion que l’intendante et d’autres femmes, sans doute, avaient de lui. Il en rit malignement. Pour moi, qui n’y trouvais qu’un nouveau sujet d’admirer la fausseté des jugements publics, je rapprochai cette preuve de celles que j’avais déjà dans le même genre. (220)

He also proposes a new way of understanding social circles (like with like), and invites the count to join his, the *petite-maison* social circle. The count’s final rejection of the *intendante*’s circle comes when Mme de B... turns out not to be there as promised on a night when there is a direct conflict between the two gatherings. When the count joins the old marquis for a “souper de petite maison” that turns out to be an orgy, the count’s misconception regarding the marquis’ morals is corrected, but once again the count takes the wrong lesson from this revelation: “je crus voir [...] la cause du désordre de sa fortune ; et je compris qu’une infinité d’officiers qui sortent du service, n’ont pas toujours

raison d'attribuer le mauvais état de leurs affaires aux seules disgrâces du métier" (222).

Rather than consider the marquis as an individual, the count takes the lack of correspondence between appearance and truth as a general case, to add to his rules for interpreting appearances. By holding strict adherence to truth up as the highest good, the count increases his cynicism. It is significant that in order to attend this event, the count cuts short his return to the home of the intendant's wife after hearing that the one person he had hoped to see there that night, the counselor's wife, will not be attending after all. From this association of sociological typology and personal evolution we can see that the novel's narrative structure is not initially based on analyzing society, and only later incorporating a romantic intrigue when the social critique begins to falter, as some critics have suggested (Tremewan "Introduction" 14-20). Rather, the two themes are inextricably entwined from the beginning.

The *souper* is moment when the count begins to participate, albeit for altruistic reasons, in the culture of dishonesty and misrepresentation in which he has found himself immersed since his arrival in Paris. While at an earlier dinner his upright character moved him to exceed the normal bounds of honesty by speaking aloud a hidden truth (216), it now moves him to pretend to have sexual relations with a prostitute in order to fit in, and to explain his reluctance to participate in the orgy by falsely implying that he has a sexually transmitted disease, from which he wanted to spare his comrades; which has the effect of protecting Fanchon from any further attention that evening (224). The count's dishonesty thus allows him to practice philanthropy, since he manages to induce Fanchon to promise to clean up her life in exchange for a modest pension. However,

while the count's motives may be pure, it is unclear what the long-term effect of compromising his principles will be. The count's seemingly paradoxical pairing of cynicism and generosity is a natural result of his increasing social sophistication, because that sophistication is not organic, but rather an overly strict application of rigorous identity between truth and appearance. Without accepting a certain level of ambiguity, or misrepresentation, the count will never fully integrate himself in to Parisian society; and, in fact, his ultimate adherence to only his internal appreciation of the relationship between truth and appearance, as revealed in his introduction, written while imprisoned in Innsbruck, shows that he never reaches that level of true sophistication, and in fact loses the artificial sophistication that he did manage to gain.

The second episode expresses the antithesis of this subunit, which is that scrupulous honesty is to be maintained at all costs, even when it might compromise another person's honor, as becomes clear through the count's reaction to the arrival of a letter from his father (226-28). This letter forms a pendant to the letter from Mlle de St. V..., and just as the count's reaction to that earlier letter demonstrated his personal evolution up to that point, this letter provokes a reaction that reveals the count's current state of emotional development. The various examples of discrepancy between reality and appearance that the count has encountered have increased his sensitivity to the possibility of misinterpretation, as shown by his attempts to explain what are, from his point of view, misunderstandings on the part of Mlle de St. V... and his father, but in a way that betrays his subjective interpretations of their actions. The count claims to be reporting the content of Mlle de St. V...'s letter, but in the absence of direct quotation, it



is the count's subjective perspective that the reader encounters, yet in a way that presents that perspective as the objective truth. For example, it seems unlikely that the count's father would have retained Mlle de St. V... 's interjection "hélas" when reporting her claim that she and the count had been in love, "quoiqu'hélas ! [il fût] parti avec tant de dureté pour elle" (227). It is also hard to imagine that in his account of his interaction with Mlle de St. V... the count's father would have included the detail of how she showed him the count's letter "sans lui laisser le temps de revenir de son étonnement" following her revelation—or claim, as the count would say—that during "ce temps d'amour et de confiance mutuelle, elle avait eu pour [le comte] des complaisances qui ne lui permettaient plus d'être la femme de mon père" (227). The count insists on the apparently manipulative aspects of Mlle de St. V... 's behavior in order to explain how his letter could have convinced his father that Mlle de St. V... 's version of events was accurate, even though to the count her claims are obviously false.

The count's reaction is to search his memory to confirm the truth or falsehood of Mlle de St. V... 's accusations, but, perhaps unsurprisingly, he finds himself innocent: "Il était certain, que de ma connaissance je n'avais jamais livré le moindre combat à sa vertu" (227). The meaning of *complaisances* is apparently sexual, and if so a detailed recollection would seem to be unnecessary, which suggests that the count's rigorous self-examination is for show. The key to understanding the count's position at this point in the narrative is the "proof" he offers, to himself and to his readers, of his innocence: "Mon cœur et ma mémoire se rendaient le même témoignage" (227). The count's concern that there could be a discrepancy between emotional truth and factual truth is analogous to his

difficulty adapting appropriately to the frequent discrepancies between appearance and reality in Parisian society. Yet, while the count's apparent concern is with determining the objective truth, his use of the word *vérité* suggests that he is, in fact, relying ultimately on his own subjective perception as an authority for determining that truth, rather than taking into account the perspectives of others. The count makes a concerted effort to demonstrate that he is bending over backward to find potential explanations for Mlle de St. V... 's false claims, but in the end he comes back to his subjective impression as the ultimate foundation of truth: "cette vérité était si claire pour moi, qu'il ne l'était que trop aussi, que ce n'était pas sur des réalités qu'on cherchait à se fonder" (227). To combat this imposition, the count decides to review his memory of his letter to Mlle de St. V... "pour juger quelles armes j'avais fournies contre moi" (227). This adversarial stance is further reflected in the count's overzealous search. First, one should note that the count remains in the realm of the subjective; second, that he gives less weight to his father's representation of the situation than to his own assessment of what must have happened: "Je crus retrouver dans ma mémoire, non seulement les termes de mon père, mais d'autres expressions beaucoup plus douces et plus civiles" (227). The count seems to think that he understands better than his father just what it was in his letter to Mlle de St. V... that induced him to believe the young woman's story.

To the count, it is obvious that each of these potential "weapons" has its appropriate meaning, "qui convenait au regret que j'avais eu d'être forcé à des explications désagréables," but because "[l]a politesse paraît quelquefois aussi tendre que l'amour," and because the count had spoken of Mlle de St. V... "avec estime" prior to

leaving for Paris, “il devait avoir été plus facile à se laisser prévenir par de fausses impressions” (227). In the end, though, all of this apparent effort to give others the benefit of the doubt is an elaborate attempt, if perhaps unconscious one, to appear (to himself and to his audience) fair. The count’s true priorities show in his attitude toward assigning responsibility for this unfortunate situation: “Avec la sévérité que j’ai toujours eue pour moi-même, je ne voulus point décider tout d’un coup en ma faveur” (227). Perhaps because of his own recent discovery of his inability to reliably determine the relationship between appearance and reality, the count’s underlying mistrust of others leads him to ask his father to adopt the same investigative stance he has begun to adopt himself. First he asks his father to compel Mlle de St. V... to be specific: “je le priai de ne pas s’en tenir à des déclarations vagues, et de savoir d’elle-même à quoi elle donnait le nom de complaisances” (227). Then he sends a separate letter in which he asks her to have her read his denial, “en prenant soin d’observer sa contenance et ses réponses” (227). Thus, by analyzing the count’s reaction to his father’s letter, his subjective method of reporting its content, and the course of action he chooses in response to it, and by making a comparison to the analogous situation that arose with Mlle de St. V...’s letter at the end of the first half of this first major narrative unit, it becomes possible to see how the count has evolved both since the beginning of the novel (which is to say over the course of the entire first major narrative unit), and since the end of the first stage of his evolution (which is to say over the course of the second half).

The signal that the second major narrative unit is about to begin comes with the count’s evaluation of the first stage of developments in his relationship with Mlle de St.

V... after concluding the account of his reaction and response to his father's letter, referring to this stage of the relationship as "[c]ette malheureuse aventure, qui a jeté tant d'amertume sur *une partie* de ma vie" (227, emphasis added). The reference to a part of the count's life suggests that there is an important structural transition taking place at this point in the narrative, and that suggestion is reinforced by the parallelism between certain events of the first major narrative unit and others from the second one, in particular the three-way comparison between portraits of dinner guests, the count's perception of those dinner guests' personalities, and the guests' true personalities.

*Antithesis: Despite the Impossibility of Counteracting Others' Distortion of the Truth, an "Honnête Homme" Can Remain True to His Own Principles*

The second major narrative unit expresses the antithesis of the novel's main dialectical process, which is the hope that even if it is impossible to counteract others' distortion of truth, it is possible for an "honnête homme" to remain true to his own principles. Like the novel's thesis in the first major narrative unit, this idea will eventually prove incorrect, as becomes clear when the count's love for Mme de B... causes him to compromise his principles even more than before, which demonstrates the internal failure of intent, and when his deathbed marriage to Mlle de St. V... shows the conflicts that arise from the inherent rigidity of "honnêteté," which demonstrates the external failure of influence from circumstances. The first subunit of the second major unit expresses the thesis of the antithesis of the novel's main dialectical process, which is that "honnêteté" is compatible with one's obligations to others, as shown in the count's efforts to be generous to Fanchon and to fulfill his obligation to protect Mlle de St. V... 's honor.

The first episode of this new subunit serves as both the synthesis of the previous subunit and as the thesis of the new one. In it, the count's naive attempt to turn Fanchon into an honest woman, which turns out to be a splendid opportunity for Mme Birat to profit from his innocence, shows the limits of his newfound sophistication, and this new test brings the count to revisit his reflection following *petite-maison* party, this time incorporating lessons learned from being tricked by Fanchon and Mme Birat (229-32). Before the count has an opportunity to employ his newly-developed skills of social perception to evaluate the marquis' portraits, he encounters two preparatory tests. The day of the next "petit souper," the count attends a daytime meal, which he finds "fort sérieux," in large part because "l'air de représentation [...] domine plus que celui de société," as he is also able to determine thanks to his new perceptive skills (229). The second test comes in the form of a deception. The count discovers that Fanchon and Mme Birat, her procuress, have been tricking him by claiming that Fanchon has returned to a life of virtue in exchange for the count's financial support, while in fact she has continued to practice her original trade. The count highlights the progress of his Parisian education thus far: "avec ma bonne foi naturelle, il fallait connaître mieux Paris que je ne faisais encore, pour être en garde contre des apparences si fortes de vertu et d'honnêteté et je n'écris que pour l'instruction de ceux qui peuvent avoir autant de bonté et de droiture avec aussi peu de lumières" (229-30). In its role as the synthesis of the previous subunit it depicts the consequences of the conflict between the contradictory requirements of rigorous "honnêteté" addressed in the previous two episodes: lying to preserve one's own honor or that of another person, and telling the truth even when it will harm another's

reputation. In its role as the thesis of the new subunit it depicts the count's efforts to use his sense of "honnêteté" to guide his interpretation of appearances, rather than risk following the advice of others, even when he risks harming himself materially or in reputation.

The second episode is a short one, but it marks the true beginning of the antithesis contained in this major unit: here we see the positive effects of the count's attempts to harmonize his internal principles of "honnêteté" with his interpretation of the relationship between reality and appearances: he starts to become socially successful on his own. The count then signals a shift in his narrative's presentation of his "extraordinary" personality, setting up the transition into next major narrative unit. It is at this point that the narrator determines that he has told enough of his story to justify his claim that his birth, natural qualities, and education have formed him in such a way that he would be perfectly suited for life in the world of Parisian high society, if it were virtuous. This moment arrives at different points in each version of the text. Quantitatively, the transition comes 57% of the way through Prévost's version and 46% of the way through in Mauvillon's. Taking into account the interaction between the narrative structure and the dispositive structure, we can see that Mauvillon's additions have transformed this transition from one that comes relatively late in the installment to one that comes relatively early in the installment. In Prévost's version this transition could ultimately lead to the elaboration of a three-part narrative structure, with one major unit bridging the gap between two installments: its situation nearer to the end of the first installment suggests it could have played a major role in the narrative structure of the novel, had Prévost chosen

to continue it. The earlier placement of this transition in Mauvillon's version suggests that it will play a less significant role in the narrative structure of his completed novel.

The count's extraordinary character consists of his unusual bringing together of worldliness and virtue, two characteristics generally thought to be incompatible:

Je n'ai pas voulu me faire honneur d'avoir reçu du ciel un caractère extraordinaire, avant que mes lecteurs aient pu s'apercevoir que j'ai quelque droit de me l'attribuer. J'étais fait pour le monde par ma naissance, mes qualités naturelles, mon éducation, et plus encore par mes inclinations et mes goûts, qui me faisaient aimer la beauté et les plaisirs. Mais c'était pour un monde vertueux que j'étais fait; et de toutes mes qualités naturelles, celles qui me rendaient le plus estimable à mes propres yeux, étaient celles dont je voyais le moins d'usage à faire dans les sociétés que j'avais connues. (232)

First, note that while the count will later marvel at how he could ever have believed the rumors about Mme de B..., given her physical appearance of beauty and virtue,<sup>115</sup> his final analysis of his interaction with Fanchon is to blame her actions on the inability of women to withstand even the most minute exposure to debauchery, which immediately corrupts their character, leaving only a misleading appearance of virtue: "à toute femme qui est atteinte une fois de la même corruption dans les qualités de l'âme, il ne peut rester d'honnête que la figure : masque perfide, qui trompe encore un honnête homme sans expérience" (232). Given that the count's planned ultimate imprisonment is supposed to have something to do with his involvement with Mme de B..., this comment may suggest that she was ultimately doomed to fall prey to debauchery in Prévost's plan, or that her

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<sup>115</sup> The count's observations are as follows: "Quoi ? l'apparence de toutes les vertus ne serait que le masque d'une honteuse faiblesse! Cette figure charmante serait associée avec le vice ? Il me semblait même, en consultant les lois simples de la physique, que cet accord était impossible ; car les traits du visage doivent se ressentir des affections du coeur. On ne concevrait pas qu'une vive tristesse pût rendre habituellement la physionomie riante : de même, la beauté douce et modeste ne peut accompagner longtemps une passion déréglée." (244)

apparent (and to a certain degree real) virtue may have hidden certain faults to which the count was to remain blind until some point in the novel's continuation. This introduction is followed by a practical application of the new lessons the count has learned from his interaction with Fanchon and Mme Birat (232-33).

The third episode expresses the synthesis of this subunit by depicting the count in a situation analogous to the first test of his social acumen, the dinner at the *intendante's*: this time, he hears the portraits first, and is able to use his internal principles to evaluate them before determining whether they are accurate or not (233-34). The novel's second major narrative unit finds the count faced with another set of portraits which the count evaluates, and which provoke his reflection. The evolution of the novel's narrative structure appears in the lack of direct parallelism between the portraits of the first major narrative unit, which appear in connection with the high society circle of the *intendante*, and those of the second, which appear in connection with the libertine circle of the marquis. The reason for this partial parallelism is that the first major narrative unit has two halves that are marked in part by the parallelism between two of the *intendante's* dinners that the count attends. The first dinner serves as a test of his naive, unformed societal perceptiveness, which he fails, and the second serves as an opportunity for him to put into practice the new perceptive skills he has learned. The test comes in the form of an opportunity to compare and contrasting the lessons of the *intendante*, whose description of her guests' characters awakens the count to the possibility of positive appearance hiding a negative socially accepted truth. By demonstrating the possibility of negative socially accepted truth hiding positive reality through his personal example, the



*président* reveals the count's failure to him. Similarly, the marquis provides information that demonstrates that individuals can provide information that lead to revelations similar to the one provided by the *président*'s personal example, another test that the count fails, albeit for different reasons, since this time it is no longer his naïveté that leads him astray, but rather his uncompromising commitment to the ideal of identity between appearance and reality. Another important difference between the count's evaluation of the *intendante*'s portraits and his evaluation of the marquis' portraits is that while in the first major narrative unit the count only heard the *intendante*'s portraits of her guests after having formed his own impressions of them during her dinner party, this time the portraits, provided by the marquis, precede the dinner party. Having been disgusted by the debauchery of his first time among the marquis and his friends, at which prostitutes provided the requisite female companionship, the count has decided never to attend another one of these "petits soupers," but the marquis induces him to return by pointing out that it would harm the marquis' reputation among his friends if the count were to abruptly cut off all connection to the group after having been introduced to it on such a favorable footing, and by proposing to invite either "honnêtes femmes" or "des demoiselles d'opéra et des maîtresses entretenues" instead of prostitutes for the count's next visit (228).

The novel's second major narrative unit is an amplification and problematization of the opposition between the first and second subunits of the first major unit: the practical application of theory learned by experiencing the doubled dialectic manifests itself in a test of the count's ability to remain an "honnête homme" when his emotions are

engaged and he is no longer a dispassionate observer. In some ways, it seems like the count regresses to an earlier stage of initiation into society when he falls in love with Mme de B... and this leads to another difficult initiation into society. This cyclical structure has already appeared, first within the first unit, which has its own narrative arc, which contrasts with the second unit. Then in the contrast between the third unit and the composite formed by the first and second units. Finally, we can see Prévost laying the foundation for a future contrast between a fourth unit and a composite formed by the first three units together.

The transition into the second narrative subunit begins with the arrival of the count's father's next letter, which highlights the count's increasing sophistication, and increases the reader's doubt regarding the correspondence between the count's representation of his relationship with Mlle de St. V... and the reality, given Mlle de St. V... 's apparent continued belief in her version of events (238-39). The count's following self-analysis is also important for understanding the novel's narrative structure (239). Here again, the count interprets his father's words: "Il avait raison de se fier à mes sentiments, car mon bonheur et ma fortune ne m'auraient pas fait balancer un moment sur mon devoir" (239). This time, the count wonders whether it is appropriate to attempt to assign blame: "Était-il temps d'examiner si c'était sa faute, ou celle de mon père, ou la mienne; et le mal étant réel, l'impossibilité même qu'il put jamais être réparé par un autre que moi, ne me faisait-elle pas un devoir de cette réparation ?" (239). It turns out that this concern was in bad faith, as shown by the count's relief at receiving confirmation of his ideas: "Mon incertitude n'étant venue que d'un excès d'équité, qui m'avait fait craindre

de me flatter trop dans ma propre cause, je fus extrêmement satisfait de voir mon jugement confirmé par les plus honnêtes gens de Paris” (240). The count has begun to return to trusting his own judgment, provided he can find confirmation from a reliable source, whereas at the beginning he had faith in it due to sheer innocence, and then came to distrust it as he was corrected by others. This represents a midpoint in his evolution as a character: he has found equilibrium in a position that compromises between his intuitions and inner reality, on one side, and the outer world of appearance and reality, on the other—with a recognition that the former might need correction. Later, he will come to disregard this correction, but even in doing so he will not return to his original position, as that future shift will represent a willful disregard for input from the outside world despite knowing that others might disagree with him.

The second subunit of the second major unit expresses the antithesis of the novel’s main dialectical process, which is that “honnêteté” is compatible with one’s obligations to oneself: the count’s rigid commitment to his principles is apparently undisturbed by his passion for Mme de B..., but as in the case of his relationship with Mlle de St. V... it is clear to the attentive reader that he compromises his integrity without meaning to while maintaining his belief in his perfect “honnêteté.” The first episode expresses the thesis of this subunit, which is that even though the count is now no longer unencumbered by love or friendship—as he says, “Depuis près de deux mois que j’étais à Paris, je m’étais plaint quelquefois à moi-même d’être encore sans maîtresse et sans ami” (239)—he will still be able to stay true to his principles of “honnêteté,” but three incidents demonstrate the ultimate impossibility of an uncompromising

commitment to such rigidity in the face of real human attachments. In this episode, the count begins to fall in love with Mme de B... and undergoes a series of events that change the course of his personal development:

Dans un intervalle si court, il m'arriva trois incidents, que je qualifierais tous trois de faveurs du ciel, si la dernière n'avait été mêlée jusqu'aujourd'hui de tant d'amertume, que je dois balancer à lui accorder ce nom. Elle a donné naissance à toutes les douceurs de ma vie ; mais elle est devenue l'occasion de toutes mes disgrâces. Après avoir ruiné pendant quinze ans mon repos et ma fortune, elle exposait, il y a six mois, ma tête au dernier danger ; et si la générosité d'un ami trop tendre et trop fidèle m'a conservé la vie, presque aux dépens de la sienne, c'est pour retomber par d'autres aventures dans une situation si désespérée, que l'unique consolation de mes malheurs est la liberté de les écrire. (241)

Because the count does not explicitly identify the events he refers to in this way, readers are left to identify them on their own, if they so choose. One factor that adds uncertainty to this determination is the count's explanation of why the third *petite maison* party is delayed: "Elle fut plus reculée qu'il [le marquis] ne le souhaitait, par des incidents qui firent bientôt prendre une nouvelle face à ma situation" (238). Are these the same "three incidents" to which the count refers later? The sentence immediately following mentions the arrival of a letter from the count's father in reply to the count's rebuttal of Mlle de St. V... 's accusations, which would then appear to be the first of the three incidents.

However, there are more than three possible candidates for these incidents. The next of these is the scene at the church in which the count experiences a *coup de foudre* when he catches sight of Mme de B... and first begins to suspect that she may be innocent of the rumors circulating about her infidelity to her husband (241). The next is the count's introduction to the "société du vrai mérite" (241-42). Through his introduction to this new social circle, the count also meets M. de La..., who becomes his best friend (242-

43). Through his friendship with M. de La... the count gains more evidence of Mme de B...’s innocence by analogy with the “marquise aux trois amants,” who happens to be related to M. de La..., who reveals her innocence (243-44). The count then visits the marquise herself, and becomes even more convinced of the likelihood of Mme de B...’s innocence (244-45). The count gains positive confirmation of Mme de B...’s innocence when his *maréchal de logis* impresses Mme de B...’s secretary and supposed lover, and through the same interaction gains the friendship of M. and Mme de B... as well as unlimited access to their home (245-48). Which of these is the “last” event, that supposedly leads to all of the count’s later problems? Is it his discovery of Mme de B...’s innocence, or is it his admission to her house? Are those two incidents or one? Which of them are responsible for delaying the count’s attendance at the third of the marquis’ *petite maison* parties? It is possible to identify the three incidents, but only through careful examination, so it would seem that precise identification is not very important. This usefully indeterminate structural device allows Prévost to give the impression of a significant transitional moment in the narrative without overly committing himself to any future course.

The test of the count’s ability to maintain his rigid commitment to “honnêteté” in the face of personal engagement also follows a dialectical process. As it begins, the count starts to fall in love with Mme de B... but without understanding at first what is happening, still more or less believing the common public opinion of her (239-41). The count’s adherence to public opinion about Mme de B... is challenged as he enters a new social circle (241-44). These challenges come about through “incidents,” the first of

which is the count's introduction to the "société du vrai mérite" (241-42). The count's experience of this new social circle suggests to him the possibility of an unguardedly honest world: "On s'écoutait avec complaisance, on se répondait avec honnêteté" (242).<sup>116</sup> The second incident is the beginning of the count's friendship with M. de La..., who reveals the innocence of the "marquise aux trois amants," and thus gives the count the idea that Mme de B... may be innocent as well, an idea that is strengthened when he visits the marquise to see for himself and to gather information about Mme de B... (242-44).<sup>117</sup> The example of M. de La...'s relative, the "Marquise aux trois amants," being innocent creates a revolution in the count's thinking:

L'éclaircissement que je venais de recevoir me jeta dans une profonde réflexion, sur la facilité avec laquelle on se prête à la malignité des discours publics. Quoi ! disais-je ; de tant de personnes qu'on a pris plaisir à décrier dans mon esprit, je n'ai pas eu l'occasion d'en connaître une, à qui je n'aie vu manifestement qu'on fait de cruelles injustices. Madame de B... serait-elle aussi l'objet d'une infâme calomnie ? Cette idée fut si vive, que me croyant autorisé par l'exemple de la marquise à ne plus douter de son innocence, je me faisais un reproche amer d'avoir osé la soupçonner. (244)

But we should wonder why the example of the President was insufficient: now that the count is infatuated, his judgment is clouded? As narrator, he notes that when he takes advantage of his introduction to the marquise to ask after Mme de B..., he fails to interrogate his own motives:

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<sup>116</sup> The "ruisseau" of the société du vrai mérite (242) stands in stark contrast to the "torrent" that characterizes the intendant's wife's milieu (218), and the circle of the old marquis (224).

<sup>117</sup> The count claims an excess of "équité" when dealing with Mlle de St. V..., but when attempting to convince himself of Mme de B...'s innocence, only a modicum is required: "Il ne faut que le bon sens naturel, disais-je, avec la moindre semence d'équité, pour se refuser à des accusations sans vraisemblance" (245).

Il me sembla que le témoignage d'une femme si raisonnable allait détruire tous mes doutes. Sans me demander compte de mes motifs, je pris occasion du seul souper que j'avais fait avec elle, pour lui dire que je n'ai pas été plus heureux depuis le même jour à rencontrer madame de B... Elle me répondit froidement que cette dame sortait peu. (244)

With the count's new conviction regarding Mme de B... 's innocence comes an update regarding his initiation into Parisian society: "[à] mesure que mes connaissances s'étaient étendues à Paris, j'avais formé des plans de vie heureuse sur chaque découverte" (245).

The count's reflection on the stages of his initiation into different parts of Parisian society points to the beginning of a new narrative unit, which begins as the count's infatuation with Mme de B... begins to put pressure on his commitment to his principles.

The third phase of the count's changing ideas about Mme de B... occurs when he begins to combine the duplicity of the first major unit with the desire to remain true to his principles. After serious reflections, an incident with Mme de B... 's alleged lover, the clerk, confirms Mme de B... 's fidelity, and therefore worthiness of the count's love, although off-limits; this information comes out during a visit during which the count gains unlimited access to her house (244-48). The count makes impressive strides in duplicity when he begins to be completely obsessed by his desire to find proof of his conviction, to the point of losing sleep: "je résolu, pour m'en délivrer, de satisfaire à toutes sortes de prix, une curiosité dont je ne pouvais craindre aucun reproche," and he comes up with the ruse of having his *maréchal des logis* do some reconnaissance as a way of figuring out how to gain access to Mme de B... 's household, although he ends up tricking Mme de B... 's secretary into joining his regiment, which ends up being a much more effective strategy (245). And although he is initially upset, the count soon takes

another point of view: “lorsque je fus revenu de cette chaleur, je considérai l’aventure du clerc d’un œil fort différent. Je voulais être instruit. Je ne pouvais pas l’être par une meilleure voie” (246). The count further mentions that during his visit to Mme de B..., “[m]a physionomie me rendit un bon office” by convincing M. de B... of his good intentions (248). The count is happy to allow M. de B... to be an unwitting advocate in favor of his passion: “C’était ma cause que cet honnête malade plaidait avec cette chaleur. Je le secondai, en promettant à madame de B... que ma conduite justifierait les bontés de son mari et les siennes” (248). The count seems to insist too much on his lack of participation in the impressment of Mme de B...’s secretary: “Je lui répondis avec vérité que j’aurais cru lui devoir moi-même des excuses, si j’avais eu la moindre part à l’aventure qui paraissait la chagriner” (247). The count continues not to know why he’s interested in Mme de B..., because he lacks self-understanding: “que pouvait-elle y lire, lorsque j’étais encore si éloigné d’y rien connaître moi-même?” (247). Mme de B... herself is able to lift the count’s understanding, but only partially.

The count’s visit to Mme de B... gives him only partial insight into his feelings toward her: “Une joie délicieuse que je rapportai de cette visite me fit assez connaître que madame de B... m’était chère,” but “dans mes principes, il me paraissait si impossible que je pusse jamais prendre d’autres sentiments que ceux de l’estime et de l’amitié pour une femme engagée dans le mariage, que je ne pensai pas même à me défendre contre la faiblesse de mon cœur” (248). The count speaks of two realizations that come from his visit to Mme de B...: his relief regarding her innocence, and his happiness at being able to visit again “J’aurais acheté bien cher les deux avantages que je venais d’obtenir” (248).



(Note the financial metaphor.) The first furthers the emotional self-discovery plot structure and the second contributes to the burgeoning romantic plot. He wants to reveal Mme de B...’s innocence to the world, but he has learned from his attempt to do so for the financier: while this discovery inspires him to “détromper l’intendante et tous ceux qui étaient dans les mêmes préventions,” he remembers that “la même entreprise m’avait mal réussi pour le financier, parent du marquis de ..., et je ne voulus rien donner au hasard” (248). The first volume ends here, as the count resolves to make sparing use of his invitation to visit Mme de B...’s house in order to preserve her reputation from new attacks. This is an important point in the count’s evolution as a character, yet it is not as important in the context of the dialectical movement of the count’s personal evolution as it is in the romantic plot. While the count has reached a major breakthrough in his relationship with Mme de B..., namely realizing that she is “dear” to him, and gaining access to the intimate space of her home, the end of the first episode of the second subunit of the second major narrative unit is not as important of a transitional point in the count’s evolution as a character. In a fully-developed dialectical narrative structure, this point would be the synthesis of the thesis of the antithesis of the antithesis, which would represent progress through 48% of the novel’s narrative structure: nearly half, but not quite, which is not exactly an important moment in the progress of the count’s narrative. Here we see a phenomenon that goes beyond the cliffhanger, which operates within a frame of reference entirely based on narrative sequence, and relegates character development to a secondary role in the structuring of the narrative. By comparing the progress thus far in the dispositive structure to progress in the narrative structure, we

become aware of a dilating effect: nearly half of the novel's narrative structure is complete, but assuming an eventual four-volume novel, this point is significantly more than a quarter of the narrative structure. And rather than attribute this discrepancy to a need to delay resolution to maximize profitability—though that does play a role, surely—it is more interesting to see how Prévost adds detail and complexity to each additional phase of the dialectic process as it progresses.

The second episode expresses the antithesis of this subunit, which is that there might be ways to find a compromise between a completely rigid idea of “honnêteté” and complete relativism; this by means of two examples: the *demoiselles d'opéra* and Mme de B..., though it starts to become clear that such is not the case. The first possibility is that presented by the *demoiselles d'opéra* at the third *petite maison* party. The count has low expectations for this gathering, since he thinks that the previous two had exhausted the social possibilities: “Des filles, et d'honnêtes femmes: tous les caractères du beau sexe ne se rapportent-ils pas à ces deux ordres? Je ne me serais jamais imaginé la possibilité d'un troisième” (249). These women, neither prostitutes nor respectably married, surprise the count by avoiding the excessive liberty of the former without falling into the excessive reserve of the latter, as shown by their moderate reaction to the licentious sculptures that adorn the grounds of the *petite maison* where the gathering is held: “Pour moi, qui me souvenais des sales discours que j'avais entendus dans le même lieu au premier souper, et de la morale austère du second, j'admire cet honnête tempérament dans nos quatre nymphes” (251). It is significant, though, that even among

these women, whose mixture of respectability and debauchery so appeals to the count, one is more appealing to him than the others:

C'était le point que j'avais cru impossible, entre l'honnêteté et la débauche. J'admirais une femme, qui, sans connaître la vertu, en retenait une certaine image, et m'y paraissait même attachée jusqu'au scrupule.  
(256)

He values her single-minded attachment to the *idea* of virtue, perhaps more than he would have valued a similar level of devotion to actual virtue in another woman.

Similarly, the count will eventually come to value his own *idea* of *honnêteté* over any practical application of such an idea or any social reality that could serve as its basis.

While the count recognizes that keeping a mistress provides a moderate pleasure that can be harmonized with all societal obligations, except religious ones, it is not the only such pleasure, as he discovers when he begins to experience the pleasurable torture of being in love with a married woman, when that woman's husband sanctions this love and as long as it remains chaste. This pleasure thus offers a different compromise between respectability and debauchery, one that the count finds even more appealing than that of keeping a mistress, perhaps precisely because it is ultimately irreconcilable with societal norms beyond the artificially isolated, intimate, limited microcosm of society of the platonic *ménage à trois* into which the count enters at M. de B... 's invitation, and into which Mme de B... enters somewhat reluctantly, to please her husband (259). In the intimate space of Mme de B... 's home, Mme de B... 's fidelity to her husband allows the count to indulge in an illicit passion without violating his cherished principles of *honnêteté*:

Dirai-je qu'ils me devinrent funestes par une trompeuse illusion ? Je ne dois jamais nommer l'amour sans frémir, parce qu'il m'a précipité dans les plus cruelles infortunes ; mais il m'a fait connaître aussi le bonheur par des impressions si charmantes, que j'ai peine à lui donner des noms trop durs, et que je ne prononcerai jamais le sien sans respect. (260).

By renouncing the “[p]laisir funeste” of Mme de B...’s company, the count is less returning to the other option of hybrid pleasure that preserves *honnêteté*, that of keeping a mistress, than he is preserving his preferred pleasure in its ideal form by removing himself from any real contact with it. The count’s reflection on the imperceptibility of emotional change points to this inward turn as a transitional moment in the structure of the narrative.

Je n’étais pas arrivé à l’extrémité du mal, sans avoir ouvert mille fois les yeux sur l’état de mes sentiments. Mais défendu, comme je croyais l’être, par des principes dont la nécessité ne m’était pas moins présente, je me reposais sur eux de la conduite de mon cœur, et je ne voyais aucun risque à suivre le plus doux de tous les penchants avec des vues innocentes. (260)

We see this movement in the synthesis of this episode, in which the count abandons his project of social observation when he decides to forget his troubles through social dissipation:

Loin d’y porter l’esprit d’observation, je savais par d’autres expériences que ces grandes assemblées, où personne n’est dans son naturel, n’offrent rien qui puissent attacher l’esprit ni le cœur ; mais c’était cette raison même qui m’y conduisait. (261)

We also see this when the count rejects the possibility of a partial remedy to his amorous pains by means of an affair with Mlle XIII (261-64). Parallels between this moment in the novel and earlier stages of the narrative structure show that the end of this subunit, which is approaching, is going to be an important transition. A similar misunderstanding arises from the count’s interactions with Mlle XIII as did from those with Mlle de St. V...:

Je me gardais bien aussi de lui rendre ses agaceries, parce que je craignais d'engager le jeu trop loin. Cependant je ne pus me dispenser de les payer quelquefois d'un sourire ; et c'était trop encore, puisqu'on prit cette réponse dans un autre sens que le mien." (263)

The similarities between Mlle de St. V... and Mlle XIII show why even the harmony of respectability and debauchery embodied by the *demoiselles d'opéra* is not enough to satisfy the count's search for pleasure that is in harmony with *honnêteté*. This time, however, the count is more aware of how others can misinterpret him, and yet this increased understanding does not inspire him to change his behavior to accommodate others, rather the opposite, as we see when the count realizes that the marquis takes the count's impassiveness in response to an invitation to another dinner party, where he intends to set his friend up with Mlle XIII, as consent (262). Instead of clarifying his feelings for the marquis, the count holds himself to the strictest possible interpretation of *honnêteté*, according to which he is not obligated to correct the marquis' error because he should have understood. The marquis disappears before the count has a chance to make his true preferences known, had he wanted to, but he then decides to treat the dinner as a distraction from his romantic difficulties with Mme de B... (262). Each time the count insists that he saw Mlle XIII's amorous attentions during the dinner as pure "badinage," it becomes more difficult to believe that he truly fails to take them seriously at all. The count doubles down on his commitment to a strict interpretation of *honnêteté* when he writes to Mlle XIII to refuse her invitation to a romantic tryst: by sharing the letter with the marquis rather than simply sending it to Mlle XIII the count shows that his desire to be seen as *honnête* exceeds any desire to be *honnête*, whether that desire is sincere or not (263-64).

The third episode expresses the synthesis of this subunit, which is that while it is impossible to create true harmony between the rigid “honnêteté” that the count would like to espouse and his love for Mme de B..., it may be possible to compartmentalize these two parts of the count’s inner life, at least temporarily. This process begins with the count’s attempt to play the role of a superficial socialite as a remedy to his inappropriate passion for Mme de B..., after which he limits himself to the “société du vrai mérite” when superficial distraction proves insufficient, although the benefit of interaction with more serious people proves limited as well (262-66). And here it becomes clear that the count’s response to his inability to deal with his love for Mme de B... mirrors the pattern of his introduction to Parisian society: pursuit by a woman whom he is forced to reject by means of a letter to obey his principles of honor and equity, an attempt to join a superficial social circle, rejection of the superficial circle in favor of more a serious one, although this time through the satisfaction of being part of a group of likeminded serious individuals does not satisfy the count. The count’s reaction to the ineffectiveness of both frivolous and more serious social interaction as remedies to his melancholy is to return once again to Mme de B...’s house, but only after receiving a letter from M. de B... including a very brief comment from Mme de B... herself. Once he arrives, he receives M. de B...’s tacit permission to court his wife (266-69). He notices M. de B...’s pleasure at seeing him, which he takes as proof of his affection, and he even notices that Mme de B...’s apparent happiness has an inverse relationship to his own satisfaction at being in her company (268). The count’s perceptiveness with regard to others’ emotions seems to be increasing in proportion to his stubbornness, which explains his ultimate failure to

understand what was truly going on in Mme de B...’s heart. The count waits for others to understand him, and if they fail to do so he still acts as if they have, because according to his ideas about *honnêteté* they should have been able to.

The story of the count’s charity toward M. Y.D.Y. synthesizes the points of the third episode by showing the interaction between the count’s rigid ideas about *honnêteté*, which are simultaneously praiseworthy and blameworthy, and his love for Mme de B..., which is simultaneously licit and illicit (268-70). The count’s reaction to the effusive gratitude of M. Y.D.Y. reveals the count’s belief that merit only accrues to those who perform meritorious actions that are not part of their duty: “Vous m’en ôtez même le mérite [du bienfait], en me faisant si bien connaître que ce que j’ai fait pour un homme tel que vous, était un devoir” (270). The count’s evolving sensibilities are further evident in his deliberation regarding whether he should try to influence Mme de B...’s opinion of him:

L’amour a cet effet sur les âmes généreuses. Il leur fait chercher à plaire par l’exercice de toutes leurs vertus. Je n’aurais pas été capable d’informer madame de B..., comme au hasard, de ce qui était propre à me relever dans son esprit ; mais je ne pouvais me défendre d’une vive joie, lorsque le témoignage d’autrui, ou des aveux qui m’étaient arrachés par l’occasion, me semblaient faire cette impression sur elle. (270)

Here we can see how the count’s commitment to *honnêteté* inhibits his ability to communicate openly and effectively with others. Because of this commitment, he is unable to tell Mme de B... about his charity unless “forced” to, because doing so would enhance her opinion of him. However, his love for Mme de B... is at least partially responsible for his charitable action, since it is also presumably inspired by his *honnêteté*, while at the same time that very same *honnêteté* makes it inappropriate for him to tell her

about his charity. Yet, if the count wants to earn Mme de B...’s love with his virtues, he has to tell her about it, but those very virtues dictate that he remain silent. A more flexible understanding of *honnêteté* might have allowed more open communication between the count and Mme de B..., and that would have enabled a more honest mutual appreciation of each other’s values that would have served the count’s passion more effectively, if that passion were genuinely concerned with its putative object, rather than being a manifestation of the count’s own obsession with his own commitment to *honnêteté*.

Rather than indicating a failure on Prévost’s part in maintaining the structural protocol of societal critique proceeding in an orderly fashion one category at a time, the mismatch between the count’s increasing sophistication regarding Parisian society and his prolonged blindness to the true nature of his feelings for Mme de B... should be taken as a sign of similarity to modern novels. Prévost simultaneously creates the conditions for a satisfying conclusion to the count’s development thus far, namely the crisis of his marriage to Mlle de St. V..., and begins the process of reorienting the novel toward the exploration of the count’s developing psyche. The count reflects on the continued evolution of his emotional outlook: “Mes sentiments devaient être bien soumis à ma raison, puisqu’en cessant de la regarder, je ne me sentais point embarrassé à tourner les yeux vers l’autel, pour y adresser mes vœux en sa faveur” (265). He also has a new appreciation of different milieux.<sup>118</sup> Paradoxically, the count talks about how visiting the

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<sup>118</sup> This new appreciation is evident in the following reflection: “Je m’imagine que c’est d’après un si beau modèle qu’on regarde Paris comme la ville du monde la plus polie et la plus éclairée. Tous les jours je découvrais quelque nouvelle maison, où la société me paraissait établie sur les mêmes principes. Je ne faisais pas toutes ces découvertes par mes yeux ; car, avec la multitude de connaissances que j’avais déjà, je ne cherchais pas à les augmenter ; mais je réglais mon estime pour les nouvelles sociétés dont j’apprenais



B... household in response to M. de B...’s invitation (after figuring out that the count is not in fact sick) would not help him recover from his infatuation with Mme de B... because his “principes” were still the same, but after M. de B... reveals that he approves of the count’s feelings for his wife, the count points to those same principles as his guarantors: “vous pouvez vous reposer sur mon honneur et sur la sainteté de mes principes” (267). This paradox shows the limits of the count’s evolving insight into his own mind. The paradox is only deepened by M. de B...’s favorable attitude toward the count’s love for his wife. The count asks for guidance regarding how to behave, but M. de B... acts as if he himself is the one who needs help, implying that the count will know what to do: “dites-moi donc quelle contenance je vais avoir devant vous, lorsqu’étant aussi souvent ici que je me le propose et que vous avez la bonté de le désirer, j’aurai tout à la fois à soutenir les regards de madame de B... et les vôtres” (267). Here M. de B... appears as a bizarre foil to the count’s father.

*Incomplete Synthesis: Only Inner Truth is Valid, Willful Ignorance of Potential Correspondence or Divorce Between Appearance and Reality is Necessary*

The transition into what is both the end of the second major unit and the beginning of a potential third major unit begins as the second volume nears its end. This takes place by means of long-term and short-term foreshadowing and by means of parallels with earlier narrative units: between the count’s charitable impulses toward Fanon and those toward M. Y.D.Y., between the letter from Mlle de St. V... and her

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les noms, sur celle des honnêtes gens que je fréquentais ; et je ne craignais pas d’être trompé sur le mérite d’autrui par le témoignage de ceux que j’estimais aux mêmes titres. Ainsi, malgré la corruption qui règne en public, je m’accoutumai à distinguer dans tous les ordres de Paris une infinité de maisons d’élite, qui font le véritable ornement de cette grande ville.” (265)

brother's arrival in Paris, between the father's letters and his arrival. Each of these parallels is an opportunity for the count to comment on his personal growth, and for the reader to evaluate that growth. Although the previous subunit begins to prepare the way for this transition, it truly begins in earnest with the third subunit, which expresses the synthetic moment of the antithetical phase of the novel's main dialectical process, namely that because of the incompatibility of the count's ideals of honor and the reality of his passions as they intersect with society neither goal succeeds: the count eventually finds himself forced to give up his commitment to absolute equity, and even so his passion remains unrequited. The first episode of this subunit expresses its thesis, which is the reassertion of the count's commitment to severe equity in his dealings with Mlle de St. V... and his perfect passion for Mme de B..., even in the face of all the reasons to relinquish both. This is also a point of articulation in the novel's narrative structure, as indicated by a narrative relay that comes with the count's retelling of his story to St. V... when the latter comes to Paris to demand satisfaction for his sister's dishonor: "je lui racontai naturellement l'aventure de mon père et la mienne" (271). The count makes an interesting reflection after the duel that sheds light on the intermediate status of the novel's first two volumes by recalling the idea from the preface that innocence or guilt in the eyes of the world is irrelevant because inner truth trumps objective reality:

Innocent ou coupable, à quelle horrible catastrophe me voyais-je arrivé, sans en avoir eu le moindre pressentiment ? Ma destinée voulait-elle s'annoncer tout d'un coup ? J'avais douté plusieurs fois si j'étais fait pour une vie heureuse. Ma passion pour madame de B... m'avait déjà causé de mortels tourments ; et, dans le changement même qui venait de se faire en ma faveur, j'avais assez prévu qu'il fallait m'attendre à des peines bien plus vives que mes plaisirs. La seule nature de cet attachement n'en était-elle pas une, dont toute la force de mes sentiments ne m'empêchait pas de

gémir ? J'aimais une femme mariée ! Eh ! pourquoi cet injuste amour, qui ne pouvait être satisfait que par l'usurpation du bien d'autrui ? D'ailleurs, mon caractère, que je reconnaissais, de jour en jour, si différent du commun des hommes, me promettait-il beaucoup de bonheur dans leur société ? (272)

The count relishes his misfortune because it proves his *honnêteté*, and he already sees himself as famous for his uncompromising commitment to that value, whether he is guilty or not of actions taken to preserve the integrity of his internal code: “Etais-je donc choisi par le ciel pour grossir le nombre funeste des célèbres malheureux, et pour étonner quelque jour l'univers par mes infortunes ou par mes crimes ?” (272). Here we see the importance of prolepsis as an indicator of narrative structural articulation.

The counterpoint to the return of the count's original problem (how to disengage from Mlle de St. V...) is a restatement of his new one (how to engage with Mme de B...), which happens after his duel with St. V... when the count asks M. de La... to come to his house, and rather than discuss the imminent threat to his life and liberty, he chooses to talk about Mme de B...:

[P]endant de vue non seulement mes blessures, mais le sujet même qui m'avait porté à le faire éveiller, je m'attachai tout à la fois à justifier l'innocence de madame de B... contre les fausses impressions qui s'étaient répandues, et la vive passion que j'avais pour elle, et le mystère que j'en avais fait au meilleur de mes amis. (273)

Has the count's personality, in fact, changed at all as a result of his initiation into Parisian society? The stress of a life-and death situation reveals his true priorities. Perhaps the change comes with the count's first experience of love: “J'ai du gout pour mille femmes aimables; et madame de B... m'a fait connaître l'amour” (273). We might wonder if Mlle de St. V... once numbered among these “mille femmes aimables.” The resolution of the

opposition between these two problems comes when M. de La... takes the count's place when the police come to arrest him for dueling (274).

The question of comparison between reality and appearance comes up again when St. V... expresses disbelief at the reports regarding the count's behavior toward his sister: "il avait été fort étonné d'apprendre ce qui s'était passé dans son absence ; en un mot, qu'il ne m'avait pas reconnu au détail qu'on lui avait fait de mes procédés, et qu'il venait me demander des éclaircissements à moi-même" (271). This theme also appears in the contrast between the count's respect for St. V... and his disapproval of his enemy's decision to hide from justice in an abbey: "dans mes principes il y avait un abus odieux de la religion à nourrir des idées de sang et de meurtre dans le sein de la paix et de la charité, en les couvrant du voile d'une retraite spirituelle" (275). And when Mme de B... 's opinion is involved, the count has difficulty accessing his previously unwavering moral compass, and he displays a calculating mindset: "J'examinais donc si je devais attendre qu'ils fussent informés de mon aventure par la renommée, ou les en instruire moi-même" (277). The count's reflection on his increasing self-knowledge and equal insistence on positive and negative possible outcomes suggest that Prévost had not completely ruled out the possibility of a continuation.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> The count's reflection is as follows: "D'ailleurs, mon caractère, que je reconnaissais, de jour en jour, si différent du commun des hommes, me promettait-il beaucoup de bonheur dans leur société ? Quelle apparence de pouvoir trouver de la satisfaction dans les mêmes choses, quand on ne se ressemble point par les idées et par les goûts ? Je n'avais donc jamais fait beaucoup de fond sur les avantages de la fortune et de la jeunesse, pour me rendre la vie aussi douce que mes inclinations naturelles me la faisaient désirer ; ou si je parvenais à me faire une situation qui répondît jamais à mes désirs et à mes vues, je prévoyais combien j'aurais d'orages à redouter, dans cette société d'hommes où je trouverais toujours moins de partisans que de censeurs." (272)

The third episode is incomplete: it expresses two thirds of the antithesis of the synthesis of the novel's main dialectical process, which is that while in reality the count must give up both his ideals and his passion, in his mind he must preserve them both. The thesis of the episode is the beginning of a disconnection between the practical reality of the count's ideals and passion and his inner mental representation of them, as initiated from the inside by the count himself, during which process he reaches a temporary equilibrium as both the count's antagonists, St. V... and Mlle de St. V..., and his main ally, M. de B..., offer him their assistance (275-76). St. V... offers to let the count join him in a monastery where he has taken refuge from the authorities while recovering from their duel, an offer the count refuses. Mlle de St. V... offers to put him up in her brother's lodgings, but the count assumes that she makes the offer mainly as a means of discovering whether the count is at home by means of her messenger's report (276). We can see the contradiction between different aspects of the count's personality in the contrast between the different attitudes the count adopts toward the Mlle de St. V... and Mme de B... in the wake of his duel. The count simultaneously distrusts Mlle de St. V... and takes note of his servants' report of the tears she sheds when they inform her that the count is not in, but fails to feel any true compassion for this woman, because according to his strict interpretation of *honnêteté*, he owes her nothing:

Enfin ne pouvant obtenir d'autre explication, elle prit le parti de se retirer, en versant quelques larmes qui furent aperçues de mes gens. Leur récit me causa une surprise extrême. Mais je n'entrepris point d'approfondir un incident qui devait me toucher peu, et qui me paraissait fort obscur. (276)

M. de B... also offers the count his assistance, but the count's scruples force him to reject the tempting offer of sanctuary in M. de B...'s house, just as he had rejected Mlle XIII's

amorous advances earlier: “j’examinais intérieurement ce que je devais à l’honneur de mon ami, et je me persuadai que dans cette occasion l’amour et l’amitié devaient connaître les mêmes scrupules” (278). The count’s commitment to *honnêteté* begins to appear suspicious when we contrast his cold, calculating reaction to his enemies’ offers of assistance, which are not attractive to him in the first place, with his bending over backward to go out of his way to avoid accepting M. de B...’s offer, which he is actually tempted to accept. Given this comparison, *honnêteté* seems to be an excuse for the count to do what he needs to do to preserve his good opinion of himself, rather than a principle that dictates his behavior.

When the count leaves Mme de B...’s house to seek refuge from the authorities at his regimental headquarters in Sedan following a duel, the narrator alludes to the future anguish that will come from their love. Tremewan suggests that even though “[t]he reader experiences a sense of finality at the close of book two[, ...] that finality could well mark the end of the count’s happiness and not the end of the book,” meaning that the previous foreshadowing could have been the outline of a well-constructed plot: “The tragic adventures that are to fill fifteen years of the count’s life would then have followed and made up the bulk of the novel” (“Chronology” 46). However, it is also true that the narrator lays the groundwork for a potentially infinite plot based on a fundamental stasis that underlies the plot: “A quelque sort que le ciel me destinât, quelque révolution qui put arriver dans ma fortune, j’étais a madame de B..., et je ne pouvais être qu’a elle” (279). This statement, presented as an inalterable truth is both a basic trait of the count’s personality and a limiting parameter of the text’s narrative structure.

The antithesis of the episode is the influence of external forces on the disconnection between the count's inner life and his outer life, ending with a complete separation between the two when the count agrees to marry Mlle de St. V... on his deathbed. The separation begins with attempts to counter the count's resolve (279-81). During his journey from Paris to Sedan, the count is unperturbed by Mlle de St. V...'s lackey following him, presumably because he is resolved not to marry her, and when she sends priests to convince him to marry her, he holds firm: "l'espérance d'une meilleure vie à laquelle je touche de si près doit me confirmer dans mes principes" (281). Compare the use of the word "principes" here with other places in text, as when the count invoked his principles when he was building the foundation of his platonic relationship with Mme de B.... M. de La... arrives to confirm the count's resolve, but his presence is not enough to maintain the count's commitment to his own passion in the face of his weakened physical state (281-82). The count's father manages to convince him that "il manquait néanmoins à mes préparations, non un devoir, puisque la religion et l'honneur dont je connaissais si bien la voix, ne me faisaient rien entendre, mais une surabondance de vertu, une action digne de la noblesse et de la bonté de mon caractère" (282). The count's inflexible commitment to *honnêteté* leaves him vulnerable when in a weakened state, which is how he ends up agreeing to marry Mlle de St. V...: "Un sentiment de bonté naturelle, aussi pressant que l'exhortation de mon père, prit enfin l'ascendant sur toutes mes résolutions" (282). While the dramatic ending of the novel's first (and only) installment can be seen to obviate the need for a continuation, Tremewan has shown that it is possible to see how Prévost could have intended to continue the novel in a way that

would have fulfilled the conditions set out by the introduction (“Chronology”). And yet, Tremewan’s analysis of the novel’s potential for continuation fails to take into account the dynamic relationship between the count’s evolving personality, the articulation of the novel’s narrative structure, the novel’s plot (taken separately from its narrative structure), and the dispositive structure of the novel (“Chronology”). The first installment comes to a dramatic end, which provides the reader sufficient satisfaction to feel good about finishing this part of the novel, but the feeling of conclusion that the count’s “tragic” wedding affords is disconnected from the novel’s underlying narrative structure, which is based on the count’s evolution as a character. In fact, the count’s acquiescence to his father’s pressure to marry Mlle de St. V... is quite out of character for him, and only serves to highlight the bizarre effects that living in Paris has had on his character.

### Mauvillon’s Narrative Structure: Plot as Linear Descent

The new structure created by Mauvillon’s modifications and additions makes the novel’s interrogation of the concept of an “honnête homme” more evident, and links it more explicitly to financial matters and class standing, including the martial metaphor for social interaction. How do Mauvillon’s insertions into Prévost’s text alter the narrative structure that Prévost was setting up? How do the two volumes entirely written by Mauvillon interface with Prévost’s text, as modified by Mauvillon? In Mauvillon’s version of the novel, the first major narrative unit is a journey toward self-agency built around the *reactive* goal of *avoiding* Mlle de St. V..., while the second is one of increasing agency built around the *proactive* goal of *pursuing* Mme de B..., and the third is one in which the count’s agency begins to wane built around the proactive but



*unsuccessful* goal of pursuing Lizon. Another useful way to understand the structure of Mauvillon's version is to see it as a progression of multi-part interactions between the count and the various women he encounters, with the contrast between parts serving to convey the novel's overall argument, each relationship serving as part of a structure leading to his gradual retirement from public life. While Prévost's structure is based on the count's evolving attitude toward the relationship between reality, perception, and appearance, and is therefore punctuated by lessons and tests, Mauvillon's structure is based on the count's evolving attitude toward true value and exchange value, and is punctuated by changes in relationships to those around him. There are seven women with whom the count has significant personal relationships: Mlle de St. V..., the woman over whom he comes into conflict with his father; Mme and Mlle de Milvois, a mother-daughter duo of "aventurières;" Fanchon, a prostitute whom he tries to save from the clutches of infamy; Mlle Ursule, a young woman who falls on hard times due to the advances of her mistress's husband; Lizon, the granddaughter of the parish priest of the village he inherits from uncle, with whom he later falls in love, but who marries his best friend; and, finally, Mlle de Ch..., daughter of Lizon's benefactors, the count and countess of Ch..., whom the count marries instead of Lizon, but who eventually dies of a fever after betraying him.

*Successful Reactive Phase: Gaining Independence by Avoiding Mlle de St. V...*

The count's interaction with Mlle de St. V... is related in two parts: the first results in his marriage to her under duress, while the second sees her return from the West Indies as the wife of a wealthy merchant, though she is ultimately forced to accept

the count's generosity to save herself from poverty after her husband commits suicide in reaction to learning that he is ruined. The first part of the count's interaction with Mme de B... recounts his infatuation, while his brief marriage to Mlle de St. V... divides that part from the second part, in which he marries her but falls in love with her lady-in-waiting, who happens to be Lizon, the daughter of the priest from the count's estate in R.... Lizon's interaction with the count also comes in two parts: in the first, she serves as the (perhaps inevitable) distraction that spoils the count's perfect love for Mme de B..., and in the second, she reappears as a noblewoman and tells the story of how her social status changed. The last important woman in the story is Mlle de Ch., whom the count marries after the death of Mme de B..., but her story is uninterrupted because it leads to the end of the novel, which concludes shortly after her death, and it seems that only death can bring these women's stories to a definitive conclusion without a reappearance.

The first major narrative unit as modified by Mauvillon focuses on the count's conflict with Mlle de St. V... and his father. This portion of the text participates in the count's development by showing his reactions to others, which is a preliminary stage before he identifies his own personal, active priorities. In the first subunit, which consists of an addition by Mauvillon in which the count's inspects his inherited land before traveling on to Paris, the count's personal development is fueled by the contrast between two women the count must avoid becoming romantically entangled with: Mlle de St. V..., a young woman of known noble origins, and Mme and Mlle de Milvois, a pair of "aventurières" of doubtful nobility. An interpolated narrative told by the parish priest of the count's new holdings juxtaposes the count's situation in relation to his father and

Mlle de St. V... with the priest of R...’s relationship with his wife (née Mlle Saugeon) and father prior to becoming a priest. His granddaughter turns out to be Lizon, who becomes Mme de B...’s rival after the count marries Mme de B... in the second installment. What is a rapid introduction in Prévost’s original adopts an esthetic of interruption and delay in Mauvillon’s version. Prévost’s count notes that after his uncle’s inheritance made him financially independent, the only obstacle to his father’s marriage was his departure for Paris (212). The timeline from the count’s departure for Paris to his learning about his father’s intended marriage is portrayed very briefly in Prévost’s version:

J’étais si éloigné néanmoins de prévoir ce mariage, que peu de temps avant mon départ, je lui avais marqué de l’inclination pour la personne dont il pensait à faire ma belle-mère. Il avait même approuvé mes sentiments ; mais c’était un simple goût de jeunesse que l’idée de mon voyage avait fort affaibli, et qui se dissipa sans violence, lorsque j’approchai de Paris. J’appris la résolution de mon père avec moins de peine que d’étonnement.

Paris n’était point un séjour nouveau pour moi. (212)

Prévost’s version of the text makes it seem like there is almost no time between the count’s inheritance and his departure for Paris, which implies that any residual feelings he may have had for the woman who then becomes engaged to his father must have faded very quickly. Mauvillon depicts money as a source of obligations to fulfill when he has his count stop off by the lands he has just inherited before making his way to Paris: “je serois parti dès l’instant même, si je n’avois été retenu pendant un espace assez considérable de tems par les arrangemens qu’il me falut prendre par rapport à la succession de mon oncle” (1: 8-9). The dilation of this increased time between when the count learns of his father’s intentions regarding the woman in question and the time when

he arrives in Paris changes the meaning of the dissipation of the count's feelings for her by the time he arrives in Paris, since every additional amount of time he spends outside Paris effectively extends the duration of those feelings. Thus, in this version, there may be more animosity or resentment between the count and his father, or at least a greater emphasis on those negative feelings.

By having the count travel to Paris by way of his new holdings rather than directly, Mauvillon considerably increases the stated amount of time that it takes for him to make his way to Paris. All told, it takes him several months to dismiss unsatisfactory rent collectors, and to repair the château and its grounds: "tout cela me retint une partie de l'été & toute l'automne" (1: 9). However, Mauvillon also increases the subjective amount of reading time represented by this period by inserting the life story of the local parish priest (1: 13-35). The count is touched by the misfortunes of "un si honnête homme," and alerts the reader, rather heavy-handedly, to the importance of these events for the rest of his story: "[E]lle revint passer quelques jours chez son grand'pere, qu'elle quitta pour aller au couvent, où nous la laisserons jusqu'à ce qu'elle reparoisse sur la scène pour occuper une place plus brillante, dans ces mémoires," and regarding the priest, "l'on verra dans la suite de ces mémoires jusqu'où j'ai poussé l'exactitude à lui tenir la parole que je lui avois donné d'avoir soin de sa petite fille" (1: 21, 22). We can compare the idea of exactitude as it is presented at the beginning and end of the narrative. The priest's granddaughter is the first of four female models introduced by Mauvillon into the narrative structure that Prévost had begun to build—the others being Mme and Mlle de Milvois and Mlle Ursule—and it forms a framework that bookends the text. While in

Prévost's version Fanchon's role had been that of an example of the count's philanthropic tendencies and a counterexample to the opposition between Mlle de St. V... and Mme de B..., in Mauvillon's version, the count's interaction with Fanchon and her procuress, Mme Birat, becomes a pendant to his interaction with Mme and Mlle de Milvois. In Prévost's version, we see an opposition between Mme de B... and Mlle de St. V... on the level of the love intrigue, and Fanchon serves as an example of the count's philanthropic tendencies in addition to his charity toward M. Y.D.Y., the former being ineffective and the latter effective. In Mauvillon's version, Fanchon's story is amplified, and the count's philanthropic tendencies are brought more into the same realm of personality as his philanthropy, as his pseudo-love-affair with Mlle de Milvois shows, with the addition of his philanthropy toward Mlle de St. V....

Mauvillon's insertion of the priest's story and the Milvois episode turns the narrative structure of Prévost's text inside-out. In Mauvillon's version, the repeated cycle of innocence, instruction, application, and disillusionment is transformed, with the instruction coming before the count's innocence is exposed from the very beginning, whereas in Prévost's version the count only has the opportunity to benefit from portrait prior to evaluation of individuals *after* he has already had to attempt that evaluation on his own. This begins with the addition of the count's visit to his estate in R... before making his way to Paris. During this episode the principal substantive interaction that he reports is his relationship with the local priest, who delivers the following lesson after they become friends:

Mon cher Seigneur, me disoit-il un jour, la nature vous a donné un cœur droit, & une âme susceptible des plus beaux sentimens. Vous, allez entrer

dans le monde : prenez garde que le mauvais exemple ne corrompe de si belles dispositions à la vertu. La plupart des hommes n'ont de l'amitié que pour eux-mêmes, & à voir leur manière d'agir à l'égard des autres, on dirait qu'ils se croient seuls dignes d'exister, & qu'ils veulent détruire leur espèce à leur individu près. Soyez généreux, compatissant, équitable, si vous voulez jouir de cette satisfaction pure & tranquille que la vertu seule peut faire goûter. J'ai vécu dans le monde, ajouta-t-il ; je n'y ai vu qu'injustices, que dureté de cœur : je m'en suis dégoûté, & je l'ai quitté avec plus d'indifférence que si je l'avois moins connu. Vous feriez étonné si je vous faisois le récit des principales circonstances de ma vie ; c'est un tissu de noirceur & de méchancetés de la part de personnes de qui j'en devois le moins attendre à mon égard. (1: 10-11)

The priest's warning shapes the reader's expectations for the structure of the narrative to come. First, it lays out a positive standard of conduct against which to judge the count's behavior once he enters the world of Parisian high society. Will he be able to and by outlining the basic profile of the life of an "honnête homme," as the count calls the priest after hearing his story in more detail. The priest's story also provides a model of a "worldly story" against which the count's narrative can be measured as it progresses. The priest's life follows a trajectory of constraint followed by dissipation, which is transformed into seriousness when the inevitable corruption of the world brings the priest back into touch with his innate "honnêteté."

There are certain similarities between the priest's story and the count's story that are worth outlining. Like the count, the priest exhibited a certain duality of character to the count's as described by his tutor. He is impressionable, and finds himself engaged on the path toward the ecclesiastical life due to the influence of his tutor, but when the tutor leaves, in the absence of his influence the young man begins to lead a dissolute life and given his father's initial opposition his ecclesiastical path he expects him to approve his decision to leave the minor orders. However, the young man is surprised to find that his

father is upset, perhaps due to the influence of the young man's greedy sisters, who had been happy to see their brother on a path that would deliver them his share of the inheritance (1: 13-21). Unlike the count, the young future priest's conflict with his father comes from the son's desire to marry a woman he loves, rather than a desire to avoid marrying a woman he wishes to avoid, and, moreover, the son finds himself free when his father dies. This situation resembles one in which the count later finds himself when he wishes to pursue Mme de B... and his father's opposition is cut short by his death shortly before he is imprisoned by forces opposing his love.<sup>120</sup> Like the count, too, the future priest sees his good intentions thwarted by the imperfections of others, though these imperfections are foreseeable human behaviors: notably, the inheritance his daughter should receive from her maternal grandparents, transmitted to them by the priest when he reenters the ecclesiastical life after his wife's death, is squandered before she can receive it, which leads her into an unhappy marriage. The priest then finds himself solely responsible for his granddaughter when her mother leaves her husband, who then dies of shame, but because of his old age and infirmity the count takes on this responsibility for him. While the death of the count's son is another difference between the count's trajectory and the priest's, the count's assumption of responsibility for the priest's granddaughter, Lizon, turns his story into the continuation of the priest's story, which does not remain an isolated narrative. The priest's story serves as a warning against trusting those close to oneself, which may help to explain the count's reaction to his

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<sup>120</sup> The imprisonment occurs after the marriage in the future priest's case, and beforehand in the count's case, and the young future priest also loses his wife shortly after she gives birth to a child.

father's belief in Mlle de St. V... 's accusations, specifically, and which may be a factor contributing to his difficulty in opening up to others, more generally.

The second episode begins after the priest's story is over and the narrator has told the reader to expect its later influence, when the count is once again almost ready to leave for Paris, and is delayed by the unexpected visit of Mme de Milvois, a nouveau-riche widow, and her 16-year-old daughter. The count's relationship with Mme de Milvois (later Mme Dubois) and her daughter, Mlle de Milvois (later the Marquise de Losange) has two principal parts and two sequels. Mauvillon also preemptively reverses the pattern of false appearance and subsequent revelation of true status that characterizes Prévost's text. Unlike the intendant's wife, who presents scandalous false portraits by circulating popular rumors, in Mauvillon's version there is a "gentilhomme campagnard" who tells the truth when he repeats the common knowledge about the doubtfulness of Mme de Milvois' nobility and about her *arriviste* tendencies (1: 23-24). Mauvillon's count brings the reader's attention to the benefit of knowing this story beforehand, even if it was not the whole story or even rigorously accurate, because it contained sufficient accurate information to facilitate the count's resistance to their efforts to seduce him:

Tout cela ne me touchait point: je lui dis un adieu assez froid, & montai en carrosse fort satisfait de moi-même, & j'avois quelque raison de l'être. Il me sembloit assez beau qu'un jeune homme de vingt ans eût résisté aux agaceries d'une aussi jolie personne que Mlle de Milvois. J'étois mon maître après tout ; on me faisoit beau jeu, on m'invitoit même : cependant je me défie, je résiste ; je triomphe même. Il est vrai que j'étois redevable de ma victoire au portrait qu'on m'avoit fait de Mme de Milvois ; mais je ne sais si le motif diminue la gloire qu'il y a à fuir les apparences mêmes du vice.

Je me défiois extrêmement de cette femme, & ce fut cette défiance qui fit que je me démêlai si heureusement de toutes ses ruses. (1: 32)



The two added stories—of the Priest and his grand-daughter, and of Mme and Mlle de Milvois—take away the innocence with which the count arrives in Prévost’s version.

Whereas prior to arriving in Paris Prévost’s count has never had to confront the disparity that often exists between appearances and reality in polite society, and therefore is little affected by his father’s surprising change in behavior regarding Mlle de St. V...,

Mauvillon’s count has encountered two striking examples of duplicity, one of which has taught him to value the reports of others, and has had ample time to reflect on how those examples might apply to his own situation.

Mauvillon’s introduction of the martial and commercial metaphors for amorous intrigues much earlier in the text seems to unify the tone of the work on the principle offered by the example of the four women of the opera of the third *petite-maison* party in Prévost’s version; e.g. “Lorsque je fus assurée de lui, je tournai mes batteries vers l’étranger” (253) or “J’ai eu des amants [...], quarante de bon compte; car j’ai toujours eu soin d’en tenir un état fort exact” (254).<sup>121</sup> In Prévost’s version, the count seems to be more impressed by the story of one of the women who is neither martial nor commercial: “j’avais été frappé de son langage, de ses principes” (256). This is in keeping with the count’s character up to that point in Prévost’s version, while in Mauvillon’s version it indicates the beginning of a change, or a continuing oscillation between a martial-commercial view of love and a more sentimental view. The count does, however, use martial and commercial metaphors in Prévost’s version, for example when describing the

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<sup>121</sup> Note an early use of a martial metaphor in Prévost’s text: “il était question de me rappeler les termes de ma lettre, pour juger quelles armes j’avais fournies contre moi” (227).

end of the third *petite maison* party, “Les demoiselles, en se disposant a partir, eurent le courage de nous donner encore quelques airs de chant, pour entrer en lice avec les rossignols, qui se faisaient entendre sur tous les arbres du bois,” and when justifying his reluctance to take advantage of Mlle XIII’s inclination for him, “il me suffit qu’il ait des droits sur sa fidélité par la dépense qu’il fait pour son entretien” (258, 263). Prévost’s count even applies his financial savvy toward his charitable efforts: “Mes agents acquirent pour soixante mille livres, ce qui valait sans doute un tiers de plus” (269). It is also useful to compare the count’s philanthropic impulses in Mauvillon’s version (e.g. taking pity on Mme et Mlle Milvois despite their venality) to similar instances in Prévost’s original text, where he shows just as much understanding of the value of money: “j’eus le pur et délicieux plaisir d’avoir rendu d’honnêtes gens fort heureux, sans me croire digne de beaucoup d’éloges, puisque je n’ai fait à leur bonheur que le sacrifice d’un bien superflu” (270). While Mauvillon’s count may focus more on money than Prévost’s, finances are of crucial importance in both versions of the work.

The added episode with Mme and Mlle de Milvois in Mauvillon’s version depicts the count as being significantly more sophisticated than in Prévost’s version, as we can see in his interactions with Mme and Mlle de Milvois, and with the other people who spend time with him during his stay at his newly inherited estate. These interactions provide an example of the kind of behavior that the count might be thinking of when he protests his innocence with regard to Mlle de St. V..., when the count engages in “badinage” with his female guests while waiting for the new arrivals to settle in:

Pendant qu’elles étoient encore à leur toilette, une de nos Dames s’avisa de me railler sur cette aventure. Prenez garde, me dit-elle, je suis fort

trompée où il y a un complot formé contre votre liberté. Je ne sais, répondez-je, si ma liberté vaut la peine qu'on y fasse attention ; mais je vous jure que j'aimerais autant la perdre avec Mlle de Milvois qu'avec une autre, & il me semble qu'il n'y aurait pas de honte à céder à un pareil ennemi.

Voilà, reprit-elle, le langage d'un homme à demi vaincu, d'un cœur qui capitule. Vous vous trompez, dis-je, & la conséquence que vous tirez n'est pas juste. Je sais que pour obtenir de bonnes conditions il faut se bien défendre. Comptez que je résisterai long-tems, & que je ne me rendrai qu'à bonnes enseignes. (1: 26-27)

This exchange provides a window into the personality of the count as Mauvillon has conceived it. He is a man who puts no great price on sentimental attachment to any particular woman, but who wants to make sure that others see him as *galant*, and who does not consider, or mind, whether what he says might be taken seriously. In fact, a certain ambiguity is important for the count's banter to be effective. It also highlights the count's martial view of human interaction, which complements his financial analysis of relationships, coming together to form a worldview based on competition and reward.

By introducing the martial and financial metaphors for romantic and social attachment earlier in the text, and by giving them a greater and more sustained emphasis, Mauvillon is able to bring out a theme that can be seen as an undergirding element of the axiological scaffolding upon which the novel's narrative structure is constructed, even in Prévost's version, though the theme is latent there. Mauvillon capitalizes on his intervention by multiplying the plot reversals within the context of the Milvois episode, which functions in some ways as a microcosm of the entire novel, and also as a counterpoint to the other relationships that the count forms over the course of the novel. Thus, while the count is able to withstand the Milvois women's "assault" at first, he goes back and forth in his resolve. After the rest of the count's female guests leave in order not

to be “confondues avec des femmes de cette espèce” (1: 28), taking their husbands with them and leaving the count alone with Mme and Mlle de Milvois, the two *aventurières* extend their stay through the ruse of the mother’s feigned illness, which is intended to give the daughter an opportunity to seduce the count, but their scheme fails because the count has been forewarned:

Prévenu contre les desseins de cette femme, je ne lui rendis d’autres devoirs que ceux que la bienséance exigeoit. Je ne fus pas moins en garde contre les agaceries de sa fille, dont tout le manège étoit celui d’une des plus rusées coquettes que j’aie jamais vües, & d’une fille dressée par une mere habile & consommée dans l’art de faire naître des desirs. Enfin après quinze jours d’attaque, Mme de Milvois voyant que sa fille n’avoit pas gagné avec moi un pouce de terrain, & que je ne quittois point mon air froid & réservé, désespéra de me vaincre, & commença à se mieux porter & à parler de son départ. (1: 29)

Even so, Mme de Milvois is not prepared to leave empty-handed, and attempts to induce the count to give her a present of a thousand pistoles, at first trying to get the count to figure out what she wants without stating it explicitly, to spare herself the shame of asking for money directly, and then successfully when she asks directly after the count fails to interpret her signals correctly (1: 30-31). The humor of this passage comes from the dramatic irony of the reader’s understanding of Mme de Milvois’s goal while the count is too imperceptive and rigidly honorable to understand what sort of favor a woman like her is likely to want from him. This lack of perceptiveness on the part of the count is more than mere material for humor, though—rather, it is an early indication of a personality trait that will play a significant role in the development of the count’s character and the attendant progress of his relationships as they build up the novel’s narrative structure. After essentially paying off the Milvois women, the count seems

mostly safe from them, but still needs to take care to avoid “ces Circés” in spite of all his suspicion and resolve, as he congratulates himself on resisting Mlle de Milvois’s last-ditch attempt to overcome his defenses: “tout cela ne me toucha point” (1: 32). And yet the count’s resolve is not as sturdy as his self-congratulations would suggest, or perhaps he was merely attempting to convince himself of that resolve: as soon as he is no longer confronted by the object of that resolve, which forces him to consciously oppose the temptation, his resolve crumbles: “Cependant je pars, et à peine j’avois fait deux lieues que tous les charmes de Mlle de Milvois se présentèrent à mon esprit” (1: 32). The count is vulnerable not only to Mlle de Milvois’s physical attractiveness, but also to the appearance of modesty she projects, and he seems to conflate the two aspects, or at least to see them as being on the same continuum, as the list of the young woman’s “charmes” suggests: “Je me rappelai ses beaux yeux noirs, son teint, sa taille, sa gorge, sa voix, ses discours, son esprit, cet air de modestie vrai ou faux qui accompagnoit tout ce qu’elle faisoit” (1: 32). This veneer of respectability is enough to completely undo the count’s resolve: “A la vérité, je sentois que je ne l’estimois pas assez pour l’aimer: mais après tout, à mon âge on aime le plaisir; sans amour on est flatté d’être aimé, & l’on a honte de s’être refusé à l’occasion” (1: 33). We see the count’s seemingly uncompromising commitment to virtue—or at least a commitment that he was trying to convince himself he held—give way to temptation and perceived social pressure.

The count’s willingness to entertain the thought of a sexual relationship with Mlle de Milvois suggests that, while he might not have gone as far with Mlle de St. V..., he might have engaged himself further than he admits, or realizes. It is also possible that he

regrets not doing what she accuses him of, and that that regret is showing itself here, now that the count finds himself in a similar situation: “C’est ainsi que l’homme, dupe des préjugés & des passions, a honte de bien-faire, & se hâte de gâter ses actions les plus louables. Emporté par le penchant naturel à la volupté, & trompé par un faux raisonnement, je me livre à mon projet” (1: 33). In the end, the count is saved despite himself. He sends a messenger to invite Mlle de Milvois to meet him at an out-of-the-way house on his estate, but the messenger falls off his horse and fails to make it back to R... before she and her mother leave. The count’s final reflection on this episode is useful for orienting the reader’s perception of the rest of the novel:

Il est étonnant qu’avec un sens assez droit, & des sentimens d’honneur, de justice, & d’équité, je ne visse pas le précipice où je m’allois jeter, & le tort que j’allois faire à une jeune personne qu’une mere fans pudeur aurait sacrifiée, fans doute, à sa vanité & à son luxe. La providence ne permit pas que je débutasse dans le monde par une intrigue si funeste à mon honneur & à ma fortune, intrigue qui peut-être m’aurait mené plus loin que je ne pensois, & m’aurait peut-être perdu sans ressource. [...] [L]es réflexions que la passion avoit écartées vinrent se présenter en foule à mon esprit, & me firent sentir toutes les conséquences de ma conduite. Elles ne se développerent que peu-à-peu : car autant que nous sommes promis à saisir le faux & le mauvais des choses, autant sommes nous lents à en découvrir le vrai & le beau. L’ame se porte avec vivacité à tout ce qui flatte sa convoitise, & ne cède que lentement à ce qui la combat. (1: 34-35)

Although somewhat trite, this is a meaningful statement about a truth of human experience, suggesting that the count is writing from a position of experience, and that he at least believes that he has learned some of the hard lessons that only come with time. Whether he is writing this during his imprisonment at Innsbruck or at a later date, such a self-evaluation suggests that the count may eventually become aware of his over-reliance on money as a means of evaluating and expressing emotional attachment, or it could be

taken as a sign that the count's limited direct, genuine emotional connection to the rest of the world is closed off by his amorous misfortunes, to the point that he eventually comes to believe that he has learned the true meaning of his experience, while in reality he has become more firmly entrenched in his financial viewpoint than he was at the beginning.

The count's debut in the social circle of the *intendante* is the focus of the next analogous narrative subunit in Prévost's version of the novel, but Mauvillon modifies Prévost's narrative structure. Instead, Mauvillon focuses on the contrast between one of Prévost's characters, Fanchon, and a character of his own invention, a certain Mlle Ursule. This change of focus pushes the dinner at the *intendante*'s house and the revelation of the inaccuracies of her portraits back into the first subunit, in which they play the role of counterpoint to the portraits of Mme and Mlle de Milvois. The first episode of this new subunit coalesces around a nucleus provided by the first *petite maison* party, which is where the count first meets both Fanchon and Mauvillon's new character, an unfortunate young woman who shows up at the same party disguised as an abbé, and then proceeds to tell the story of her escape from her mistress' husband, who tried to seduce her (1: 78-92). The revelers send her on her way, and she later reappears after the count discovers Fanchon's complicity in Mme Birat's dishonesty. Fanchon was too naive to avoid falling into the clutches of Mme Birat, and ends up being unable to profit from the count's efforts to bring her back into the realm of respectability, but Mlle Ursule has enough innate sense to avoid entering Mme Birat's employ. Furthermore, although she has not been able to be entirely successful in remaining respectable under her own power, Mlle Ursule has continued to "fight the good fight." For this reason, it is possible

Mauvillon's count recognizes himself in her when she uses similar martial metaphors to those that Mauvillon has been putting into the count's mouth since early on. As the reader progresses through the text, the contrast between Fanchon and Mlle Ursule seems intended by Mauvillon as a means of resolving the tension that persists at the end of Prévost's text. By providing a counterexample to Fanchon's lack of virtue despite her heart of gold, Mlle Ursule flattens out the moral ambiguity of the count's interest in Fanchon. For example, she recognizes Mme Birat as the procuress she is, while the count fails to do so, and an understanding beyond her years somehow makes it easy for her to stand firm where Fanchon cannot, although she admits that she is happy that she was able to avoid an encounter with Mme Birat herself, since the procuress' verbal ability might have overcome her resistance (1: 126-28). Mauvillon puts the following formulation of the contrast in the very mouth of Mlle Ursule: "Je crois autant mériter votre compassion que Mlle Fanchon. Vous avez voulu la retirer du précipice. Refuseriez-vous de m'empêcher d'y tomber ?" (1: 129-30). In other words, if a young woman who has lost her virtue merits assistance in regaining it, does not one who has yet to lose hers merit the same assistance even more so? Mauvillon further compares the count's military understanding of his own struggle to remain virtuous when confronted by the temptation of Mlle Milvois and her mother, and Mlle Ursule's use of similar terminology to describe her near-miss with M. S... "J'ai succombé ; mais je suis dans le même état que si j'avois résisté jusqu'au bout ; quoique vaincue, j'ai toutes les marques de la victoire" (1: 130). Like Mlle Ursule, the count has good intentions, but remains virtuous solely by luck. Ursule's situation and attitude recall the similar situation and attitude in which the count



found himself in the passage Mauvillon added with Mme de Milvois and Mlle de Milvois: only luck prevents him from making the mistake of falling for their seduction, and he employs similar militaristic metaphors to describe the situation. Here we see the increasing value the count places on not being naive. While Fanchon retains her unsuspecting nature, and thus a certain kind of innocence, but falls victim to deception, and thus loses a different kind of innocence, the count and Ursule lose their trust in others, and therefore also lose the kind of innocence that Fanchon retains, though in this way they retain the kind of innocence that Fanchon loses. The question implicitly posed by the text, then, is whether it is better to remain trusting of others and risk losing one's good name through falling victim to dishonest people, or to distrust everyone in order to maintain one's position in society?

Just as the count was prevented from compromising himself with Mlle de Milvois despite himself, Ursule remains technically respectable, but because she was willing to give in, she (like the count) is perhaps less meritorious than Fanchon, who gave in to a dishonest life, but wishes she had not, even though she fully participates in it, including her participation in Mme Birat's trickery. Thus it becomes difficult to assign an axiological value to Mlle Ursule's protestations in favor of her virtue, for which the amorous M. S... proposes compensation: "avec beaucoup de vertu & rien dans le gousset on meurt bel & bien de faim, ou tout au plus on vivote chargé du mépris public" (1: 84). The old Marquis applauds this idea—"Au fond cette vertu ne mène à rien, & l'on n'a pas pour un sou de pain avec ce meuble-là" (1: 84). The count, however, finds it repugnant:

Choqué d'entendre des discours si impies & si libertins, je ne pus  
m'empêcher de dire au Marquis qu'il avoit mauvaise grace de parler si

cavalièrement sur une matière si délicate. Ah! Monsieur, excusez-moi, dit-il, j'ai tort ; je ne me souvenois pas que vous étiez-là. Epargnez-vous la peine de me réfuter ; je n'aime pas les dissertations, & je suis impatient d'entendre la fin d'une aventure, qui devient toujours plus intéressante. Allons M. l'Abbé, poursuivez. M. S.... reprit Mlle Ursule, parlait en vrai financier, qui met le souverain bien à être riche. Il me laissa après quelques discours dans le même goût. (1: 84-85)

It is possible that readers who find Mlle Ursule's story as interesting as the Marquis does might also "forget that the count is there," meaning they might be distracted enough by the inserted story to take more interest in the discussion of the idea of virtue than in the defense of virtue or religion. Given the count's already developed sense of economic equity, which mostly tends to develop over the course of the novel, it is difficult to precisely situate the affective axes of the narrative structure. Given the impracticality of an uncompromising commitment to virtue, is the count's claim that "la pauvreté donne beau jeu à la tentation, & [...] l'indigence est presque autant l'écueil de la vertu que les richesses" intended to be taken seriously or to make the count appear ridiculous (1: 85)? Or perhaps the reader is meant to find the immoderate libertinage of the Marquis excessive? Here, it seems that Mauvillon is signaling to his readers that the psychological concerns of Prévost's count are of a lesser order than the socio-economic ones he is exploring in his revised version.

Mlle Ursule, like Mauvillon's count, knows the true value of money, as she shows by making good use of it to ensure her escape when she discovers her path barred by the gardener, who has been charged to prevent such an occurrence: "voilà [...] cent louis ou peu s'en faut, dont je vous fais présent ; aidez-moi à me sauver" (1: 89). The gardener accepts her bribe without comment: "Mademoiselle, répondit-il, en prenant la bourse,

suivez-moi, je vous ferai sauver” (1: 89). He then even goes beyond the terms of his tacit agreement, invoking divine assistance on her behalf, promising to cover for her by lying about having seen her, and warning her of possible pursuit, an obstacle of which she might not otherwise have been aware. And through all of this, Ursule is completely aware that she is in fact swindling the gardener: “Je sortis donc, laissant le jardinier dans la ferme croyance qu’il avait gagné cent louis, quoiqu’il n’y eût guère que la moitié de cette somme dans la bourse” (1: 89-90). Is the reader intended to think that Ursule’s deception is justified? Perhaps a gardener would not have been likely to take a risk of this kind for fifty louis, but a hundred louis would have seemed realistic? Even if so, the amount of money in Ursule’s purse has not previously been established, so nothing seems to prevent it from containing the necessary hundred louis. In this way, Mauvillon portrays Ursule as a cunning person well aware of the value of money.

There seems to be a certain kind of “doublespeak” going on in Mauvillon’s additions to the novel. While the count appears to prefer virtue, it is not at all clear that he truly does: perhaps he believes that he does, but actually only values money; then there is the attitude of the count as the narrator to take into account, and the intended axiological reception by the reader. For example, what are we supposed to make of the conclusion of Mlle Ursule’s first episode? She is hardly the entirely innocent heroine one might expect in a situation like this, as shown by the fact that she is prepared to reverse her disguise, and does not need her audience’s help finding feminine clothing: “Que cela ne vous inquiète pas, dit-elle, j’ai fous cette soutane tout ce qu’il me faut pour paroître en femme” (1: 90). The count reports that after removing her soutane and retrieving a head-covering

from her pocket, the general reaction of the assembled company was to conclude that “Enfin c’etoit une fort jolie personne que Mlle Ursule” (1: 91). Without this bald declaration, it would be easy to take at face value the count’s relief at Ursule’s determination to return to her family for help getting back on her feet, rather than to succumb to the temptation of a life of prostitution:

Il ne tint pas au Marquis & au Chevalier qu’elle ne prît un autre parti ; mais elle tint bon, & temoigna beaucoup de repentir de la faute qu’elle avoit faite de s’être laissée séduire. Cela me donna bonne opi[ni]on de cette petite personne & me mit entièrement dans ses intérêts. Sa jeunesse me faisoit pitié, & je craignois que le discours de ces Mrs, & l’exemple de nos donzelles ne l’entraînassent dans un genre de vie le plus humiliant pour l’humanité. (1: 91)

However, the count’s good faith here is far from firmly established. Mlle Ursule’s refusal to accept money to make up for her bribe to the gardener increases the count’s good opinion of her, but the calculating manner in which she made the bribe and her forethought to bring feminine clothes with her when fleeing make it seem like this might also be a pose. And when the count mentions that “Ces sentimens m’inspirerent un grand desir de lui parler en particulier,” we might wonder if his desire is less than pure curiosity, and if so whether he has amorous designs on her, or whether he merely is intrigued by her ability to adapt her appearance to circumstances. The count’s comment about her decision to leave as soon as possible in order to return to Paris, “ne croyant pas sans doute être fort en sureté avec une troupe d’hommes yvres, & de filles, qui sembloient avoir rénoncé à tout sentiment de pudeur & de retenue” (1: 92), suggests that he does not identify with his companions, but something makes it seem like his admiration for her apparent virtue isn’t entirely genuine.

With the addition of the Mlle Ursule episode, the transitional phrase that leads back into Prévost's text takes on a new meaning. In Prévost's version, the transition from the indecency provoked by the prostitutes' participation in the dinner-table discussion to a discussion of religion is marked thus: "J'avais espéré que dans l'intervalle du service, le repos qui avait succédé pendant quelques minutes à tant d'agitation, servirait à faire changer de matière à l'entretien" (224). Mauvillon modifies this phrase by changing Prévost's reference to the service to refer to Mlle Ursule's episode: "j'avois espéré que dans l'intervalle de cette aventure & du récit d'Ursule le repos qui avoit succédé pendant quelques minutes à tant d'agitation, serviroit à faire changer de matière à l'entretien" (1: 92). In Prévost's text, the "rest" refers simply to the time it takes for the servants to bring out the dessert course and leave the room, whereas in Mauvillon's version the "rest" refers to the comparative calm of Ursule's story in comparison to the agitation of the men's quasi-military preparations for fending off an "assault" before discovering that it was a young woman disguised as a priest knocking at the door, not the police. In Prévost's version, the interpolation of a short period of calm creates a transition in the conversational subject matter. In Mauvillon's version, the contrast between boisterous activity and calm storytelling serves the same purpose. The addition of this episode alters the context of the following discussion of religion. The earlier interaction between the count and the marquis about the value of virtue gives greater significance to their difference of opinion. In particular, it gives new meaning to the marquis' professed surprise at hearing the count espouse a view in favor of religion: "Le Marquis étonné de m'entendre, me demanda si j'y pensois, de vouloir faire l'Apôtre, & d'où je venois avec

cette dévotion qu'il ne me connoissoit pas" (1: 93). In the context of Mauvillon's modified text, this is now the marquis' second objection, and seems more like anger, especially in contrast to his first remark, which was much more good-natured, and admitted, albeit jokingly, the superiority of the count's position.

The second episode of Mauvillon's restructured second subunit focuses on the count's second interactions with both Fanchon and Ursule. As we have seen above, the former consists of the count's discovery of Fanchon's betrayal of his trust, while the latter consists of Ursule's reappearance, once again disguised as a man, to tell the story of what has happened to her since the first *petite maison* party and request the count's help. Mauvillon's addition solidifies the count's lesson, but also renders him less sympathetic due to increased emphasis on exactitude in dealings with others. Like the count, Ursule has managed to remain virtuous, but not entirely through her own efforts. When her employer's husband first attempted to seduce her, she eventually acquiesced and was only prevented from going through with the plan by circumstances beyond her control. And while she deserves some credit for recognizing Mme Birat for what she truly is despite Fanchon's description of her—"je comprenois fort bien ce que ce pouvoit être que cette marchande chez qui une fille comme Fanchon logeoit, & en quelle sorte de marchandise elle trafiquoit" (1: 127)—she admits that if she had encountered Mme Birat she might have given in anyway: "Elle auroit sans doute combattu mes réflexions avec une adresse qui m'aurait peut-être éblouie ; peut-être cette femme habile & rusée auroit-elle réussi à me séduire" (1: 128). She makes it back to her lodgings "bien résolue d'éviter de semblables pièges" (128). The count echoes Ursule's resolution immediately

following her speech: “Je [...] lui déclarai que piqué d’avoir été la dupe de la Birat & de Fanchon, j’étois résolu de n’être plus si crédule, & de laisser le monde comme il va, sans m’exposer à être joué par des fourbes” (1: 130). Having resolved not to be taken advantage of anymore, the count agrees to help Ursule in a similar way to how he helped Fanchon, but only on the condition that the terms of the agreement be explicit: “je lui promettois un secours honnête, pourvûque je visse plus clair là-dedans que dans l’affaire de Fanchon où j’avois lieu de me repentir de ma précipitation” (1: 131). While Ursule is far from Fanchon’s virtuous opposite, as it is clear that she is offering to become the count’s mistress, the count does report that “sa bonne conduite sut me consoler de la perfidie de Fanchon” (1: 132). Ursule provides Mauvillon with a foil for the count, and by creating a contrast between her and Fanchon, Mauvillon introduces a reflection on honesty and natural character. At times Mauvillon’s count may appear to be more concerned with getting his money’s worth than with doing the right thing, yet while Mauvillon does make an addition that allows the count to recover from the loss he suffered at the hands of Mme Birat and Fanchon, he does not remove the impassiveness of Prévost’s count faced with that loss. While Prévost’s count is capable of suffering a loss of face in public when it is justified, because he knows his own internal commitment to his values, Mauvillon’s count goes a step farther and seeks to balance the registers of his internal self-esteem, showing his deep commitment to equity. Ultimately, money remains a medium for the expression of ethical values for Mauvillon’s count, albeit an emotionally stunted one

The third subunit of Mauvillon's first major unit focuses on the contrasts between the three young women he has encountered up to this point in the narrative: Mlle de St. V..., Fanchon, Mlle Ursule, and Mlle de Milvois. These contrasts are illustrated through the insertion of the Baron de Malemain episode and story of the second *partie de petite-maison*. Mauvillon's inserted narrative about the wedding of the Baron de Malemain situates the transition after the count demonstrates his ability to feel strong emotions in situations where his passions are not involved, without it affecting his generosity. The next development in the count's amorous affairs comes between two corresponding parts of this scene, which plays out at two different dinner parties, the first being the one with prostitutes and the second being the one with "honnêtes femmes." This implies a division of the narrative of his life into several parts. In Mauvillon's version, the second dinner party at the *petite-maison*, to which only *honnête femmes* are invited, is presented less as a contrast to the previous party, which featured prostitutes, and more as a reaction to the count's melancholy in the wake of the tragic events following the marriage of the marquis' friend, the Baron de Malemain, to Mlle de Milvois. When the count denies the marquis' accusation that he had amorous feelings for Mlle de Milvois, claiming instead that he needs time to recover, the marquis reacts as follows: "Bon, [...] du tems ! une partie de petite maison fera mieux cet effet que tout le tems du monde. [...] Il faut vous remettre dans le grand monde ; voilà le meilleur remède pour vous guérir radicalement de cette humeur réfléchissante. Je m'en vais vous préparer une dose de ma façon" (1: 155-56). In a similar fashion to Mauvillon's insertion of the episode of the count's extended tour of his new holdings prior to his travel to Paris, the intercalation of the Baron de



Malemain episode changes the context within which the count's actions take place: it slows down a transition and alters its significance. On this occasion, the change adds emotional significance to the count's investigation of social milieux. Instead of intellectual curiosity alone, another force driving the count's curiosity and shapes his reactions is a need to recover from the emotional trauma of the death of a woman he had some kind of feelings for, whether amorous or merely sympathetic. Here we see Mauvillon's count's trust in the value of money as a measure of the value of relationships beginning to waver, as he notes that Mme de Milvois' feelings of grief were "d'autant plus sincères [...] que cette perte en étoit réellement une pour elle" (1: 157) referring to the loss of her daughter's income, which was only guaranteed to her during her life.

*Successful Proactive Phase: Apogee of Agency in Pursuit of Mme de B...*

Mauvillon's second major unit begins when the count sees Mme de B... at church and starts to seriously doubt the rumors of her infidelity. At that moment he begins to transform from a reactive object of other people's agendas whose only goal is a reactive function of another person's active one, into an active subject with a proactive goal of internal origin. There is, however a period of overlap between the two major units, during which Mlle de St. V... continues to pursue the count, who must therefore continue to pursue his older reactive goal of avoiding her at the same time s hi begins to devote an increasing portion of his energy to his new active goal of pursuing Mme de B.... In this new major narrative unit, the principal contrast is between Mlle de St. V... and Mme de B..., which manifests in a progression of alliance and opposition between the individuals involved. As the transitional zone of overlap between the first and second major units

begins, the count is opposed by Mlle de St. V... and by his father, while M. and Mme de B... are friendly toward him but not yet engaged in his amorous life. By the end of the transitional period, M. de B... has become the count's active ally in his relationship with Mme de B..., and Mme de B... herself has occupied an ancillary position regarding her husband's matchmaking, and the two of them have expressed their support for the count in opposition to Mlle de St. V..., and, by extension, the count's father.

Mauvillon modifies the narrative structure of this part of the novel by inserting an account of the count's visit to the country home of his old friend, Mme de Milvois, now Mme Dubois. This addition emphasizes the count's burgeoning love for Mme de B..., as the reason why Mme Dubois invites him to leave Paris is to relieve the tension of his new emotional burden, which she senses in him thanks to her "grande connoissance du cœur humain" (1: 207). Prévost's narrative structure is, at least in part, clearly based on his examination of social milieux, as Jean Sgard and Peter Tremewan have pointed out, but it is important to attend to how Mauvillon modifies and extends this structural device by depicting a social circle that operates as a foil to the "société du vrai mérite." Jean Sgard argues that the structure of the novel comes from the several social milieux that the protagonist encounters, and argues that Prévost's choice of such a structure demonstrates his comprehension of his audience's changing tastes, which run less toward sprawling adventures like *Cleveland* and more to social analysis; he further suggests that Prévost loses track of social critique as a structural element of his novel in the second part, in which the love plot takes over (Grenoble 8: 449-50). Sgard notes that of the six dinner guests whose portraits the intendant's wife paints, two do not reappear to have an

opportunity to clear their names, and that while the count believes in the innocence of a third, he has forgotten what the accusation was (Grenoble 8: 450). While Mauvillon does not exploit this untapped structural resource in his continuation, he does build on Prévost's use of classification of social milieux as a structural device. Prévost's count recapitulates this categorization before he is about to attend the last of three dinner parties at the chevalier's petite maison, "Des filles, et d'honnêtes femmes," but wonders if there could be a third (Prévost 249). Mauvillon introduces another social category through the addition of a walk along the Seine in the company of Mme Dubois, formerly de Milvois. The count describes this gathering as follows: "Voilà [...] des gens qui ne sont ni médisans ni impies ; mais qui en revanche, ont bien peu d'esprit" (1: 216). He then argues that such company is only amusing when represented in fiction or observed from afar: "Leur défauts ne divertissent que dans la représentation & dans le lointain : Voyez-les de près & en original, ils vous dégoûtent" (216-17). He also compares them to the characters of three classic plays by Molière: *L'Avare*, *Le Tartuffe*, and *Les Précieuses ridicules* (216). This added social category brings the text into the realm of metatextual commentary.

The second episode of this new major unit begins when the count realizes the true nature of his feelings for Mme de B..., at which point he returns to the conclusion that distraction will do nothing to solve his romantic problems: "Il me fut aisé de concevoir que je ne devais rien espérer de la solitude ; je résolu de me livrer à la dissipation" (Prévost 261). In Prévost's version, this is the first time the count has come to this conclusion, but in Mauvillon's version it is an echo of a lesson the count learned from his

friend the marquis earlier in a similar situation (1: 155-56). This parallelism underscores Mauvillon's modification of the narrative structure by transforming an insight attributable to the count's inherent qualities into a recollection of someone else's insight. In this new phase of the count's interactions with Mme de B... and Mlle de St. V... he is still reactive, but has started to flee his new passion as he is not yet able to adopt a proactive stance. When seen in relationship to the count's desire to avoid Mme de B... his interactions with Mlle XII during and after the third *petite maison* party form an exact analogue of his interactions with Mlle de Milvois, seen in relationship to his desire to avoid Mlle de St. V... in the first installment of the novel, with a reversal of the count's affective orientation toward the woman he is avoiding in each case.

It is important to address Mauvillon's insistence on the link between the two volumes. In his continuation, Mauvillon makes sure to emphasize the links between the two parts of the novel, especially those that he himself created by inserting new material into the first part of the text. For example, when it is necessary for the former Mlle de St. V... to leave the count to facilitate his healing process by removing herself as an unpleasant influence, the count's father advises her to wait for her new husband at "R... celle de mes terres dont j'ai parlé dans la première partie de ces mémoires" (2: 6). Mauvillon's introduction to the new volume begins with a description of the added emphasis, both as intensified in the second volume and as modified in Prévost's text. A potential connection between the two parts can be observed when the old marquis returns, and remarks that "Il sembloit que je prévisse ce malheur ; et qui ne l'auroit pas prévu connoissant l'humeur violente & impétueuse de ce jeune St. V... ?" (1: 39). However,

while M. Dubois does foresee the count's duel with St. V... (1: 291-93), the text does not record any such warning from the marquis, meaning that the connection between the two installments is implied, but not actual. Another potential connection comes when the count recalls verbatim the words of his mistress when he returns to her house after her disappearance with the hopes of learning about her new whereabouts from the current occupant: "Quel souvenir se renouvelle encore en entrant dans cette chambre ! C'étoit-là que Mme de B... m'avoit dit ces aimables paroles : *Vous seriez le plus injuste des hommes, si vous ne me regardiez pas comme la meilleure de vos amies*" (2: 46, emphasis in original). The count's quotation is inaccurate, though, since Mme de B... 's actual words were "Vous seriez bien injuste, me dit-elle en rougissant, si vous ne me regardiez pas comme la plus tendre amie que vous ayez au monde" (Prévost 279, Mauvillon 1: 346). Must we impute an egregious level of carelessness to Mauvillon to explain the discrepancy, or might it be possible to see the count's inaccuracy as an intentional choice? In the second case it would appear that the count is quoting from memory, which would add a certain realism. Instead of an improbably perfect hero whose perfection extends to his memory, the count would then appear to be merely an imperfect person whose inability to connect with others in a genuine way deforms his memories. The count exaggerates Mme de B... 's criticism, replacing "bien injuste" with "le plus injuste des hommes," and minimizes the level of affection that Mme de B... 's expresses, turning "la plus tendre amie que vous ayez au monde" into "la meilleure de vos amies."

The first subunit of Mauvillon's second major narrative unit begins to come to a close with the third and fourth episodes. The third episode shows the count's first

proactive steps in his relationship with Mme de B... when he returns to Mme de B...'s house and receives M. de B...'s blessing for his passion. In Mauvillon's version, the count visits his old friend Mme Dubois, whose husband informs him of some suspicious inquiries that have been made about him and warns him to be careful. By foreshadowing the count's duel with St. V... Mauvillon refocuses the episode on the contrast between Mme de B... and Mlle de St. V..., rather than letting it remain with Mme de B... herself. In the fourth episode Mlle de St. V... and her brother begin to pursue the count more desperately than before, which points to a shift in momentum in the dynamic system of relationships that exists between the count, Mlle de St. V..., and Mme de B.... While the count is not yet actively pursuing Mme de B..., he is no longer primarily concerned with avoiding Mlle de St. V..., and the lack of tension between them results in her adding energy to the system: in the absence of the pull from the fleeing count, Mlle de St. V... begins to push toward the count. The transitional zone ends, along with the first subunit, when the count finally begins to actively pursue Mme de B..., which takes place when the count's father visits him as he is recovering from the wounds he received during his duel with St. V... and asks him to explain how his attitude toward Mlle de St. V... changed. Even though the count claims that there was no such change, that he has always been indifferent to Mlle de St. V... despite her assertions to the contrary, this request serves initiates a narrative relay that marks the beginning of the next narrative subunit. The precise moment of transition comes during the count's reply to his father's request, which begins as an invective against Mlle de St. V... and concludes with praise of Mme de B... (2: 12-15).

In the second subunit, the count begins to actively pursue Mme de B..., but just as the removal of energy from the narrative system that took place when he stopped resisting Mlle de St. V... led to her infusing more energy into the system by increasing her level of activity in pursuing him, the count's transition to an active role in his relationship with Mme de B... leads to a shift in her energy level: while previously she had tolerated the count's passive pursuit, once he begins to take an active stance toward her she begins to avoid him. The narrative relay that takes place when the count visits Mme de B... for the first time after his shift in attitude toward her is incomplete, consisting only of a conversation about the count's duel, subsequent convalescence, and return to Paris, and leaving out the count's marriage (2: 17-18). This is possible because the count's conversation with his father at the end of the previous subunit serves as the first part of the relay. For the remainder of the first subunit the count finds himself opposed by Mme de B..., once she learns of his previous marriage to Mlle de St. V..., and while Mlle de St. V... ceases to actively pursue the count, M. de St. V...'s resistance continues.

The second episode begins after Mme de B... breaks with the count, who begins to search for a way to annul his marriage, which brings him into direct conflict with Mlle de St. V...'s brother who duels with the count a second time, while Mlle de St. V... is reduced to passive resistance by means of her sadness and beauty (2: 34). When the count finds himself once again unable to see Mme de B..., this time because she has fled Paris after her husband's death, thinking (because of his marriage to Mlle de St. V...) that the count had misled her, he once again consoles himself by returning to her house: "Toute

ma consolation étoit de me rendre presque tous les soirs devant la maison où elle avoit demeuré” (2: 43). However, this time he enters the house:

J’entrois dans cette maison avec un saisissement extrême : j’en considérois l’escalier, & me disois à moi, voilà où les pies de Mme de B... on souvent passé ; elle traversoit ce vestibule. Oh ! lieux autrefois heureux qui étiez habités par la plus aimable de toutes les femmes ; vous avez perdu celle qui vous embellissoit ; mais je suis encore plus à plaindre que vous, puisqu’outre le malheur que j’ai de commun avec vous, il me reste encore le sentiment de ma perte. Oh ! plutôt-à-Dieu fussé-je insensible comme vous ! Je ne serois pas maintenant en proie au plus cruel chagrin. (2: 43)

While before he was content to hover around Mme de B...’s house when he was purposefully denying himself the pleasure of her company, in part because he believed that to be the only honorable course of action, but also because he was less active in his passion, now he is bold enough to enter Mme de B...’s house. The count’s subsequent actions continue to parallel what he did at the beginning of the first phase of his infatuation with Mme de B.... Notably, he consults the friend of Mme de B... who now occupies her apartments in an effort to learn her whereabouts, just as previously he had sought information about Mme de B... from the “marquise aux trois amants” (2: 46-48). Rather than merely parroting Prévost’s narrative material, here Mauvillon is demonstrating a development of the count’s personality.

In the final episode of this subunit, the count and M. de La... search for Mme de B..., and when they find her and the count has a chance to plead his case before her she appears to reject him while in reality laying the foundations of their eventual unification, which represents the realization of the count’s longest-held goal, by saying that she will be with him or no-one, but requiring that he prove himself for a period of time before she can be with him. The count’s apparent submission to Mme de B...’s will is in fact a sign



of his continued misplacement of his affective resources. While Mme de B... communicates a need to cultivate a more direct personal connection to the count, not expressed in financial terms, before she can be with him, the count continues to attempt to connect with her indirectly, and expresses his desire for connection in financial terms, even though M. de B..., who used to facilitate the count's indirect connection to Mme de B..., is dead. In fact, the count uses his memory of M. de B... as a conduit for his attachment to Mme de B.... The count takes advantage of the war that is about to begin as an opportunity to prove his worth to Mme de B..., but is challenged to another duel by St. V... almost immediately, and is forced to sit out the war in Munich (2: 93). Despite what he says later, it is clear that the count is quite concerned with his advancement, as he demonstrates by his continued determination to seek out military employment. He soon finds himself unjustly imprisoned by an anonymous German prince, apparently for the simple reason that he is French, although the count's later discovery of M. de Far's machinations against him suggests that he may have been behind the count's imprisonment (2: 94-97). The count's reflections on the injustice of his imprisonment recall similar reflections from the very beginning of the novel. The count attributes his suffering to his innocence, reasoning that a deserved punishment is less onerous than an undeserved one. And while Prévost's count might have deduced his suffering from his innocence, having completed a trajectory of personal evolution from naive reliance on internal intuition to a deliberate one, Mauvillon's count deduces his legal situation (whether he is innocent or guilty) from his suffering (2: 98). While Prévost's count is concerned that others might try to convince him that he is guilty of some offense of

which he is unaware, but is protected from that concern by an unshakeable conviction of his innocence, Mauvillon's count is afraid that those around him are aware of his innocence but wish to imprison him unjustly in spite of it. And while Prévost's count's willful blindness to the external world is the result of an internal evolution resulting from external stimuli, Mauvillon's count's blindness to the interiority of others is an internal constant that stimulates the progress of the narrative, rather than responding to it. Although Mme de B... resists the advances of M. de Far, her manner of giving in to the count in the end, rather than enthusiastically accepting his proposal suggests that she was doing so more for herself than for the count, and his marriage to her is less of a failure of the general possibility of happiness in the world (2: 113) than a personal failure, especially given M. de La... 's later "perfect" happiness with Lizon.

In the third subunit, the count and Mme de B... work together against M. de Far, who replaces the count's father, and M. de St. V... after Mme de B... is convinced of the count's good intentions. The first episode tells of the count's military service abroad, which he undertakes as a way to prove his worthiness to Mme de B..., and his subsequent imprisonment, which Mauvillon attributes to M. de Far. At first the count is unaware of M. de Far's involvement, but when he discovers it he is powerless to stop it because he is in prison.<sup>122</sup> The first episode ends when the count makes it back to Paris and engages in a mutual narrative relay with Mme de B... as each updates the other about

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<sup>122</sup> During his time in prison, the count reports not seeing any benevolent visitors from among the inhabitants of Innsbruck, although he does receive books and paper (2: 100-101). This does not preclude the possibility of a visit from foreigners, and it is possible that if he did receive such a visit he had only completed the first of the two volumes of his memoirs.

what has happened since their last meeting (2: 108). The second episode tells of the count's marriage to Mme de B... and the overlap between Mme de B...'s dominance and Lizon's. Just as the count began to come under Mme de B...'s influence before becoming aware of it and before he became free of Mlle de St. V...'s influence, he starts to feel the effects of Lizon's presence before understanding their nature, and before his active attention toward Mme de B... ceases, but not before it begins to wane.

It is worth noting that, for all his later protestations against the corruption of the world, the count first intends to enjoy his newfound bliss with Mme de B... in Paris, living a glamorous life, and only settles down in the relative calm of the countryside at the insistence of his new wife, and even then he makes a point of throwing lavish parties in celebration of his marriage (2: 113-14). The count also continues to use martial metaphors to describe his marriage: "C'étoit un combat mutuel de tendresse & la vertu en étoit le prix" (2: 115). As long as the count continues to discover new levels of stimulation he remains satisfied, but he soon comes to value hunting nearly as much as spending time with his beloved wife, who then requests a companion to occupy her during her husband's absence (2: 115-16). The fact that the count blames Lizon's trickery for his change of heart points to his lack of emotional insight both toward himself and toward others (2: 117-18). And furthermore, his reflection on the situation with the benefit of hindsight shows that he remains unable to apply what he has learned about human nature to himself (2: 119). He fails to see that, given the eventual outcome, his rigorous self-examination must have been faulty, or there must be more to human interaction than strict equity alone. Even granted that he admits that his feelings were

disguised at first, and mentions that he decided to take action as soon as he realized their true nature, he fails to grasp the true importance of truly open communication that exceeds the threshold of strict honesty. While no-one could say that the count lied when he spoke to his wife of the danger of having an object *such as Lizon* around, he met the minimum requirement of “honnêteté” but failed to go as far as was truly necessary to avoid a negative outcome (2: 120-21). Here we also see that the count’s understanding of the social order is directly related to his emotional intelligence (2: 122). If reason and virtue are insufficient arms for combatting the inevitable change of the heart or of social status, then perhaps the count is not as reasonable or as virtuous as he believes himself to be. Or perhaps he is mistaken regarding the inevitability of changes of heart and of social status? There are certainly examples of both types of change in the novel, but the social change is depicted as undeserved or rare. More open communication might have prevented the count from falling as deeply for Lizon as he does, but even so, the value of the count’s attachment is brought into question by the fact that such methods are necessary to maintain it (2: 122-23). The count’s emotional calculus continues to be expressed in terms of duty, which is roughly equated with money, while Mme de B... focuses more on esteem.

In Mauvillon’s version, the count seems to inhabit a world in which everything ultimately comes down to a matter of money, even his passion for Mme de B.... While in prison, he is given the option of freeing himself by signing a statement engaging himself to give up all claim on Mme de B... or to pay a sum so large that it would bankrupt him (2: 102). When he finally manages to make it back to France, his first words to Mme de

B... reveal his materialist attitude toward her: “Ah ! Madame, [...] ce que j’ai souffert n’est rien au prix de l’impatience de vous revoir & de vous posséder” (2: 109). It is difficult to make a satisfactory determination regarding Mauvillon’s intentions in emphasizing the count’s fixation on financial matters. Is it a parody of sentimental fiction, or is it a good-faith attempt to intensify the sentiment of Prévost’s original? Perhaps it is both. Let us take the example of Mme de Boisdoré’s justification of her efforts to discover the identity of her anonymous benefactor, “ne pouvant se résoudre à continuer à faire usage de ces secours, sans connoître la personne de qui ils venaient, moins [...] pour juger du motif qui la faisoit agir que pour m’aller jeter à ses pieds avec mes enfans, & la remercier très-humblement des graces dont elle me combloit” (2: 266). The very fact that she denies being motivated by suspicion of her benefactor’s motives has the opposite effect of suggesting that, in fact, that was her primary motivation. This paradoxical statement does, however, point to a subtle truth of human existence, namely that no-one’s motivations are ever entirely pure. It is possible that Mme de Boisdoré did feel the need to reassure herself that she was not being manipulated for some reason that would eventually be harmful to her or her children, while at the same time feeling compelled to express her gratitude. Mauvillon’s count is much more legally savvy than Prévost’s, as shown by his determination to consult legal experts before allowing Mlle de St. V... to see him (2: 11, 15) and his decision not to write to her “de peur qu’il ne m’échappât quelque chose dont elle pût se prévaloir en justice” (2: 16). However, the count’s legal sophistication is overcome by his passion for Mme de B..., which distracts him from his intended goal for two weeks, until he receives a letter from Mlle de St. V....

A good example of the count's "new" financial savvy comes when the servant of the woman who now occupies the apartment that Mme de B... had previously rented offers to put him in contact with his mistress, who is one of Mme de B...'s friends, in the hopes that she may be able to provide some information about the former occupants new dwelling-place. Rather than assume that the servant will do this for free, which would perhaps be a reasonable assumption, given that he offers to do so without any prior solicitation, the count offers to give him a tip, and then makes sure to report that he follows through on his promise: "Je le satisfis [...] à l'égard de la promesse que je lui avois faite de lui donner pour boire : un écu de six francs que je lui glissais dans la main m'assûra son amitié" (2: 44-45). However, this augmented financial conscience is not the count's sole province; the woman who takes over Mme de B...'s apartment when she leaves Paris following her husband's death mentions that she accepted it "sur le champ, après être tombées d'accord du prix" (2: 47). Yet, given the appreciation for the value of money that Mauvillon's count displays, what is the significance of his decision to disguise himself as a peddler in order to better discover what has become of Mme de B..., especially considering how badly he does his job, selling his merchandise at a severe loss in order to loosen the villagers' tongues, as he himself admits: "La bonne fille étoit trop simple pour comprendre que je m'acquittois assez mal de [mon métier]" (2: 54). Mauvillon seems to think little of the villagers' intelligence, since they fail to see anything odd in his poor business strategy. The young woman whose gullibility the count takes advantage of is herself quite mercenary, as she agrees to tell him what she knows, after he "reveals" that he is not a peddler but rather the secretary of a rich lord in search

of Mme de B..., but only if he will promise to share with her any profit that may come to him from the successful completion of his mission (2: 56). During the count's search for Mme de B..., he attends another *partie de petite maison* with M. de La... and the marquis at the home of an abbé, which repeats some key elements of the first *partie de petite maison*, in particular the prostitutes' naked gymnastics and the count's disgusted departure from the room to seek relief in the fresh air of the garden (2: 61-62). While it is possible to see this as mere repetition, Mavillon's treatment of the scene does indicate some development on the part of the count. The count becomes disgusted much more quickly, which indicates that his tolerance for impropriety has decreased. Moreover, while the count claims to feel pity for the prostitutes—"j'admirois que des créatures humaines pussent s'avilir à ce point pour gagner quelques écus" (2: 61)—the juxtaposition between this scene and the one that immediately precedes it, in which the count himself uses financial tricks to manipulate others, implicitly points out his hypocrisy.

After the count's reunification with Mme de B... in the second episode of the third subunit, the financial metaphor is accompanied by a continued use of the martial metaphor for romance. The count reports his efforts to resist his attraction to Lizon: "Tant d'assauts, tant de combats livrés à une passion impérieuse me plongèrent dans une profonde mélancolie dont les caresses les plus prévenantes d'une épouse vertueuse ne pouvaient me divertir" (2: 122). After his wife finally realizes the danger that Lizon poses and sends her away, the count couches his apologies in terms of obligation, which does little to address his wife's desires. The count manages to forget Lizon and spends the next

two years in relative happiness with his wife, who dies after bearing him a son, whom he calls “le présent le plus précieux qu’elle eût pû me faire” (2: 124) using the same term he had previously employed, in Prévost’s original text, no less, to designate the recompense he mistakenly believes owed to the *demoiselles d’opéra* after their attendance at the third *partie de petite maison*: “Comme je n’avois point entendu parler de présent, & que je supposois qu’elles n’étoient parties qu’après avoir été payées, je demandai au Marquis si je n’avois pas dû leur donner aussi quelques louis d’or” (Mauvillon 1: 266, Prévost 2: 51-52/493). The count continues to fail to learn from others’ reactions to his attempts to substitute money for emotional connection, but rather than see this as the simple sign of a wooden character, it is more interesting to note how it makes the count increasingly tragic while rendering the unsympathetic side of his personality increasingly apparent.

It may be true, as Tremewan notes, that Mauvillon eschews Prévost’s reflective style of narration (“Editions” 331), but it would be an exaggeration to claim that he fails to depict his characters’ interiority. Rather, he regularly places them in situations where they distinguish between different parts of their interior landscape, as when St. V... refuses the count’s request for his friendship:

Quant à mon amitié je ne puis vous la promettre. Ce sentiment ne s’accorderoit pas avec le désir formel & constant que j’ai de venger l’honneur de ma sœur ou de périr. Contentez-vous donc de mon estime que je puis vous accorder sans refroidir cette ardeur de vengeance, que je veux nourrir & fomentier en moi jusqu’à ce qu’elle soit satisfaite [...]. (2: 42)

The sophisticated and precise self-knowledge that St. V... displays here is hardly in keeping with a flat characterization, which is what Tremewan seems to see in Mauvillon’s writing style (“Editions”). Attending his father’s deathbed, Mauvillon’s



count maintains that “l’intérêt ne m’avoit jamais fait entreprendre quoi que ce fût” when respectfully refusing to grant his father’s wish that he abandon his passion for Mme de B... in favor of a financially advantageous marriage (2: 65). This, despite the heightened appreciation for the power of money that he has displayed all along in Mauvillon’s version of the text. When reporting his father’s death, he mentions that “Il [...] expira [...] avec la consolation d’avoir toujours vécu, si non en parfait chrétien, du moins en véritable honnête homme” (2: 66). Attributing this quality to the count’s father dilutes its meaning, and this dilution is furthered even more by M. de La...’s use of it when he introduces his tutor, who happens to pass by: “Voilà [...] un honnête homme de prêtre qui a été mon précepteur” (2: 75). The priest’s identity as an “honnête homme” and the meaning of that identity itself are put into question when the count reports that “j’aurois dû me défier d’un homme que l’intérêt dominoit, & qui n’avoit pas balancé d’accepter un présent de cent pistoles” (2: 84). However, the count himself is perhaps partly to blame for the priest’s cupidity, having offered him the bribe when it was unnecessary without any prompting (2: 79-80), and after he had himself claimed that he did not wish to owe his access to communication with Mme de B... to such lowly means (2: 74-75). The prelude to the count’s third duel with St. V... once again shows his adversary to be keenly aware of how his interior landscape maps onto the exterior topography of society (2: 87-88). As for the count, he further reveals himself as an anti-hero with his dispassionate evaluation of the situation:

Il jeta son pistolet pour prendre l’autre : Dans ce moment je lui lâchai le mien au milieu de la tête. Il tomba raide mort, & je le plaignis d’autant moins que j’avois perdu toute espérance de me réconcilier jamais avec lui.

Je pensai, que puisqu'il falloit que l'un de nous deux perût par l'autre, il valoit encore mieux que ce fût lui que moi. (2: 89)

The count's conflict with M. de St. V... is a prime example of his lack of insight into others. The count also appears to be blind to his own lack of sympathy toward St. V... while he complains bitterly about a similar lack of compassion on the part of his jailers, which he attributes to the general inability of happy people to understand the pain of the unfortunate (2: 98-99). Mauvillon's version of the novel exhibits increased cynicism and materialism, which reaches its height during the count's search for Lizon, then begins to decline. In Mauvillon's versions, the count's personality evolves following a dual trajectory: one dimension is concerned with financial and class matters, and the other is active control, both of which are defined by their influence on his love life. In Prévost's version, the count's personal trajectory has only one dimension: the count's attitude toward the relationship between appearance and reality, as reflected in his social skills, which is also measure by its influence on his love life.

*Unsuccessful Proactive Phase: Declining Agency in Pursuit of Lizon*

In Mauvillon's third major narrative unit, as the count pursues Lizon, he transitions from being the active agent of his narrative to a passive subject of it. The first sign of the count's eventual transition into passivity came in the last subunit of the previous major narrative unit, when the count submitted to Mme de B... 's conditions for courting her. The count also found himself "forced" to kill St. V... in their third duel, whereas he had previously been able to assert his principles enough to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, even when St. V... wanted to make an appointment for their rematch. The count also needs M. de La... 's financial help to return to France after escaping from

prison in Innsbruck, and M. de La... even meets him halfway, in Strasburg, symbolizing the beginning of the count's regression into passivity and M. de La...'s taking over for him. The first subunit of this new major narrative unit begins with an episode in which the count briefs his friend M. de La... on what has happened to him over the past two years, chiefly his marriage to Mme de B... and infatuation with Lizon, which provides an opportunity for reflection on the count's behavior during his marriage. M. de La... presents the "normal" reaction, namely to conduct an affair with Lizon without letting Mme de B... find out, while the count presents the "virtuous" reaction. However, given Mme de B...'s fate, and the count's continuing inability to live up to the emotional responsibilities of his rigorously equitable vision of virtue, one wonders whether the virtuous response is truly valued here (2: 126-27). After this the two friends perform a rather perfunctory search for Lizon before traveling to Paris, and the count's willingness to try out living in Paris despite an apparent opposition to it suggests an inability to hold firm on the course his instincts dictate (2: 128). Furthermore, the count's stubbornness is undiminished: he recognizes the merit of his friend's hypothesis that prior to a change in his humor he would have preferred Paris to the country (2: 129).

In the first episode of the first subunit of the third major unit, the count begins to rely heavily on M. de La...'s advice when he makes his second Parisian début, but everyone he knew from the first time he lived in the city is gone, and this change provides an opportunity for insight into the personality of the count as conceived by Mauvillon:

Hélas ! répliquai—je, qui sait si Lizon est digne des sentimens que j'avoue que j'ai pour elle. Ma femme m'en a parlé en mourant comme d'une jeune

personne rusée, ambitieuse, coquette, dont je devois me défier. Cela peut bien être vrai, reprit M. de La...; mais qu'importe après-tout, vous n'en voulez pas faire votre femme. J'avoue, lui dis-je, que ce n'est pas-là tout-à-fait mon dessein; mais aussi ne me résoudrois—je pas aisément à être le séducteur d'une fille dont j'ai été le bienfaiteur, ce seroit perdre tout le mérite d'une action dont je m'applaudis, & je trouve bien plus de satisfaction à inspirer la vertu qu'à donner leçon du vice. (2: 127)

Mauvillon's count does retain the emotional sensitivity of Prévost's, but the measure of that sensitivity is financial, and the benefit is more clearly reserved for the count himself: perhaps Mauvillon's reworking and continuation of Prévost's text is less a tone-deaf mangling of Prévost's characters than a cynical rethinking of them. Such a view would be supported by the new social typology of Paris that Mauvillon establishes here (2: 130-37). There are striking parallels between this debut and the first, and it seems unlikely that Mauvillon would have been unaware of them. While the count does not explicitly say anything to this effect, we can imagine that his earlier experiences help him determine more quickly which group to join. Nevertheless, given his recent adoption of a critical stance toward Parisian society, the greater rapidity with which he completes the trajectory suggests that he has become more committed to his earlier positions. Even though he largely repeats his earlier trajectory might suggest that his character has changed little since his first debut, perhaps he is now more aware of them and therefore consciously committed to them. The count reveals his continued lack of compassion for others and willingness to hide his true thoughts and feelings from them when he gives his unflattering opinion of a friend of Mme Dubois.<sup>123</sup> These undesirable personality traits

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<sup>123</sup> He describes her as “une bourgeoise ridicule qui vouloit faire la savante,” and who would do better to keep her mouth shut—or confine herself to matters appropriate to her station—to prevent herself from spoiling the effect of her good looks and making herself appear stupid (2: 137-38).

stand in stark contrast to the count's attitude toward Lizon, with whom he is about to fall completely in love once again when she returns to Paris (2: 138-39).

The sudden reappearance of Lizon—now Mme de Losange, having married a marquis since the count's last interaction with her—is the focus of the second narrative episode of the first subunit of the third major unit of Mauvillon's narrative structure.<sup>124</sup>

The count's fascination with Lizon appears to have two sources. First, her ability to maintain her principles, as she claims to be “digne encore de l'estime des personnes qui m'en ont témoigné autrefois” (2: 140). Second, her ability to appear as if she belongs to the social level to which she has only recently attained: “On eut dit qu'elle avoit toujours vécu dans le grand monde & joué toute sa vie le rôle d'une femme de condition” (2: 141). The count's analysis of Lizon's narrative emphasizes the importance of pragmatism in the interpretational framework appropriate to the novel's narrative structure:

Tel fut le récit que Lizon me fit de ses aventures. Je les trouvai surprenantes, bien qu'elle me parut digne de la fortune qu'elle avoit faite, et qu'à la place du Marquis de Losange j'eusse peut-être fait tout comme lui. Cela ne laissoit pourtant pas de me paroître un songe, tant il est rare de voir le mérite tout nud procurer un sort heureux. (2: 224)

What is surprising about Lizon's adventures is not their melodrama, but rather the fact (or apparent fact) that she has been able to succeed based only on her personal merit. Lizon provides a synthesis to the opposition presented in the first installment between Fanchon, a prostitute who lost her virtue through lack of cleverness but retains her innocence

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<sup>124</sup> There are parallels between Lizon's story and the count's own story that might be interesting to analyze, notably that between her love triangle with the Marquis de Losange and his nephew, St. Angel, and the count's love triangle with Mlle de St. V... and his own father, or the count's love triangle with Lizon and his friend M. de La....

through lack of guile, and Mlle Ursule, a woman of bourgeois origins who remains virtuous but only by developing her guile and thus losing her innocence. Lizon also stands bears a striking resemblance to Mlle de Milvois: both are of bourgeois origin, and both inspire a violent passion in the count by cunning—at least according to the count—though the count later develops what seems to him a more genuine attachment to each. Where they differ from each other is in the facility with which the count is able to disengage his affections once they develop. While the count is plunged into a depression by Mlle de Milvois's death, he is able to voluntarily give up his attachment to Lizon in order to satisfy his friend's emotional needs.

In the remainder of this episode, following Lizon's story, the count's past begins to return to haunt him, principally through the reappearance of Mlle de St. V..., now Mme de Boisdoré, whose membership in Lizon's circle of friends forces him to disengage from his new life, as he is forced to share Lizon's social circle with her, since it is impossible for them to be in the same place at the same time. This absence provides M. de La... ample opportunity to become attached to Lizon, which eventually leads to the count's decision to "cede" her to his friend. And while Mlle de St. V...'s reappearance would seem to provide the count an opportunity for the count to reinforce his victory over her, when her husband's ruin and suicide allow the count to save her from bankruptcy through anonymous charity, in fact it reverses their roles, and it is she who refuses him, as the gratitude she expresses when she eventually discovers that the count is her benefactor leads him to fall in love with her.

When the count takes his leave of Mme de Losange after hearing her story, his first action is an attempt to inform his friend M. de La\*\*\* of his discovery. However, his friend is not at home, and in the end it is M. de La\*\*\* who seeks out the count. This “relay” moment marks a new stage in the count’s transition from the role of active agent in the story he is narrating to a more passive role. As the count tells M. de La\*\*\* more about the beauty of Mme de Losange, his friend becomes curious about this woman who manages to give the impression of being born to a rank to which she only attained by means of marriage: “M. de La\*\*\* m’avoua que je lui donnois une impatience extrême de connoître cette aimable veuve” (2: 226), thus unwittingly planting the seeds of his friend’s eventual infatuation with her, which will lead to M. de La\*\*\* supplanting the count as the active agent of the story. The two friends decide to take advantage of Mme de Losange’s invitation to dine with her, and on the way they encounter a richly-dressed woman in a magnificent carriage attended by Moorish slaves, whom the count recognizes as Mlle de St. V..., and who ends up being at Mme de Losange’s dinner, forcing the count to abandon the field to his old adversary, while M. de La\*\*\* remains, thus furthering his occupation of the count’s position vis-à-vis Mme de Losange.

Following the dramatic return of Mme de Boisdoré, a multi-layered narrative relay further reduces the count’s active presence in the narrative. In each relay, the emphasis shifts from the count’s role to that of those around him. When the count and M. de La\*\*\* first discuss their odd encounter with Mme de Boisdoré, the count’s comments focus much more on Mme de Boisdoré herself than on her role in his story (2: 227). This preliminary relay precedes two more extensive double relays. The first takes place

between Mme de Losange and the count, who provide complementary perspectives on the history of the count's relationship with Mlle de St. V..., now known as Mme de Boisdoré. When Mme de Losange relates how she came to know Mme de Boisdoré, she also repeats the secondhand reports she has heard about the count's relationship with her, but without knowing that the count was the person in question (2: 231-32). Although the count has ample opportunity to present his side of the story, he fails to justify his behavior toward Mme de Boisdoré; indeed, he adds additional unflattering details (2: 233). The end result of these first two layers of the relay is a decrease in the count's active control over the events that become the story he is later to narrate. Although Mme de Losange offers to give up her new friendship with Mme de Boisdoré so that the impossibility of the count's peaceful coexistence with Mme de Boisdoré should not limit her own connection with the count, her benefactor, the count proposes a time-sharing system that would make it possible for both Mme de Boisdoré and himself to maintain their relationships with Mme de Losange without requiring them to spend time with each other. Since his love for Mme de Losange has been the count's primary motivation since the death of his wife, any limit on his access to her is by definition a limit on his agency in his own story.

The second double relay takes place when the count relates his conversation to M. de La\*\*\* and asks him to visit Mme de Losange again to observe Mme de Boisdoré's reaction to the proposed arrangement. M. de La\*\*\* reports that she still hates the count as much as ever, but accepts the arrangement nonetheless. This conversation provides another opportunity for the count, as narrator, to point out the signs of M. de La\*\*\*'s



burgeoning affection for Mme de Losange, to which he was blind at the time (2: 235). The narratives of this double relay are not reported in full; rather the relay increases M. de La\*\*\*'s role in the relationship between the count and Mme de Losange, as intermediary, while simultaneously decreasing the count's agency in his own life, which furthers the process that will result in relegating him to an increasingly passive role as the narrative progresses. The count's failure to notice M. de La... 's feelings for Lizon is another example of his lack of insight into others: the count is now in a position similar to that of his father in the first installment, in that he must negotiate a conflict over a love interest between himself and someone very close to him, and M. de La's attitude toward their rivalry is in contrast to the count's own when he was in conflict with his father: "un ami étant sans comparaison plus rare qu'une maitresse, il me serait plus facile de remplacer Lizon que M. de La\*\*\*\*" (2: 248). The absurdity of the count's proposition suggests the true extent to which his psyche has been warped by his fixation on value. Yet, this deformation need not be seen as a sign of vulgarity alone. Rather, it is interesting to see it as a sign of a certain kind of personal tragedy that, while failing to render the count more sympathetic, nevertheless can inspire a certain amount of pity for a man who comes to occupy an unsavory position as a result of clinging unjustifiably to a principle that does not truly serve him.

In the second subunit of the third major narrative unit, the count's agency in his own life continues to wane. M. de La\*\*\* attempts to return his friend's favor by setting him up with the daughter of the Countess of Ch..., even going so far as to anticipate the count's objections, which are based on having not ever seen the young woman in

question, and being uninterested in the high society that she is likely to want to join. M. and Mme de La\*\*\* counter these concerns with a plan for the count to have ample time to get to know the young countess (2: 255-57). The count's generous act inspires M. de La... to refer to him as his and Lizon's benefactor, which conflates the count's financial generosity, which supported Lizon's education, and his decision to allow M. de La to court Lizon, which is more emotional. M. de La... praises the count's superiority to human weaknesses, as shown by his ability to sacrifice love for friendship, and his sensitivity to the pleasure of making others happy (2: 254). The count's reaction is embarrassment, partially due to Lizon's presence, though the reader wonders if the count feels embarrassed because by letting Lizon go he showed that his feelings for her were not as deep as he had claimed, or because it makes Lizon seem inconstant. The initial awkwardness between the two of them suggests that each must overcome a certain repugnance in order to behave normally in the other's presence. M. de La...'s offer to express his gratitude by finding his friend a new wife shows that his grasp of the financial method of understanding relationships is not as developed as the count's, and underscores his assumption of control over the count's destiny. In response to his increasing lack of direct control over his own life, the count appears to reinvent himself by insisting much more than before on his simplicity, probity, and lack of "titres fastueux qui en imposent tant à la vanité des hommes" (2: 257). While he had at first been eager to earn distinction and rank while he was courting Mme de B..., and while he had initially preferred Paris to the country before she restricted him to his estate after their marriage, the count now claims to prefer the country to Paris, and a simple life without distinction to one of

advancement, even going so far as to ignore his title of count. His friend M. de La...’s use of a martial metaphor to describe the precautions he and Lizon have taken in their matchmaking—“la guerre à l’œil” (2: 257)—suggests that he and perhaps others in the count’s circle of friends would like to keep him in the same financial-martial realm as he had occupied previously, even though he has convinced himself that he has left it and to a certain degree has actually left it—for example, when he first arrives at the home of his future second wife, he mentions that “[l]a maison, ou le château était grand et spacieux” (2: 257), indicating that his sensitivity to the difference between registers has increase—though his continued use of money to express emotions suggests that he has not yet overcome his old reflexes.

As the count begins to court Mlle de Ch... he continues to maintain his stubborn fixation on the recognition of value, even to the point of failing to notice when his opinion of others reflects poorly on himself. The count demonstrates this in his reaction to his friend’s project of setting him up with Mlle de Ch... The count still understands the value of a person is in financial terms: “une jeune personne, qui compte pour rien tout ce qui ne frappe pas ses yeux, & qui préférera toujours le clinquant du petit maître à tout l’or de l’honnête-homme” (2: 256). The count’s commentary on his second wife’s temperament recalls his tutor’s predictions about his own future, recorded in the introductory passages of the first installment:

Quand la nature n’est pas d’accord avec l’éducation, celle-ci peut bien contraindre celle-là dans la faiblesse de l’âge; mais la nature reprend tôt ou tard le dessus & efface souvent dans un âge plus avancé jusqu’aux moindres traces des impressions que l’éducation avoit faites. Cette observation ne se vérifie que | trop souvent, & doit apprendre à ne pas juger de ce que certaines personnes seront par ce qu’elles font

présentement. Il ne faut pas croire que ce jeune homme, cette jeune fille qui paroissent si doux, si modestes, si remplis de pudeur, d'honnêteté, de droiture, de sincérité, soient toujours les mêmes: attendez, laissez les venir dans le monde; voyez s'ils en rejettent les maximes, s'ils résisteront au torrent de l'exemple, & s'ils se maintiendront sains & saufs au milieu de la corruption générale, & alors dites décidément, ils sont tels ou tels. (2: 258-59)

Consider also the count's reference to his blindness to everything but "les fruits de la bonne éducation que la jeune Comtesse avoit reçue" during their courtship (2: 274).

These fruits prove illusory, and the count's assessment of them turns out to be worthless, although he fails to make the connection between his failed assessment and the ultimate failure of their marriage. The reader, then, is forced to resolve the dilemma: either the count's initial assessment was wrong or his later one was. In the first case, the count's impartiality toward others is put into question, while the second casts doubt on his impartiality toward himself. The count has learned from his experiences, but not enough. His comment about education shows that he has learned from his own example, but nevertheless he falls prey to shallowness and "falls in love." He allows others to send him down the wrong path for an attachment that is incapable of ever maturing into something deeper, given the lack of permanence of his love for Mme de B..., his love for Lizon, and even his sudden passion for Mme de Boisdoré (2: 270, 290). And even so, he fails to see how he himself fares poorly by his own test, and continues to be selfish, desiring a companion whose only desire is to please him (2: 259).

The efforts of M. and Mme de La\*\*\* to marry the count off to Mlle de Ch... also highlight the pragmatic, cold side of the count's views on relationships, as we can see when he attributes the esteem in which the countess holds him to his friends' efforts

rather than to his own merit, stressing that “tout cela ne m’aveugloit pas au point de me méconnoître, & de me faire sortir des bornes que la raison me prescrivoit” (2: 260).

Above all, the count values reason as the ultimate guide of behavior, which is one way to understand his habit of translating the world into financial terms. He has convinced himself that he ought to control his feelings, and seems to regret that he was unable to prevent himself from expressing them, despite his efforts to accustom himself to not relying on the continued life of those close to him; thus, even though he sees through his servants’ attempt to break the news of his son’s death to him gently by speaking at first only of an illness, he is unable to hold back his tears when his suspicions are confirmed (2: 261-62). Yet, while the count will not allow himself to fully express his emotions in the normal ways, he seems to transfer them into the most readily available financial expression, which arises when he rewards his son’s governess:

C’étoit une femme de mérite, déjà âgée & veuve d’un Officier qui avoit perdu la vie au service du Roi. Elle avoit de l’esprit, beaucoup d’usage du monde, de la lecture & m’étoit fort attachée. Je lui fis un présent très—honnête qu’elle refusa, me priant de lui permettre de finir ses jours à ma terre où elle espéroit qu’elle ne me seroit pas inutile. Je consentis à la proposition, & lui accordai des appointemens qui valo[en]t mieux que l’intérêt de la somme que j’avois eu dessein de lui donner. (2: 263)

Considering only the description of the financial arrangement, the count’s attitude toward the governess might appear simply mercenary, but the context provided by the count’s description of the woman’s personality and of her relationship to him shows that the count is simply expressing genuine gratitude in the only way he knows. It would also seem that rewarding his son’s governess provides an outlet for the pent-up emotions elicited by his son’s death. The count’s actions following the death of his son suggest that

he is perhaps not so much a “vulgar man who knows the value of money,” as Tremewan argues (“Editions” 334), but a man who has never learned how to express his emotions in a healthy way, but is able to do so using money.

There is a parallel between the count’s falling in love with Mme de B... after having long been immune to the power of love, in Prévost’s version, and M. de La\*\*\* falling in love with Mme de Losange after a similarly long period of insensibility with regard to love, in Mauvillon’s version (2: 247-48). Mauvillon’s count weighs the comparative rareness of a true friend and a mistress, and makes the “rational” decision to cede his interest in Mme de Losange to his friend, even seeing this as a way to more firmly cement his friendship with M. de La\*\*\* through obligation (2: 248-49). Is it possible that Mauvillon is being tongue-in-cheek when he has the count observe that “par-là je m’attacherois d’autant plus un ami dont je connoissois la probité & les sentimens d’honneur” (2: 249)? M. de La\*\*\*’s involvement in the count’s schemes for finding Lizon suggest that the count’s estimation of his friend’s “probity and sense of honor” are no more than they ought to be. M. de La\*\*\* recognizes that he is now in his friend’s debt, as he notes when he remarks that he has yet to do anything for the count that would merit such a sacrifice, although the count makes a show of stressing the joy of rendering service to a friend (2: 250-51). In order to facilitate his friend’s conquest of Mme de Losange’s heart, the count invents a vague pretext for leaving Paris, and in his absence M. de La\*\*\* does his best to encourage her doubts regarding the count’s feelings for her (2: 251-54). Here we see M. de La\*\*\* taking on an even more active role in the events that constitute the count’s narration; by reporting the content of his friend’s letters,

the count begins, in effect, to devote an increasing amount of narrative time to recounting his friend's adventures, and, more specifically, the progress he makes in his attempts to replace the count in Mme de Losange's heart.

The first episode of the final subunit of Mauvillon's narrative structure comes to a close with the second return of Mme de Boisdoré during the count's courtship of Mlle de Ch..., when she discovers that he is her benefactor (2: 263-70). In the course of explaining how she discovered the identity of her benefactor, Mme de Boisdoré reports an instance of narrative relay in which the count's story serves a function, rather than as the main subject. When the priest who delivers the count's anonymous pension to her happens to ask about her past, and she tells her story, presumably this including her relationship with the count, which inspires the priest to exclaim "ô le digne, ô l'honnête-homme!" (2: 267). The count is moved by Mme de Boisdoré's story, to the point of beginning to fall in love with her, but in a much more serious manner than he did when they were younger; this time, though Mme de Boisdoré resists his advances (2: 267-70). If the count in fact deserves the epithet of "honnête homme" then the term is emptied of all value, since he only acts out of a scrupulous concern for fairness, not due to concern for others, and Mme de Boisdoré's assessment of the count's motivations for his charity support this interpretation:

Ah! m'écriai-je, peut-on se venger plus noblement d'une ennemie : Je reconnois bien-là ce cœur dont j'aurois acheté la conquête au prix de tout mon sang : ah ! qu'il est doux d'en avoir de pareils dans ses chaînes ; mais oublions des infortunes passées pour ne plus songer qu'à témoigner notre reconnaissance, notre admiration à ce généreux ennemi. (2: 268)

The count's experiences have brought him to a point where he might be capable of a

genuine attachment to his former adversary, but it would be an attachment based on her admiration for him, not on mutual respect or love, as Mme de Boisdoré herself tells the count, who is completely unaware of his own true motivations (2: 269). The shallowness of the count's feelings is evident in the facility with which he switches his attentions to Mlle de Ch... (2: 270-71). Mme de Boisdoré's refusal and the control the countess exerts on the count demonstrate the count's increasing passivity as he finds himself increasingly incapable of pursuing his own emotional impulses. What he fails to understand is that what is preventing him from doing so is his self-centeredness.

In Mauvillon's final episode, the count continues to allow others increasing control over his affairs. First, he follows the countess's request that he stay with M. and Mme de La\*\*\* while she attempts to bring her husband around to her point of view regarding his potential marriage to Mlle de Ch...: "Je n'avois garde de ne pas me conformer à ce plan" (2: 272). Then, by showing the letter containing the countess's summons to M. and Mme de La\*\*\*, and following their advice that he return immediately to Ch..., "afin de leur témoigner par cet empressement le cas que je faisais de leur alliance, & l'amour que j'avois pour leur fille" (2: 273). Note that in the end, money plays a big role in determining the count's second marriage even though he denies its importance (2: 259), and his future father-in-law even says as much (2: 273). The count benefits so much from money that it is impossible for him to develop another way of interfacing with the world. After his marriage, he allows his father-in-law to set him back up in the military: "je fus obligé de consentir qu'il traitât d'un régiment de



cavalerie” (2: 275). Here it is important to note that the count claims not to care about rank and honors, but makes a point of mentioning how he has been held back.

After his father-in-law’s death and his mother-in-law’s retirement to the countryside, the count allows his young wife to determine the course of their life together, because “il falut céder aux instances d’une jeune femme pour qui j’étais accoutumé d’avoir les plus grandes complaisances, & que j’aimois encore passionnément;” he also consults his mother-in-law: “je ne voulus néanmoins rien déterminer à cet égard sans avoir auparavant consulté la Comtesse ma belle-mere,” and he agrees to her advice (2: 277-78, 279). After their arrival in Paris, the count is “forced” to indulge his young wife’s passion for the glamorous life of Parisian high society (2: 284). Once again, lack of communication is to blame for the relational problems for which the count blames his wife, as he stubbornly refuses to see the inevitable consequences of his unwillingness to engage authentically with her, or rather seeing the likely course of events but continuing on the path to disaster nevertheless (2: 285-86).

At a loss for ideas of how to deal with his wife’s dissipation, the count is about to sell his regiment so he can return to the country when M. de La\*\*\* arrives, having gathered from the tone of the count’s letters that his friend needs him, at which point the count promptly gives over control of his affairs to his friend, who recommends patience, arguing that her interest will wane as the novelty wears off (2: 286-8[7]). This strategy fails, though, when the count finds himself promoted and granted a military governorship through the efforts of the Duke of XXV, who hopes in this way to get his mistress’s husband out of the way (2: 291); the count visits his mother-in-law on the way to his post

and mentions that his wife preferred to stay in Paris rather than to come with him for what was intended to be only a week-long stay; she is alarmed, and suspects her true motives, but drowns in a carriage accident while on her way to stop her daughter from succumbing to the duke's seduction (2: 292); as a result, the count is forced to waste two months dealing with the formalities of his mother-in-law's succession, during which time his wife engages in an indiscrete affair with the duke, who then abandons her, causing her to fall into a delirious fever, of which she ultimately dies (2: 293-94).

After his wife's death, the count sells his regiment and abandons most of his inheritance from her to her relatives in order to be able to retire more rapidly to M. de La... 's estate, where he is able to enjoy the comforts and satisfactions of family life without any genuine personal engagement (2: 296). In this second platonic *ménage-à-trois*, the count's emotions are ultimately self-directed. While he wants to prove to the other members of his household how much he loves them, that very focus places the emphasis on the proof, rather than on the love itself, which suggests that the count is more concerned with how he is perceived than with the actual affective connection that may or may not exist between himself and his companions. And while his continued insistence on framing relationships in financial terms may seem vulgar, it can also be seen as an expression of emotional desperation. Unable to find lasting value in emotional attachments—indeed, unable to see such attachments as anything other than sources of value—the count has come to rely increasingly on money as a way to evaluate and express emotional connections. However, in the process he has come to realize that while money is the best way he has found to express his emotions—which may, in fact, be a

result of an emotional deficiency—the ultimate cause of his difficulty is the transient nature of the world. While others may find it easier to satisfactorily express and experience their emotional attachments than the count does, their facility in doing so is an illusion.

Whether or not Mauvillon intended to undercut Prévost's original narrative structure, whether or not he sincerely meant to present the count as an "honnête homme," the value of the term is fairly evacuated by the way Mauvillon writes the character, and this evacuation results in a modified narrative structure. While Prévost's narrative structure is circular, Mauvillon's is linear. Prévost's count begins his story naively and unconsciously assuming that he can trust his instincts, and ends up believing only in his own intuitions, but knowingly dismissing the possible conflicts that experience has shown him can arise between his internal assessment of reality and the truth of that reality, especially as perceived by others. Mauvillon's count starts out less naive than Prévost's, and follows a linear trajectory that leads toward an eventual disengagement from the world: while he has learned to express his affective attachments in financial terms, he becomes convinced that ultimately there can be no durable value in anything, even if it can be valued in money.

## Conclusion

The relationship between the two versions of the novel poses a problem for modern readers, since the first ends with a dramatic climax seems like a conclusion, suggesting that Prévost may have intended to "telescope" the novel, while the second is the work of a different author. Whether we restrict the identity of the work to Prévost's

text alone, or whether we consider Mauvillon's continuation to be part of the work, we end up with an unsatisfactory "whole," judging by modern criteria for what constitutes a novel, which include the requirement that it should resolve the conditions it sets up for itself to resolve, and it should be written by a single person. (And if it violates one or both of those criteria, it should do so intentionally, according to a rationale that is put into place in advance.) These critical impulses are conditioned by the nineteenth century assumption that the typographical articulations of a work of fiction (chapters, books, volumes, etc.) and its narrative articulations should be the same, but are ill-fitted to the eighteenth century, and our modern appreciation of reboots and retcons can help us understand how even though Mauvillon's version of this novel may be plagiarism according to our modern standards, that is not the most important thing about it.

## Part III: When the Whole Story Has Been Told

### Chapter 5: *La Jeunesse du commandeur*: When the Whole is More Than the Sum of its Parts

#### Dispositive *Parts* vs. Narrative *Caravans*: Opposition as Narrative Foundation

One of three “experimental” novels written by Prévost in the 1740’s, *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de Malte, ou la jeunesse du commandeur* tells the story of an anonymous younger son of an important French noble family whose unusual hunger for glory leads him to follow his parents’ original intention for him to join the Order of Malta even after the death of his older brother leaves him heir. During his time in the order he gains a great friend when he rescues a Spaniard named Perés<sup>125</sup> from a shipwreck, and becomes infatuated with an adolescent girl named Helena, whom he rescues from pirates. The novel tells the anticlimactic story of how the narrator resolves the tension between these three dominant passions, glory, friendship, and love. Ultimately, none of the three is satisfied. Perés dies of a broken heart after the narrator receives a potentially mortal wound while participating in a duel on his behalf, and Helena is so disfigured by smallpox that the narrator forces her to withdraw to a convent. Thus, while the removal of the potential distractions posed by friendship and love enables the narrator to achieve success within the Order of Malta, that success is a bitter prize. The novel is one of Prévost’s most “modern” in form, being relatively limited in size, unlike *Mémoires d’un homme de qualité*, published all at once, unlike *Cleveland*, compact in scope and

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<sup>125</sup> I have followed the convention of retaining Prévost’s original, idiosyncratic spelling for all proper names. All page references are to Démoris and Leborgne’s 2005 edition.

typographically homogenous, unlike the *Voyages de Robert Lade*, and unified in terms of authorship, unlike *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*. This greater formal similarity to modern novels makes *La Jeunesse du commandeur* a good test case for how narrative-dispositive structural analysis could be applied to more recent novels.

One way of understanding the narrative structure of *La Jeunesse du commandeur* is to consider the rhythm created by the narrator's oceangoing military expeditions, or "caravans," that he must undertake to fulfill his obligations as a Maltese knight, and to earn the rank of commander, which, the title informs us, he does eventually obtain.<sup>126</sup> By this understanding, the narrator's eventual promotion provides a provisional condition for concluding the narrative, and the caravans provide a means of judging progress toward that conclusion, each one constituting a point of articulation for the narrative structure. The commander focuses the reader's attention on these "caravans" very early on in his narration when, in explaining the peculiarities of his personality that led him to prefer to join the Order of Malta even after the death of his elder brother removed the obligation to do so: "lorsque tout semblait m'appeler aux fonctions du chef d'une grosse maison, je parlai de me rendre à Malte pour mes caravanes, et d'abandonner à mes cadets toutes mes prétentions" (44). However, although he will do so later, the narrator does not mention the precise number of expeditions that a knight of Malta must undertake before promotion to the rank of commander, nor does he mention a specific number that will take place before the end of the narrative.<sup>127</sup> Thus, while the narrator does not establish

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<sup>126</sup> This meaning is attested by the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* (Coulet, cited in Démoris and Leborgne 44).

<sup>127</sup> The required number was four (Démoris and Leborgne 44).

precise expectations for the specific details of the narration's internal structure, he sets the conditions for the reader's perception of narrative progress. Each sea voyage is a reminder that the narrator is fulfilling the responsibilities that will eventually earn him the rank that he occupies at the moment of writing.

The future commander's attitude toward the prospect of joining the order of Malta also reveals information about his personality that is crucial for understanding the overall arc of the novel's narrative structure. The first clue is the future commander's odd reaction to the death of his elder brother, which would appear to remove an obstacle in his path by making it unnecessary for him to join the order of Malta, which had always been his intended lot since birth—"je reçus la croix presque en naissant" (43).<sup>128</sup> Rather than seeing his brother's death as the removal of an obstacle preventing him from leading a secular life, to the general surprise of those around him, this apparent removal of difficulty spurs his passions in the opposite direction, confirming a disdain for worldly things, which he had acquired in his reading: "J'avais pris ce goût dans la lecture" (44). The conventional logic espoused by those around him indicates that the future commander's appropriate course of action would be to take his place as heir, but perversely the pressure of this expectation only confirms his desire to pursue a greater glory than can be had by secular means: "Rien ne m'avait paru si noble et si grand que ma première vocation, et je ne pus me persuader que des avantages aussi frivoles que les biens de la fortune dussent balancer un sentiment qui me paraissait fondé sur l'honneur et

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<sup>128</sup> For a comparison between the story of the future commander and that of another young protagonist destined from birth to join the Order of Malta, see Jean-Paul Schneider, "Les *Mémoires de Malte*, une invitation à relire *Manon Lescaut*?"

la raison” (44). Rather than follow the newly opened path to conventional success, the future commander reacts against his family to pursue a path in the opposite direction from the one opened up by his new freedom: “Les résistances de ma famille n’eurent point la force de m’arrêter” (44). Thus we can see that, at the beginning of his narrative, the future commander’s zeal for his duty increases in response to obstacles that appear, while this is his dominant passion: he sees himself as nobly fighting against obstacles preventing him from doing his duty, and doing it in spite of them—or at least his zeal for doing his duty is stoked by the presence of those obstacles. By the end of the novel, he has come to see himself as being prevented from doing his duty, or at least his zeal being reduced, by obstacles.<sup>129</sup>

Prévost maximizes the interest of the narrative through skillfully manipulation of the interaction between the narrative structure of the five caravans and the dispositive structure of two parts.<sup>130</sup> The succession of the caravans highlights the evolution of the narrator’s oppositional personality and adds to the impression of narrative progress. By situating the first three caravans entirely within the first part of the novel, Prévost creates a rhythm of rapid development and change, which corresponds to the narrator’s first

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<sup>129</sup> In his 1996 introduction, Démoris describes the future commander’s evolution thus “Et puis cela *dérive*, ce terme de navigation n’étant pas impropre, peut-être, dans un aussi exemplairement *maritime*, à rendre compte à la fois du destin du héros narrateur et de la démarche du romancier dévoilant, par touches insensibles, le leurre de la perspective héroïque” (9). For more analysis of the future commander’s unusual personality, see Éric Bordas, “La Folie du Romanesque dans *Histoire de la jeunesse du commandeur*.”

<sup>130</sup> In the summary that appears at the end of their 2005 edition of the novel, Démoris and Leborgne list only four caravans, although they admit that “[l]e décompte des caravanes du commandeur ne saurait toutefois être très exacte, dans la mesure où le narrateur profite beaucoup de la complaisance du grand maître à son égard—un novice qui apporte un bien non négligeable à l’ordre—pour se faire compter deux fois ses expéditions maritimes” (289). However, my analysis shows that it is possible to positively identify a total of five caravans.



discovery of the world as an adult. The situation of the fourth caravan athwart the novel's only dispositive boundary adds to the suspense of that narrative unit, which lays the foundations of the ultimately anticlimactic conclusion of the narrator's story, and the inclusion of a fifth caravan contained entirely within the second part of the novel serves as a coda that confirms the overall narrative trajectory of the work as laid out by the four previous caravans. In this way, Prévost orchestrates a climax that feels satisfying, yet is not definitive. Perés is dead, Helena is out of the picture, and the narrator basks in the approval of the entire Order of Malta. However, he has not yet earned the rank he possesses at the moment of writing, and it is always possible that Helena might emerge from her seclusion. And while Prévost would most likely not have made the unrealistic choice of bringing Perés back to life in order to continue the story, an unauthorized continuer might have done so, as Mauvillon did with the count in his continuation of *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*. Thus, as my analysis shows, even an apparently self-contained novel like *La Jeunesse du commandeur* is susceptible to continuation, which suggests that this openness is a more fundamental property of narrative fiction than we might think.

By some measures, the equilibrium of the work's narrative structure is not symmetrical across the apparent line of reflection one might expect to observe at the juncture of the novel's two parts, but it is by others. Perés' North African adventure is recounted in two roughly analogous parts, the first of which is reported in the first caravan, while the second plays out in the fourth, and straddles the dispositive dividing line between the two parts, making his story dispositively asymmetrical. However, the

full arc of Perés' narrative has two elements: one centered on his disgrace and eventual rehabilitation at the Spanish court, and one centered on his exile to Oran. While both elements begin in Perés' first narrative episode, only the North African element is resolved in the second episode that addresses Perés' story—the one that crosses the dispositive dividing line between the two parts, and that gives his story its dispositive asymmetry. A certain symmetry arises here. Both the episode of the Spanish court and Peres' own story originate from a narrative element that appears in the first part of the novel, during the future commander's first caravan, and are resolved in the second part of the novel, during the last caravan. And yet this symmetry does not negate the asymmetry of the content of these episodes, given that Perés' first episode relates both his disgrace at the Spanish court and his initial experiences in North Africa, while his second episode relates the definitive resolution of his adventures in North Africa, and brings only news of Perés' rehabilitation at the Spanish court, which is only finalized in the third of Perés' episodes. There is also an element of symmetry in the relationship between Helena and the future commander, in that there are two episodes of isolation from the outside world involving one of the two lovers crossdressing; the first takes place in the third caravan, and it is the future commander who dresses as a woman, while in the second, which is recounted in the fourth caravan, and which crosses the boundary between the novel's two parts, it is Helena who wears men's clothing.

Secondary characters also contribute to the complexity of the novel's dispositive and narrative symmetry and asymmetry. Perés appears during the first caravan, Helena and her mother appear during the second caravan, Count Leniati (Helena's true father)

and Junius (the former commander-turned-king) appear during the third caravan, Dom Antonio (Perés' enemy) and the pirate Lirno appear during the fourth caravan, and the Spanish woman who attempts to seduce the future commander after having been engaged to Perés before the latter's death appears during the fifth caravan. Yet each of these appearances is complicated by various factors that undermine the apparent symmetry of one new character introduction per caravan. Perés' introduction is complicated by the fact that one of the characters in the story he tells about himself, the traitor Dom Antonio, reappears as an active character when the future commander and Perés spend time in North Africa during the fourth caravan. Helena's introduction is actually a reappearance, since the future commander first encounters her during his initial voyage to Malta, although he fails to take note of her then.

The distribution of the future commander's various voyages between the novel's two parts also sheds light on the novel's overall narrative structure. The first part is 130 pages long, while the second part is only 114 pages long, or 88% of the length of the first part (although this is perhaps not a very significant difference). The future commander's five voyages also occupy different amounts of space in the text: the first occupies 27 pages (although most of that is taken up by Perés' story), the second only seven, the third 56, the fourth 72, and the fifth 29 (including a six-page return to Malta). Three of the voyages take place in the first part of the work, the fourth bridges the divide between the two parts, and only the fifth voyage is fully contained within the bounds of the second part, which would imply a disequilibrium between the two parts. However, of the 191 pages taken up by the future commander's voyages, 105 are in the first part (the 90 pages

of the first three voyages and 15 pages from the fourth [158-172]), and 86 are in the second part (57 pages from the fourth voyage [173-229] and the 29 pages of the fifth). This means that while 75% of the second part is taken up by the future commander's travels, compared to only 69% for the first part. Thus the second part of the text gives the reader the impression of bringing the future commander closer to his maturity, while the first part contributes more to the impression of his youthful impetuosity. The quick succession of voyages (four, including the future commander's departure from home) that punctuates the first part of the novel creates an effect of acceleration, and there is an attendant decelerating effect that begins when the division between parts interrupts the fourth caravan, and which is enhanced by the second part's greater ratio of voyage pages to non-voyage pages.

### The First Two Caravans: Transferring Opposition from Family to Order of Malta

The first caravan contains little in the way of plot, but it does much to prepare the reader's expectations for the rest of the narrative (46-72). The future commander tells how a storm separates his vessel from the group almost immediately after the expedition leaves Malta, forcing them to abandon hope of achieving any glorious objectives, "*par le même sort qui m'a toujours rendu cet élément funeste*" (46). This comment ought to give the reader pause, given that sailing expeditions are an integral part of the future commander's vocation. This caravan is also associated with miraculous divine intervention: first, when the narrator jumps into the sea to save Perés and would have drowned if the waves had failed to calm down immediately in a manner reminiscent of

the Jonah story (48), and again when the expedition's return to Malta is considered to be a miracle (72). In the absence of glory, the main consequence of the voyage is the future commander's encounter with Perés, a Spaniard who soon becomes his best friend. The majority of this episode is taken up by Perés' narration of his own story (49-70), which the narrator refers to as a "récit [...] intéressant" (70).<sup>131</sup> Perés' motivation also evolves in response to removal of obstacles. Banished to Oran, he finds that the Spanish colonial authorities are so inured to the attacks of the region's original inhabitants that they are content to keep the enemy troops at bay outside the city walls. It occurs to Perés to try to extend the Spanish zone of control by pushing back the enemy beyond a nearby river. However, he remains dissatisfied even after meeting his initial goal, despite the renown his achievements have brought him across all of northern Africa and his concomitant increase in prestige at the Spanish court, which comes with a pension: "le goût de la gloire, autant que la nécessité de m'occuper, me fit étendre insensiblement mes idées" (54). The narrator acknowledges the failure of his first caravan, but points out the significance of his encounter with Perés: "Ma première caravane fut ainsi réduite à une course aussi stérile pour la gloire qu'elle me paraissait heureuse par l'acquisition que j'avais faite d'un ami" (72). As the narration continues, the comparison between the two men's response to changing obstacles influences the reader's perception of the work's

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<sup>131</sup> In his 1996 preface, René Démoris notes the role of the seemingly overly-fortuitous inserted narrations in achieving the poetic goals of the novel: "On peut tenir pour placages les histoires romanesques, chacune à leur manière, de Perés le noble espagnol et de Junius le commandeur renégat et aventurier mégalomane [...], mais ces aventures-là ne sont-elles pas là pour marquer aussi la déliquescence de l'histoire principale, la manière dont, à l'image du héros, elle *se laisse entraîner* hors de son propos ?" (9, emphasis in original).

narrative structure, Perés emphasizing possibility, while the future commander remains obstinately pessimistic.

The two men's burgeoning friendship grows to the extent that because of their mutual desire to increase each other's reputation neither of them can bring himself to take sole command during the second caravan, for though Perés would deserve command by virtue of his greater experience, the future commander could name himself captain in virtue of having financed Perés' purchase of a vessel in Venice. This voyage begins not as a caravan but as an expedition to Venice for the purpose of acquiring a ship for caravans, after which the two friends return to Malta to allay perceived doubts of their submission to the order's authority by taking orders before departing once again to begin a proper caravan: "La défiance de notre soumission, que j'avais cru remarquer au grand maître, nous fit prendre le parti de retourner d'abord à Malte, pour recevoir les premiers ordres à la tête de nos gens" (75-81). As was the case with the first caravan, the second caravan contains relatively little narrative material, and the principal consequence of the voyage is the future commander's encounter with an important character: "la fortune, qui nous destinait plus de gloire que de bonheur et de richesses, nous préparait sur la route une rencontre dont toutes les aventures de ma jeunesse ont pris leur source" (75). The encounter in question is with Helena, the daughter of the elderly Maltese commander whom the future commander met during his journey to Malta and the elderly commander's mistress. She is to become the future commander's lover and the prime motivator of the remainder of the narrative. Since the future commander last met them, briefly, Helena and her mother have been captured by pirates while traveling to Malta

after the death of her father, the elderly commander. The narrator summarizes the narration thus far when he recalls the circumstances of his first meeting with Helena and contrasts them with this second meeting:

On se souvient que la jeune fille n'avait pas plus de treize ans, lorsque le vaisseau qui m'amenait de France avait relâché à Orbitello. Il s'était passé six mois depuis mon arrivée à Malte. On connaît donc son âge. Mais ce que j'ai mal représenté dans notre première rencontre, ou plutôt ce qui ne pouvait être que le fruit des six mois qui s'étaient écoulés depuis ma visite, car il n'est pas vraisemblable que mon cœur et mes yeux ne fussent plus les mêmes, je lui trouvai plus de charmes qu'une femme n'en a jamais réunis. (77)

This passage recruits the reader's active participation in understanding how the novel's narrative structure is progressing. After six months the excitement of opposing his family's will by joining the Order instead of taking on the social role expected of him has ceased to be sufficiently motivating for the narrative to continue on that basis, and a new narrative unit begins as the future commander begins to oppose his new "family" the Order. The reader can be expected to wonder if the narrator is being completely honest, with himself and with his audience: is it more likely that the future commander had changed or that Helena had? In either case, the reader is invited to see the time that has passed between the first two caravans as a significant period of time, and therefore a substantial unit of the narrative structure. While it is perhaps possible that six months were enough to produce sufficient changes in Helena's appearance to induce feelings of attraction in the future commander where there were none before, the very denial of any other possibility actually introduces doubt in the reader's mind, suggesting that the opposite may be true, i.e. that the difference is due to changes in the future commander's personality. One wonders, though, if the apparent change in the future commander's

behavior truly indicates a changed personality, or if this kind of reaction is not, perhaps, rather a further instance of his tendency to react in opposition to the removal of boundaries.

Before, when the future commander first met Helena, his energies were directed toward rejecting the secular world by establishing himself in the order of Malta as a reaction against the removal of obstacles that had prevented him from pursuing success by conventional means. Now, however, his joint venture with Perés promises him success by the alternative means he had pursued in reaction against the unexpected freedom to join the secular world, and this lack of opposition to his chosen path sends him in the other direction, leaving him open to the temptations of the flesh, against which he had previously been protected by his contrarian impulses. Perés also feels the effects of Helena's charms, and the future commander finds himself once again in the comfortable situation of struggling against an obstacle, as Perés has now become his rival without ceasing to be his friend: "sans me sentir pour lui moins d'amitié, sa présence me jeta dans une contrainte insupportable" (79). Just as the future commander's relationship with his new friend had been an avenue of expression for his rejection of secular success because it allowed him to embrace his duties as a knight of Malta, his newfound infatuation with Helena becomes an avenue of expression for his resistance to the constraints of those very duties, which have become less compelling now that circumstances (i.e. Perés' friendship and the approval of the Grand Master of the order) are supporting his efforts to fulfill them, rather than opposing him (as they were when he was under pressure to assume his position as heir following the death of his older brother). The influence of this



new love relationship is evident in the future commander's plan for overcoming the threat posed by Perés' competition for Helena's heart: "Il ne me vint rien de plus favorable [...] que de feindre en arrivant à Malte une maladie, qui m'obligeât d'interrompre pour quelque temps nos courses, et qui engageât Perés à se remettre en mer jusqu'à mon rétablissement" (80). With the benefit of hindsight, the future commander is able to understand how the very actions he undertook in pursuit of his new passion created obstacles for himself without him realizing it: "je ne voyais pas que la maladie même que je voulais contrefaire était ce qu'il y avait de plus opposé à mes désirs" (80). Another obstacle that encourages the future commander's love is the fact that Helena's mother mistakenly believes that she, not her daughter, is the object of his affections. True to form, rather than correct this misunderstanding, the future commander allows it to persist, thinking it necessary to keep up the pretense of being interested in the mother in order to maintain his access to the daughter:

L'erreur de la mère se confirma d'autant plus, que sentant le besoin que j'avais de la ménager, mes attentions se tournaient continuellement vers elle ; et l'amour d'ailleurs, qui m'avait touché si vivement pour la fille, m'inspirait une retenue qui ne me permettait point de prendre avec elle un air si libre. (79)

Here, again, the commander demonstrates his penchant for obstacles, pursuing a course of action that constrains his actions in the direction he wishes to pursue, which must make his unrequited desires all the more beguiling. Soon after the future commander's return from his voyage to Venice, the narrator-commander's hindsight brings the reader's attention back to the structural function of the caravans: "étais-je donc résolu d'abandonner ma vocation, ou me flattais-je que le temps que j'emploierais à l'amour me

serait compté pour une caravane ?” (81). To reassure Helena’s mother of his commitment to her and her daughter and his ability to provide for them, the future commander minimizes the effort it will require for him to become a commander: “je lui avais promis de tout employer pour obtenir que mon voyage de Venise fût compté pour ma seconde caravane, et je comptais de me faire dispenser facilement de la troisième” (85). Without mentioning the total number of caravans required for this promotion, Prévost manages to remind his readers of the goal toward which the future commander is, at least nominally, working. Yet it is not the future commander’s efforts that bring him closer to that goal, but rather those of his friend Perés, who in one action resolves the tension between the future commander’s love for Helena and his duty to the order of Malta by finding himself a woman to take as a mistress, so that the future commander will no longer have any reason to fear him as a rival (“pour faire renaître votre confiance”), and suggests that they kidnap both prospective mistresses and Helena’s mother and bring them along on their next expedition, so that the future commander need not sacrifice his career to follow his heart (“pour vous tirer de la léthargie où je crains que l’amour ne vous retienne trop longtemps”), showing that he has understood his friend’s propensity toward unrequited passion resulting in stasis (84).

### Third Caravan: Creating New Obstacles to Replace the Ones That Disappear

The third caravan (87-142), like the first two, focuses much less on the future commander’s navigational or military exploits, which are its ostensible purposes, and instead emphasizes the protagonist’s evolving relationships with those close to him.

Despite this imbalance, however, when Perés explains his plan to his friend, he portrays it

as a means for himself and his friend to pursue their respective amorous intrigues while at the same time preventing public discovery of the future commander's love for Helena and creating opportunities to attack enemies of the Order, thus simultaneously preserving and enhancing the future commander's reputation: "agitez-vous pour trouver quelque expédient qui soit plus convenable à la situation de votre cœur, à votre gloire, à l'intérêt de votre fortune" (84). This way of understanding the purpose of the voyage relieves the conflict between the future commander's duty to the Order and his affections for Helena. Helena's mother's mistaken apprehension of the future commander's affections is corrected when she discovers him in her daughter's cabin. With both of the main obstacles to the realization of the future commander's desires removed by the circumstances of the third caravan, it seems likely that some new obstacles will come to replace them, or that he will turn his energy in a different direction, or perhaps both. At first, the future commander revels in his newfound freedom, indulging his passion to such an extent that he forgets his duty almost entirely and, instead of transporting Helena to a convent from which he plans to fetch her after returning to Malta, he spends three weeks alone with her, and when he finds that Perés has departed with their ship, mostly for the purpose of placating Helena's mother, his reaction is to rejoice at the prospect of six more weeks with Helena before the date set by Perés for a rendezvous at Naples. It would seem, then, that at least at some level, the future commander is aware of the continued conflict between his love for Helena and his duty to the Order, or, if not, that his unconscious desire for there to be such a conflict is stronger than his desire to find a way for both love and duty to coexist. When the future commander and Helena arrive at

Naples they enjoy frequenting the city's high society circles, where Helena's beauty makes the two of them the object of general admiration. However, when the future commander loses track of Helena in the midst of a crowd, and when a well-meaning person asks him what is wrong, he realizes that he does not know how to describe his relationship to his mistress: “ne sachant par quelle qualité je devais désigner Helena, j’ai perdu, lui dis-je, après avoir hésité quelques moments, une jeune étrangère que je donnerais ma vie pour retrouver” (101). This recognition of the ambiguity of their relationship is a sign of the nascent change in direction of the future commander’s stance toward the world and his opposition to the pressures his environment exerts on him.

The change that has begun continues when the future commander learns that Helena has been discovered by her true father. It is revealed that Helena’s mother had an affair with the Marquis of Leniati, but managed to convince the elderly commander that the child was his when Leniati failed to express any desire to claim her as his own when she was born. Now, however, he decides to bestow a fortune on her if she marries the future commander, thinking that this arrangement will be attractive to both young people, given Helena's illegitimacy and future commander's apparent lack of resources given his status as a knight of Malta. The future commander is most comfortable in the realm of uncertainty, which fuels the fires of his passion: “toute la facilité qu’il [Leniati] m’offrait pour la voir, ne pouvait satisfaire la passion dont j’étais plus enflammé que jamais” (107). The future commander also revels in equivocation, which allows him to prolong the heightened state of arousal that comes from the uncertainty of conflicting passions and opposing the forces around him, as the freedom to express his love for Helena offered by

Leniati's official sanction of their relationship revives the future commander's feelings of familial pride and personal ambition: "Tout l'amour dont je brûlais ne pouvait me faire oublier ce que je me devais à moi-même et à l'honneur de ma famille" (107). The future commander's instinct to preserve the conflict between the various forces that motivate him comes into play as he attempts to manipulate those around him in an effort to maintain the current fragile equilibrium. To that end he attempts to convince Leniati not to assume that he will immediately accept his offer without reservation by revealing his family origin to Leniati and his unusual reasons for becoming a knight of Malta: "Mon dessein n'était pas de lui faire entendre que je voulusse renoncer absolument à sa fille, mais j'espérais que me voyant de si fortes raisons de balancer, il deviendrait moins pressant" (108). The future commander has no qualms about exploiting Helena's passion in order to preserve the ephemeral nature of their relationship, or in his own words, "de lui faire préférer les douceurs d'un commerce libre à des chaînes dont je ne me sentais aucune envie de me charger" (108). While the future commander's selfish desires are sufficient to explain why he feels the need to dampen Helena's father's enthusiasm for his marriage to Helena without extinguishing it entirely, and to convince Helena herself to forgo the benefits of marriage, only his oppositional personality can account for his choice of strategy. Ultimately, the sudden legitimization of his passion for Helena is another external force for the future commander to resist, and he enjoys fighting against it by kidnapping Helena once again: "je l'enlevai [...] à son père avec autant de joie que je l'avais déjà enlevée à sa mère" (110). The future commander's interactions with Leniati suggest that the young man prefers to live in a situation of precariousness, and his

decision to kidnap Helena shows that he will do whatever he can to maintain such a position, even when stability is offered to him.

The future commander does his best to convince himself and Helena that the precarious situation in which they find themselves is, in fact, durable. Having found a nearby village in which to hide from Leniati and from Helena's mother, the future commander thinks to have established a safe place for the fragile equilibrium that sustains his ephemeral relationship in its conflict with external forces. When listing the specific features that constitute the charm of the couple's retreat, the future commander concludes the list with a vague catch-all: "tout ce qui fait le charme d'un cœur amoureux dans la solitude" and concludes by stating that "[t]ous les plaisirs auxquels j'étais sensible se trouvaient [...] réunis dans l'enceinte de mes murs" (111). Taken together, the vagueness that the future commander includes in his description, his distinction between pleasures to which he is susceptible and those to which he is not, and his insistence on the containment of those pleasures within the confines of his retreat suggest that crucial elements of the conditions necessary for the future commander to be able to enjoy his passion are undefined, but that for him to feel their presence it is necessary to situate them within a protected zone that resists outside influences. Rather than a defensive precaution, this resistance appears in the commander's case to be a positive condition for the existence of his passion. And because the conditions necessary for the future commander's satisfaction are essentially oppositional, they are infinitely recursive, and no resistance can ever be definitive, since once it is successful there is no longer any energy opposing it. However, rather than switching directions, as he did when he opposed

his family's desires to join the Order of Malta, or when he abandoned ambition in favor of love, on this occasion the future commander falls back behind a further opposition in the same direction.

This fragile equilibrium of amorous bliss endures only as long as the pressure of the threat posed by the outside world continues to keep the future commander's contrarian impulses under control. Helena's chamber maid turns out to be an agent of the outside world, whose presence introduces jealousy into the seemingly perfect closed system of the couple's love nest. When the future commander and Helena discover that she is in the employ of a widow who happened to take a liking to the future commander as he and Helena were moving into their new accommodations, they fire her, but Helena starts to become more and more jealous, requiring ever-increasing levels of strict obedience from the future commander, including requiring that he wear women's clothing, "*dans la pensée que ne pouvant être distingué d'elle au jardin, il serait inutile à sa rivale de chercher l'occasion de [le] voir*" (115). Thus, while it might at first seem that the protection from outside influence offered by the future commander's retreat would fend off any significant threat to his relationship with Helena, in fact that outside influence must infiltrate the seemingly safe space that the future commander has established to protect himself from it in order to create a force against which he can exert his energies.

Despite this narrative necessity, it seems likely that the resources of jealousy as an object against which the future commander can direct his oppositional penchant would eventually run out, and indeed it is the returning influence of the outside world that

eventually provides the necessary motivation to sustain the future commander's love for Helena. It is true that the future commander claims that he would have been happy to forget the rest of the world if it could have been possible to remain in his idyllic hideaway forever, but the impracticality of his professed "philosophy" at the time suggests that it could not have endured for long without external influence arriving to cut it short, thus preserving the idea of what could have been, without requiring the impossible test of reality to prove that the ideal could be realized. The fragility of this philosophy becomes evident when the reappearance of Perés returns the future commander to his previous position. As long as he could continue to believe that he and Helena were safely isolated from the outside world, he could see Helena's ever-increasing exigency as a sign of her affection: "des caprices si passionnés ne servant qu'à me la rendre plus chère, je redoublai les témoignages de ma tendresse" (115). Yet when Perés and Leniati arrive unexpectedly, the future commander censures the same requests to which he had previously submitted gladly: "Voyez [...] à quoi vous m'exposez par vos caprices. Comment souvenir la vue de deux gens d'honneur dans l'état où je suis ?" (119). After the future commander puts his masculine clothing back on, Leniati removes all doubt as to his position with regard to Helen, clarifying that he intends to recognize her as his daughter only if she accepts his plan for her marriage.

The future commander's ensuing reflection begins with an interesting confusion of words that sheds light on his character. In their edition, Démoris and Leborgne follow Coulet's suggestion of replacing "rejeter" with "regretter" in the following sentence: "Il me passa dans un instant cent idées qui affaiblirent les plus puissantes raisons que j'avais



eues de *regretter* le mariage” (120, emphasis added). With this correction, the list of reasons in favor of the marriage that follows this sentence represent the ideas that flowed through the future commander’s mind at that moment; the list, then, is the enumeration of the “hundred ideas” that combat his previous “reasons for rejecting the marriage.” In the original, uncorrected version, the list is an enumeration of the future commander’s reasons for “regretting” the marriage, and the “hundred ideas” are left implicit. While it is entirely possible that in following Coulet’s suggestion Démoris and Leborgne have restored the text to a form that better reflects Prévost’s original intentions, that is by no means absolutely certain, and the text as originally published produces a reading that harmonizes with the future commander’s unusual contrarian character. When the future commander made the decision to trick Helena into joining him in hiding from her father despite her initial inclination for the marriage, he did so in part because the more logical choice was to go with the current of the social forces surrounding him, given that ultimately they were in consonance with his passion for Helena. However, he did not take that course of action, preferring instead to act in a way that created conflict between his desires and the social forces surrounding him, when there did not need to be any. I have argued that his reason for doing so was a deeply-rooted preference for being in a state of opposition to outside influences, which sometimes results in a modification of his desires, when those desires cease to be opposed to the forces around him, but which can also lead him to take actions that modify those forces, thereby allowing him to maintain his current desires. Given this pattern of action in the past, it is not a stretch of the imagination to find logical meaning in the uncorrected version of the text, even if it does not reflect

Prévost's intentions, which are unknowable. In this account, the list of reasons to marry Helena are included as a representation of the future commander's inner revolt against the consonance of outer forces with his inner desires, a harmony that he finds fundamentally unsettling.

Yet while it is quite possible that at this moment the future commander fully intends to go through with marrying Helena, none of the indications are incompatible with the opposite interpretation. When he signals to Leniati that he only needs a moment of private discussion with his friend Perés to make his decision, it does not necessarily follow that he has, in fact, decided to go through with the marriage, and if Perés seems to think that his friend may be sincere (although he doubts it), it only follows that he did a good job of appearing to be ready to marry Helena (121-22). The future commander offers to give up his ship and his revenue to Perés and to content himself with the revenue that Helena's father will provide when she marries, since it will suffice for the modest life he plans to lead with her (122). Abandoning his pension in addition to his ship is a new idea, but this offer could be seen as another effort on the part of the future commander to get rid of Perés so that he can continue his relationship with Helena on the same unofficial footing as before, since it resembles the strategies he was already planning to employ in order to win Perés over to his side (116). All that is certain is that the future commander intends to sacrifice his career as a knight of Malta in order to continue his relationship with Helena. To entice the young man to bring his behavior back into line, Perés attempts to frighten him with a report of the threats to his reputation and to the security of his relationship with Helena that are brewing on Malta, and to soften the blow

he explains the temporary solutions that he, Perés, has devised to avert them, which require the future commander's immediate return (123). The future commander is momentarily cowed, but remains under the power of his passion for Helena, with the added benefit that he can now see himself as in conflict with society, thus proving to himself the power of his love: "Ma droiture naturelle m'obligea [...] de confesser que suivant les idées communes, je me rendais méprisable aux yeux de ceux qui ne connaissaient pas [...] cette impérieuse passion" (124). His only concession is to ask Perés' help in finding a way to protect his relationship with Helena without marrying her. It does not follow that he had in fact decided to go through with the marriage, only that he now realizes that he cannot neutralize Perés' interference by convincing him that marrying Helena is a good idea. Rather, he must win Perés over to his true cause, which is to preserve his relationship at any cost.

Perés agrees to help his friend, and the two of them come up with a plan for kidnapping Helena once again and taking her back to Malta. Unfortunately for the future commander, by the time the plan is ready, Leniati has already tricked Helena into leaving with him. Perés takes advantage of this separation to manipulate the future commander into returning to Malta without Helena, in hopes of curtailing a liaison he sees as detrimental to his friend's future prospects. He convinces the future commander to let him act as intermediary, and returns with the bad news that Helena intends to remain with her father. The future commander's internal conflict is suggested by the rapid succession of two reactions: indignation at her infidelity followed by excuse attributing her words to the constraint of her father's presence during her conversation with Perés. When Perés

presents a letter in her own hand to the same effect, the future commander is forced to resolve the conflict:

Les vœux qu'elle formait pour ma consolation furent la plus cruelle partie de cette affreuse lettre. J'y crus voir une froideur si déclarée, que m'excitant à faire succéder la haine et le mépris aux tendres sentiments qui me remplissaient encore, je commençai par offrir à Perés de partir à l'instant pour Pouzzoles. Je connaissais mal les ressorts de mon propre cœur, ou plutôt je n'avais point assez d'expérience du caprice des grandes passions, pour savoir qu'un passage si prompt de l'excès de la tendresse à celui de la haine serait un prodige qu'il ne faut point attendre des forces de la nature. (127)

The commander-narrator's retrospective self-analysis suggests that at the time of narration he believes that at the time of the diegesis he truly desired to be free of his passion for Helena, but was simply unable to execute such a drastic modification of his feelings so quickly. Such an interpretation assumes a basic underlying consonance between the future commander's fundamental character and his later interpretation of his character in light of the eventual turn of events. On the contrary, what we have seen of the future commander's oppositional personality thus far would suggest, rather, that his efforts to replace his tender feelings with hateful ones is a way to maintain an oppositional stance toward the outside world. The impossibility of regaining Helena's company requires him to submit to the circumstantial forces leading him back to Malta, but to do so without endorsing Perés' project of rehabilitation he must preserve an impression of being embattled: if not by the social requirements of his knighthood, then by Helena herself, whose infidelity makes the realization of his amorous ambitions impossible while leaving those ambitions themselves intact. These mental gymnastics explain why the future commander says "c'est sur les Turcs que je vais me venger des

trahisons de l'amour" when Perés arranges a battle against the Turks as an opportunity for his friend to proactively counteract the rumors about him and Helena by enhancing his reputation (128). This internal sanctuary for his personal ambitions enables him to participate fully in actions that advance the order's agenda without adopting the order's values as his own.

When Perés and the future commander return to Malta the news of their "successful" caravan ensures the future commander's continued good reputation in spite of the rumors spread by Helena's mother, and Perés takes the opportunity provided by this moment of relative stability to attempt to correct his friend's detrimental impulses by means of a comparison between the latter's attitude toward the order of Malta at the beginning of their friendship and the attitude suggested by his current behavior:

Son exorde fut pris des premières confidences que je lui avais faites après son naufrage. Je lui avais parlé de ma vocation avec transport, et je m'étais efforcé de lui inspirer le même goût pour la religion de Malte. Il me demanda si j'avais perdu cette noble inclination, ou si elle était refroidie. Malgré l'amertume qui régnait encore dans mon cœur, je lui répondis que mes vues n'étaient point changées. (143)

By recalling a point so far in the past, Perés suggests the outline of a summary of the entire narrative up to this point—effectively including the portion that preceded the beginning of the two men's friendship, since Perés refers to the future commander's "vocation," which is associated with the very beginning of the future commander's narration, and is the force that moves him to embark on his first caravan, which is where he encounters Perés. However, the narrative implied by Perés' skeleton summary does not correspond to the one that has actually brought the future commander to the situation in which he finds himself. Perés refers to two points of comparison: the present moment

and the beginning of the narrative, implying a linear trajectory of decreasing religious zeal. However, as I have been demonstrating above, the actual trajectory has been one of ups and downs. The future commander's reply only makes sense in the context of his back-and-forth trajectory of oppositional attitudes: he purposefully misrepresents his internal state because it allows him to continue to see himself as in opposition to those around him without running the risk of being convinced to join them, or of them finding ways to neutralize that opposition. Not understanding the true nature of the future commander's internal trajectory, Perés appears to think that his friend believes that his religious zeal has not decreased, while he, Perés can tell that it has. He therefore suggests that the best way for his friend to ensure his future success is to finalize his commitment to the order by taking the final vows, which he has put off thus far. He takes the vows, thus maintaining the contradiction between his internal state and external appearance: "comme s'ils m'eussent rempli d'une nouvelle ardeur, je ne m'occupai les jours suivants, avec Perés, qu'à former de glorieux projets pour la campagne que nous étions prêts à commencer" (145). Such a course of action would make sense if the future commander's trajectory were indeed a linear descending one, but since it has not been, this development shows the future commander's need to disguise his true feelings from his friend as well as from the authorities of the order from this point forward.

In this way, as the fourth caravan approaches, we see the future commander develop a new method of preserving the conflict between himself and that which is expected of him: keeping his continued passion for Helena secret, which is easier to do while the two lovers are separated, and embracing a new zeal for the order's agenda,

which he can do without betraying his passion for Helena because her supposed infidelity allows him to see himself as forced to turn away from her and toward the order. And when his scandalous behavior necessitates his departure from Malta, the future commander manages to paint that departure as a sign of his submission to the influence of those around him, chiefly Perés, who interprets his friend's impatience to depart as a sign of new zeal for combat: "Je m'applaudissais d'une erreur que j'étais sûr de confirmer par ma conduite dans toutes les occasions qui demanderaient de la valeur" (159). Thus, even after the two lovers reconcile when Helena miraculously reappears at Malta, having escaped her father, the future commander manages to hide his true feelings from Perés, the Grand Master, and other authorities of the order by convincing them that zeal for combat has replaced love as his dominant passion.

#### Fourth Caravan: The Commander Lays a Foundation for Durable Obstacles

While the "caravan" status of each of the three voyages undertaken by the future commander thus far has been complicated by various circumstances, granting the next voyage status as a "caravan" is the most dubious proposition so far (158-229). The first caravan amounted to nothing because of the storm that brought the future commander and Perés together, and the second caravan began as a voyage for procuring a ship and only later came to be counted as a caravan, and the third caravan's military justification is completely out of proportion to its role in furthering the future commander's relationship with Helena. The military justification of the fourth caravan does not even derive from the order's agenda, as the primary purpose of the voyage is to conquer Albania, and only later to deliver the conquered territory to the order, if Perés and the future commander

should ever tire of ruling over “barbarians” (152). Perés even admits the lack of a connection between this expedition and the interests of the order when he proposes to inform the Grand Master of their intentions:

Ses raisons furent que l’aveu de l’ordre ne changerait rien à nos vues, si nous obtenions quelque succès ; et que si la fortune ne secondait pas notre entreprise, il nous serait toujours avantageux de pouvoir compter sur le secours et la protection du grand maître. (154)

The decision of whether or not to undertake the voyage does not require the Grand Master’s approval, since the plan is to sever ties with the order if the campaign is successful, and the potential benefit of maintaining that connection will only arise if it fails. Moreover, this military objective is not the future commander’s true primary motivation, which comes from Helena’s exhortation “de ne pas négliger une entreprise qui pouvait nous assurer pour jamais la tranquillité de notre amour,” and in fact, this motivation “fut pour moi plus puissant que l’exemple de Junius [an apostate Maltese commander who became king of a previously undiscovered island] et l’espérance du trône” (153). The future commander even goes so far as to claim that love is his “seul motif dans une si étrange entreprise” (154). By the narrator’s own admission, then, this voyage is a strange endeavor that goes beyond the scope of the order’s normal operations. Indeed, the extraordinary nature of the proposed campaign is perhaps what allows the future commander to participate in it without going against his oppositional personality.

Counting this voyage as one of the future commander’s caravans, then, makes little sense from the point of view of the Order, but it does serve as a point of articulation in the narrative structure of the text. The voyage’s structural function can be seen in the comparison between the present of narration and the time of diegesis, when the narrator-



commander reflects on his own excesses, which went beyond even the unorthodox character of the voyage on which he was about embark. When the future commander proposes to seduce Junius' three female companions as a method of taking revenge on him for attempting to seduce Helena, Perés gently shows him the injustice of such a course of action; which is incompatible with the more "honorable" choice of maintaining a monogamous liaison with a single mistress. The narrator-commander's reflection on Perés' friendly criticism indicates the evolution of the narrator's personality between the time of the diegesis and the time of narration:

J'ai fait mille fois réflexion combien cette manière tendre et mesurée de combattre les emportements de la jeunesse, est préférable à l'amertume d'une censure violente, qui irrite tout à la fois et contre le précepte et contre celui qui le présente avec trop de rigueur. On ne va que trop reconnaître dans cette remarque le fruit de ma propre expérience. (156)

The narrator's last remark points to the outcome of the tension at work at the moment of his story that he is currently narrating, which is important because the future commander's behavior might not at first glance appear to be compatible with the rank of commander that he ultimately assumes. Rather, the future commander does not take his friend's advice quite so sufficiently to heart as to bring his behavior entirely within the compass of what is tolerated from a person in his position.

During this caravan, there are several instances in which the future commander negotiates between his own impulses and Perés' advice, whether real or imagined. The future commander is increasingly able to take his friend's advice to heart, largely because participating in an endeavor that goes against the agenda of the Order relieves the pressure of needing to position himself in opposition to what is expected of him. The

future commander opens up gradually, first when he seeks Perés' approval of his plan for retaliating against Junius, and then when the commander imagines the advice Perés' would give when the future commander finds himself poised to join forces with a band of pirates as a means of rescuing Helena, but begins to doubt the wisdom of this plan as soon as they leave, asking himself "Perés l'approuvera-t-il? Ce fut la première question par laquelle je mis mon propre cœur à l'épreuve" (175). While still isolated from Perés, who has left on a mission, the future commander attempts to come up with his own solution to preserve Perés' interests as well as his own, and after Perés returns he not only presents his plan for approval, he accepts his friend's modifications without argument and goes on to present additional dilemmas that arise as a result of the modified plan, even before coming up with his own solution to propose (179-80). The future commander's submission goes so far as to encompass blind trust in his friend even when it requires him to restrain his impulses, and now it is Perés who hides his intentions from his friend: "Sans m'expliquer ses principales vues, il m'assura qu'il avait en réserve une voie qu'il ne voulait tenter qu'à l'extrémité, mais dont il croyait le succès infaillible" (187). Later, the reappearance of Perés' old adversary, Dom Antonio, poses another challenge to the future commander's deference to his friend's authority, as the force of indignation on his behalf coupled with his own frustrated amorous ambitions leads him to return to his old ways of concealing his true intentions:

Tout me paraissait si [...] terrible, et pour l'amour et pour l'honneur, que m'abandonnant à la fureur dont je me sentais enflammé contre Antonio, j'en tirais assez de force pour cacher mon dessein à Perés. [...] Si je ne lui promettais rien de contraire à mes sentiments, j'étais bien éloigné de lui découvrir tout ce qui se passait dans mon âme. La vengeance m'occupait uniquement. (190)

It appears that the narrator-commander is not being entirely honest with himself or with the reader when he claims that he was solely concerned with revenge, as his motivation for seeking revenge also came from anger at Antonio's role in separating him from Helena. The future commander's desire to believe in Antonio's good faith may come in part from naïveté and in part from an unconscious bias that privileges interpretations that favor his amorous ambitions, and this internal conflict seems to result in partial deference to Perés' authority except as it comes into conflict with his relationship with Helena. For example, he agrees to spare Antonio's life in exchange for his cooperation with a scheme to allow him and Helena to escape, but he puts off the difficulty of acquiring a ship until later, when he can consult Perés (193-94). Yet when Perés reveals that Antonio's apparent tractability is merely a ruse to get the future commander to help him escape with Helena himself, the future commander only agrees to restrain his vehemence because he believes Perés' observation to be mere conjecture (195). The future commander continues to believe in Antonio's good faith until directly confronted with positive proof of his treachery, yet throughout the entire time during which he believes in Antonio he continues to feel an impulse to share his developing plans with his friend (198). The narrator continues to portray Perés, "à qui tout était suspect," as increasingly distrustful of others, while he describes himself as having faith in others: "J'aimais mieux croire encore que ma mémoire s'était trompée que de reconnaître Dom Antonio pour un perfide" (196-98). Finally forced to admit that Perés was right, the future commander tells the crew to follow Perés' orders when setting sail, having taken Antonio prisoner and recovered Helena (200). The future commander had originally thought to take Perés

to Spain first, now that he is no longer in disgrace, but Perés' order is to return to Malta by way of the island of Gozo, with the intention of interceding once again on behalf of his friend before returning to Spain, and the future commander acquiesces as long as he thinks that this plan will not interfere with his access to Helena.

As the return to Malta approaches, the future commander's old oppositional nature returns as his fear of being separated from Helena increases. He resolves this tension by deciding to run away with Helena, and although he questions whether he should share his doubts with Perés: “[c]ette idée se présenta d’une manière si riante à mon imagination, que m’y attachant aussitôt comme au seul parti que j’eusse à choisir, je mis seulement en délibération si j’en ferais un mystère à Perés” (207). He then decides to impose his own will instead of following Perés' direction: “je me fortifiai tellement dans [la résolution] de rejeter tous les conseils qui ne s’accorderaient point avec mes idées, que je crus pouvoir m’exposer aux graves représentations de Perés” (208). It seems that even with the benefit of hindsight, the narrator-commander does not fully understand the inner workings of his emotions as a younger man, since he sees the fact that he remained constant in denying Perés entry to his cabin for four consecutive hours after the Spaniard criticized his younger friend's plan to abandon his reputation as a sign of new strength of character: “Il fallait que la colère, ou plutôt l’intérêt de mon amour, eût fait une étrange altération dans mon caractère” (211). Yet, at bottom, this reaction is a manifestation of the oppositional personality that has determined the future commander's understanding of his place in the world and therefore his actions, since the beginning of his narrative. In the past, every time that some outside force resolved conflict between himself and the

rest of the world, the future commander countered that resolution either by altering his attitudes toward his environment or by changing his course of action to create a new conflict. Perés manages to overcome the future commander's stubbornness by means of two summaries of the preceding narrative. First, he brings up his own role in encouraging his friend's mistakes: "reprenant tous les degrés par lesquels j'étais parvenu au bord du précipice où il me voyait prêt à tomber, il se reprocha amèrement d'y avoir contribué par l'approbation qu'il avait donnée à mes faiblesses" (209). He then unsuccessfully tries to use this rhetoric to exhort the future commander to repent for his actions. Perés' second summary, which is more effective, emphasizes how he helped the future commander, rather than pointing out how he contributed to his friend's mistakes: "me rappelant toute sa conduite depuis que nous faisons profession d'être amis, il me força de convenir dans moi-même qu'elle n'avait été qu'une suite continuelle de sacrifices qu'il avait faits à l'amitié" (213). The key element here seems to be the interiority of the future commander's reaction: the admission of his friend's sacrifices is private. Accordingly, when the future commander changes his course of action—instead of fleeing with Helena he will trust Perés to arrange for the two lovers to stay together without causing a scandal—he switches his primary allegiance to his friend, and changes his attitude toward the Maltese authorities: by keeping a mistress while continuing to serve the order he will maintain a conflict between his true values and those he professes publicly. But this is a practice is relatively common among members of the order, so the conflict produced in this way is not sufficient to satisfy the future commander for long. For now, his primary

loyalty is to Perés and to the tacit approval of the order, which suggests that his relationship with Helena will soon take a turn for the worse.

The future commander demonstrates his loyalty to Perés when Lirno, the pirate who has been his ally since they left Morocco, asks what to do with the property they seized from Dom Antonio, an apostate Spaniard at the Moroccan court who had conspired against Perés during his exile. Rather than bring this property to Perés as compensation for the wrongs he had suffered at Antonio's hands, the future commander uses his own instincts as a guide for determining what Perés would want him to do: "je crus devoir juger de ses sentiments par les miens, ou plutôt j'avais trop de preuves de sa générosité pour ne pas prévoir qu'il dédaignerait une proie dont il n'aurait l'obligation qu'au malheur d'autrui" (224). The future commander's loyalty to Perés has led him to internalize his friend's values, or at least to believe that he has done so, although he may be projecting his own values onto his friend. The future commander's loyalty to Perés remains in tension with his love for Helena, and he begins to fear what may happen if Perés is unsuccessful in pleading his cause with the Grand Master:

L'amour m'échauffant plus que jamais, je faisais réflexion que dans les sentiments que je connaissais à mon ami je ne pouvais être excusé d'imprudence, puisqu'autant qu'il était porté à favoriser ma passion, s'il trouvait le moyen de la concilier avec mon devoir, autant je devais craindre qu'il ne se joignît lui-même au grand maître pour la combattre, et pour m'en arracher l'objet, s'il se persuadait une fois qu'elle était incompatible avec ma fortune et ma gloire. (225)

Given Perés' perfect track record of saving his friend's reputation, the future commander's imperfect confidence in his friend may have more to do with his unconscious need to maintain the conflict between his passion and his duties than it does

with the actual likelihood of Perés' success. The future commander even falls back temporarily on his old habit of performing docility to buy time: "Quoique je ne pusse rien lui refuser après le nouveau service qu'il venait de me rendre, je me flattai de le faire changer de pensée en lui promettant toute la modération qu'il désirait" (226). However, in contrast to his earlier use of this strategy with Helena's father, on this occasion the future commander couples it with genuine belief in his indebtedness to his friend, suggesting that his loyalty to Perés and to the order has begun to replace his love for Helena as his dominant passion.

The reported similarity between Junius' story and that of the future commander complicates the reader's perception of the work's narrative structure. While awaiting Perés' return on Gozo Island, the future commander happens to run into Junius, who tells him about how, having been deposed from his position as king, he finds himself encumbered by an inconvenient mistress, whose unplanned presence makes it impossible for him take up his old position as commander (217-20). The future commander recognizes himself in Junius' tale: "Je ne pus cacher à Junius que mes peines, mes inquiétudes, mes craintes étaient de la même nature que les siennes ; enfin, qu'il ne fallait qu'un même nom pour deux histoires si ressemblantes" (220). The chief similarities are that both Junius' mistress and Helena dress as men in order to be able to accompany their lovers secretly, and that both men must somehow convince the Maltese authorities that they are not romantically involved with them in order to be received back into the fold of the order. The differences between the two men manifest primarily in their ability to enjoy their relationships with their mistresses once Perés makes it safe for them to return

to Malta. While Junius' personality allows him to do so calmly without scandal ("son caractère lui promettait beaucoup de tranquillité dans ses amours" [230]), the future commander continues to cultivate conflict between his passion and his responsibilities. At first, Perés' requirement that the future commander wait two weeks to see Helena after returning to Malta provides the necessary tension, since it allows him to pit his idealized love against the reality of his loyalty to Perés and the order. This temporary measure is insufficient to satisfy the future commander's oppositional tendencies for long, though, and for any kind of durable resolution, the circumstances must shift significantly in one way or another.

#### Fifth Caravan: Permanent Opposition through Internalized Obstacles

The required shift takes place in between the fourth and fifth caravans in the form of Helena's disfiguration due to disease. In the narrator-commander's words, "il s'était [...] fait une étrange révolution dans tous mes sentiments" (231). The future commander attributes the setup for this change to the idealized image of Helena that he constructs in his mind during a two-week waiting period imposed by Perés during which they communicate by correspondence alone: "Cette vie avait augmenté l'ardeur de mes sentiments jusqu'à me persuader que Helena était l'unique bien pour moi" (231). Yet the future commander's position is not internally consistent. On one hand, he believes that "J'aurais sacrifié pour elle ma vie et ma fortune," and that his love for Helena is perfect: "En un mot, je me croyais à la perfection de l'amour" (231). On the other hand, he tells Perés that he would not accept any extension of the two-week waiting period, "dût-il m'en coûter tout ce que j'ai de cher et de précieux" (231). If Helena is the future



commander's "unique bien," how can he sacrifice his life and his fortune to her?

Moreover, how could he pay the price of holding Perés to the agreed two-weeks if the cost was his dearest and most precious possession, i.e. Helena herself? Luckily, Perés keeps his word and does not put the future commander's claim to the test.

The test, which the future commander fails completely, comes when reality fails to live up to his expectations, as Helena has been completely disfigured by smallpox. The future commander understands that his passion, while intense, has never led him beyond Helena's superficial attractiveness, and realizes that he must develop a deeper attraction to her if their relationship is to survive: "Il fallait approfondir son caractère, y démêler ce qui était capable de flatter mon esprit et ma raison : j'y trouverais peut-être aujourd'hui de quoi me soutenir contre les funestes impressions que son visage fait sur mes yeux" (234). However, Perés knows that the future commander will not be able to overcome his shallowness; and while he refrains from telling his friend his true opinion, he does so only to provide him an opportunity to figure it out for himself: "Il prévient donc que mon dessein n'aboutirait qu'à me tourmenter par de vains efforts, et peut-être le regarda-t-il comme une espèce de réparation que je voulais faire à ma maîtresse pour l'insulte que je lui faisais en cessant malgré moi de l'aimer" (235). The internal turmoil that the narrator-commander imagines Perés to have thought to be the future commander's objective in setting himself this impossible task is ultimately what allows the future commander to preserve his new loyalty to Perés and to maintain his renewed commitment to the order. Because his relationship with Helena is now inherently conflicted there is no need for it

to be in tension with his other loyalties and responsibilities to satisfy his oppositional personality.

This stage of the future commander's evolution represents a turning point in the novel's narrative structure, one that initiates the process of closing off the current phase of the protagonist's life story while opening up the future as both an implied frame and a potential entry point for another installment. During this period, the future commander's contradictory feelings toward Helena fluctuate wildly, from disgust to apathy to longing. After sustained efforts toward cultivating an attraction to Helena not based on her physical appearance, Perés' influence forces the future commander to admit the truth when she asks him directly whether he no longer loves her: "quand le désir de la ménager aurait pu me rendre capable de recourir à quelque détour, la honte d'employer l'artifice et la dissimulation devant Perés et son Espagnole, qui connaissaient le fond de mes sentiments, suffisait pour me forcer d'être sincère" (237). Helena reproaches the future commander's shallowness, given that his feelings for her seem to be based solely on "un objet aussi fragile que la beauté," but she also points out that since the disease has only affected her face, not the rest of her body, perhaps her lover's passion should not have been completely negated, and the future commander replies that while he has never untangled "l'origine de mes sentiments," he sees now that "s'ils avaient été tels qu'elle paraissait le croire, il devenait fort heureux pour moi d'en être délivré" (238). This response leads the future commander to undertake a more definitive separation between himself and Helena by offering her a generous fixed income, but Helena prefers to make

common cause with Perés' mistress in rejecting their lovers' attempts to buy them off by bringing accusations against them to the Grand Master.

This inquiry being the first time that the future commander directly witnesses Perés' defense of his reputation before the Grand Master, and therefore the reader's first experience of Perés' full powers of persuasion, it is a perfect opportunity to bring the current status of the text's narrative progress into relationship with the past. First, the future commander explains that Perés plans to compensate his mistress for abandoning her by ceding her the entirety of his assets in Malta, which include "sa part du seul butin que nous avons enlevé dans notre seconde campagne" (241). It is somewhat difficult to determine precisely which "campaign" is being referred to here, since the first voyage that Perés and the future commander took together began as a simple journey to Venice to acquire a ship, and only took on a military aspect by accident when two men were bringing the ship back to Malta, which means it is not clear whether their "second campaign" designates the time when Helena's chances of a normal life reunited with her father in Italy are spoiled by the future commander's insistence on living with her in romantic isolation, or whether it refers to the abortive attempt to conquer Albania—which actually leads the future commander and Perés to Morocco. The accusations brought by the two women provide another opportunity for retrospective comparison: "Perés [...] commença toute l'histoire de nos amours, en donnant un tour badin à des aventures dont la plupart n'étaient pas assez sérieuses pour en recevoir un autre" (242). The narrator-commander's account of how he and Perés defended themselves glosses over most of the details of their joint narrative, focusing more on recent events, including

the “scene” that prompted the accusations and some of the circumstances of their most recent voyage. The only earlier event that the narrator-commander specifically mentions in this account is “la séduction et l’enlèvement d’Helena” (242). This version of the timeline makes it appear obvious that the two women’s accusations are motivated by cupidity rather than by personal injustice.

After this failed attempt to force the future commander’s hand through the agency of the Grand Master, Helena tries a more conciliatory approach, demonstrating the built-in contradiction that now characterizes the relationship between her and the future commander. She asks for a six-week reprieve to undergo a dangerous treatment at the hands of a shady healer to improve her appearance, as the future commander later finds out when he has reason to consult the same healer. This discovery nearly undoes his resolution to part ways with Helena:

Elle m’aime, disais-je ; eh ! quel autre bonheur ai-je attendu de l’amour que celui d’être aimé ? Ne suis-je pas trop heureux qu’elle estime assez mon cœur pour le vouloir conserver au risque de sa vie ? [...] [J]e fus attendri de sa résolution, jusqu’à mettre en balance si je ne devais pas lui épargner un danger où j’étais bien sûr que l’amour l’exposait plus que la vanité de son sexe, et la reprendre dans l’état où elle était, pour lui marquer plus de tendresse et d’attachement que jamais. Mais l’affreuse image qui s’était gravée dans ma mémoire s’y renouvela si vivement au premier pas que je fis pour suivre cette nouvelle idée, que sentant tous mes désirs éteints au même moment, je revins à l’indifférence qui avait été depuis quelques semaines la disposition habituelle de mon cœur. (245-46)

Before even waiting to see whether the treatment will succeed enough to revive his passion, the future commander decides to follow the example of Perés, who makes a plan to marry his mistress off to their lieutenant, by convincing his valet to marry Helena. Once again, though, Helena’s efforts nearly overcome the future commander’s disgust.

When it becomes clear that the treatment has in fact worsened her appearance, Helena sends a letter, “un modèle de raison et de modestie,” to the future commander “confessant qu’elle n’était plus propre à inspirer de l’amour” and asking to be established in a convent (250). Once again, the idea of Helena that her letter evokes in the future commander’s mind, “cette douceur,” temporarily renews “toutes les anciennes traces de [s]a passion,” but the memory of “ce terrible visage, qui [l]’avait guéri malgré [lui]” almost immediately does him “le même service” (250). The future commander takes Helena’s request as an expression of desperation and persists in his plan to marry her off, rather than consulting her preferences (251). Even when she and Perés’ mistress discover the two men’s scheme, which leads them both to decline their lovers’ proxy suitors, the future commander continues to push Helena into his valet’s arms, and only accedes to her demands when she begs him to allow her to take a place in his household as a servant: “la trouvant obstinée à me répéter la même prière, je fus si touché de son attachement, qu’en lui accordant ce qu’elle me demandait de si bonne grâce, j’oubliai la difformité de son visage, pour l’embrasser avec toute la tendresse de mon cœur” (254). The inherent conflict that is now an irremediable part of the relationship between the future commander and Helena would seem, then, to satisfy the former’s deep-seated need to see himself as being in conflict with the world around him, but since his feelings for Helena are only revived by her continual self-abasement, an eventual limit to that resource now begins to appear over the horizon.

The harmony that appears to exist now between the future commander’s obligations to the order and his inner emotional life is manifest as he embarks for his fifth

caravan, which is composed of a brief introductory phase and a longer main phase (254-56, 262-82). The motivation for this expedition comes from an absence of worry: “Je me trouvais libre par un soin si particulier de la fortune à lever tous mes obstacles, que mon premier désir fut de me livrer désormais sans partage aux glorieux devoirs de ma profession” (254). It is difficult to understand just exactly what the future commander means here. Is he eager to demonstrate that he is grateful to some kind of Providence? If so, what, precisely, are the obstacles he is grateful have been removed, and why would devoting himself fully to his vocational duties demonstrate that gratitude? Does he mean the failure of the attempt by Perés’ mistress to turn the Grand Master against him and Perés? He must not mean his attempts to get rid of Helena and Perés’ mistress by marrying them off, since that scheme turned ended disastrously. The main candidate for the referent of “tous mes obstacles” is Helena’s persistence in wanting to do whatever may be necessary in order to stay with him.

The narrator-commander represents this caravan in a most well-developed expression of his professional zeal thus far in terms of matériel: “Mon vaisseau se trouva mieux équipé que jamais au premier vent qui devint favorable à notre départ” (254-55). However, he makes no specific indication of what preparations, if any, he or Perés might have taken to bring the ship to that standard, so it seems like the narrator-commander may be stretching the truth, and the ship may merely have been in as good shape as ever, but not better than ever. Just as the ship is ready to leave at the first favorable wind, but is not itself materially different than it was before, the future commander is ready to serve his order as soon as the forces preventing him from doing so abate, as long as there is

some kind of paradoxical relationship between the various parts of his life. The future commander's apparent eagerness is less a sign of true zeal than of a reaction against what he sees as inconveniences: by rushing to serve his order, he demonstrates that he was being held back, whereas before he was relying on being held back to maintain his vision of himself.

This expedition interrupts the current narrative progression, providing contrast when the future commander returns sooner than expected, having encountered success almost immediately upon setting out. After defeating three pirate ships, the future commander returns to Malta to find himself ambushed by Helena's mother, who attempts to kidnap him, reminding him of Perés' story: "L'exemple de Perés me fit rappeler ce que j'avais à craindre" (258). Once again, Helena's docility saves the future commander, as she manages to convince her father, who has accompanied her mother to Malta, that she wants to stay with him when asked what she wants to do next:

Cette tendre fille leva les yeux sur moi, comme pour chercher dans les miens ce que je lui permettais de répondre. Je ne sais si la compassion et la reconnaissance mirent quelque air de douceur sur mon visage, mais le prenant pour un signe que ses désirs étaient entendus, elle accourut vers moi les bras ouverts, et elle saisit ma main, pour marquer à son père de quoi elle faisait son partage. (261)

By limiting his response to an equivocal and ill-defined facial expression, the future commander manages to retain Helena's devotion without committing himself to her emotionally, while simultaneously maintaining the conflict between himself and her. Those around the future commander see this newest development as a victory over himself, and as a sacrifice that expiates his youthful transgressions (262). And at the same time, the future commander is able to frame his ties with Helena as being in conflict with

his newest impossible desire, which is focused on Perés: “Le plus ardent de mes désirs aurait été de passer le reste de mes jours avec lui” (262-63). Now that the contradiction of the future commander's relationship to Helena is firmly established and has reached a point of stasis. He preserves his passion without either fully satisfying it or allowing it to subside completely, and takes care not to allow it to be replaced by duty to the order, resulting in a shift of his libidinal orientation from his lover to his friend.

The future commander accompanies Perés to Spain, and Perés gives in to pressure to get married, in large part to provide his friend the satisfaction of being able to attend the wedding. However, Perés' bride-to-be makes inappropriate advances toward the future commander, who is obliged by the laws of honor to inform his friend, who then calls off the wedding. Perés asks the future commander to inform the interested parties, unwittingly sending him to a duel in which he is seriously wounded. When Perés visits his wounded friend, the two men share a very intimate moment: “les sentiments de son cœur passaient au fond du mien, et j'éprouvai qu'on peut être aussi sensible au zèle d'un ami qu'à la passion d'une maîtresse” (271). However, Perés dies of a broken heart, separated from the future commander as a result of misguided concern for both men's health: “Je l'aurais eu du moins devant les yeux, et de quelque manière que le ciel disposât de sa vie et de la mienne, c'eût été une consolation pour l'un ou pour l'autre d'expirer entre les bras de son ami” (271). Denied even “cette funeste douceur,” the future commander's newly intensified feelings for his friend are as though suspended in the unrequited and conflicted heightened state brought on by the unravelling of Perés' plans for marriage and his feelings of guilt for having caused the future commander to be



injured while defending his reputation, which guilt in turn adds poignancy to the future commander's feelings toward Perés.

After Perés' death, there is a shuffling of roles between the characters that paradoxically demonstrates the primacy of the previous distribution of roles while revealing the impossibility of undoing the redistribution. First, the future commander takes on his friend's role as advocate when Lirno runs afoul of the Spanish authorities: "La faute [...] qu'il venait de commettre était si extraordinaire, que pouvant être tournée en badinage, je la représentai comme le reste d'une forte habitude, qui n'avait pas permis à un vieux corsaire de demeurer oisif et tranquille à la vue d'une proie si riche" (273). Lirno's offense is an unusual one, like the future commander's were, which is what makes it possible for the future commander to defend the pirate, just as the strangeness of the future commander's behavior made it possible for Perés to convince the Grand Master to excuse it time and again. However, just as Perés' efforts to defend the future commander failed to prevent the younger man from committing new offenses, Lirno is unable to control his criminal urges, and the future commander continues to protect him from the consequences: "le penchant qu'il avait à s'enrichir du bien d'autrui le fit retomber dans un autre embarra, dont il ne sortit pas moins heureusement" (274). These urges lead him to encourage the passion of Perés' former fiancée for the future commander, all the while planning to abduct her for the future commander's benefit and to take control of her wealth for his own benefit: "Ainsi Lirno toujours rappelé à ses anciens principes ne connaissait rien de si doux que la rapine et l'enlèvement" (275). Apparently, the narrator-commander fails to see any irony in his censure of Lirno's

predilection for two activities in which he himself has engaged repeatedly throughout the course of the narrative. Moreover, by taking on the thankless role of protecting an incorrigible miscreant, the future commander gains access to a force against which to exert himself, now from the opposite side of the relationship to the one he occupied while Perés was still alive. This opposition allows him to preserve the conflict between his duty to his deceased friend and his conflicted relationship with Helena without resolving that tension in favor of either, since both relationships are reduced to a state of living death.

The advances of Perés' former fiancée provide the future commander an external force to resist, which allows him to preserve both his conflicted relationship with Helena and his loyalty to Perés and the order. After hearing Lirio's version of the future commander's story, Perés' ex-fiancée attempts to occupy Helena's former place in the future commander's heart: "ne pouvant s'imaginer qu'un cœur accoutumé aux tendresses de l'amour fût revenu pour toujours fût revenu pour toujours à l'indifférence, elle ne désespéra point [que] je ne pusse la substituer à la place d'Helena" (274-75). However, although she cannot be aware of it, such an assumption is invalidated by the future commander's oppositional personality. When he boards his ship to leave Spain, the future commander finds this unnamed Spanish woman already onboard, and is gratified to observe that he is not susceptible to her charms:

Je me faisais [...] un plaisir, après avoir été si longtemps faible, de pouvoir résister aux attaques d'une femme" ; et cette parfaite insensibilité où j'ai passé le reste de ma vie commençait à s'établir sur des fondements qui ne devaient plus être sujets à changer. J'avais été comme épuisé par l'amour et l'amitié [...]. (277)

This seems to be more like wishful thinking on the part of the future commander, or

revisionist recollection on the part of the narrator-commander. How “perfect” can his insensibility be if it allows him to succumb to Helena’s advances, as it does when he returns to Malta? The principal excuse he offers to placate his would-be mistress betrays Helena’s continuing importance in his life, even now that he (erroneously) believes himself free of any feelings for her: “ma fortune [...] n’avait que trop souffert d’un autre engagement, après lequel je ne pouvais plus en prendre de la même nature” (277). This equivocal statement preserves the possibility of an attachment between Helena and the future commander, and keeps her place in his heart open even should that attachment never be rekindled. The narrator-commander then sketches a self-portrait that sheds more light on his reinterpretation of the past:

La perte de mon ami ayant comme changé mon caractère, j’étais devenu plus grave dans ma figure, plus circonspect dans mes idées, plus capable même de m’attacher d’une vue ferme à mes réflexions ; et l’héritage que j’avais recueilli du sage Perés était un commencement de prudence. (278)

There is no indication in the text that Perés’ former fiancée notices the future commander’s new attitude, which suggests that the narrator-commander’s memory is showing the influence of his later opinion of himself, which requires this to be a moment of transition in his personal narrative.

The revisionist character of the narrator-commander’s retrospective interpretation is further supported by his inability to understand why those around him might justifiably think of him as a pirate, not as a chivalrous man of God. First, he cannot explain the Spanish woman’s disbelief at seeing “un corsaire tel que toi faire le vertueux et le magnanime” other than as a result of insanity or desire for revenge (278). Thus, the Spanish woman’s interest ultimately serves to strengthen the future commander’s

paradoxical tie to Helena. When Lirno recommends immediate departure after taking the unfortunate woman to a monastery, the future commander solicits no further information “pour savoir le fond d’une aventure dont [il] étai[t] bien moins occupé que du perpétuel sujet de [s]a tristesse” (279). The narrator-commander does not explicitly define the subject he has in mind, but it is most likely a complex constellation of his conflicted relationships to his deceased friend, his disfigured lover, and his professional reputation. Similarly, when Lirno’s assumption that the future commander will approve of his theft of the Spanish woman’s money and jewels, the future commander is offended by the pirate’s assumption that he would share his attitudes toward personal property:

Quelle raison avais-je donnée à ce brigand de me croire capable de partager ses crimes ? Il m’avait vu exercer à la vérité une espèce de piraterie contre les Turcs, et peut-être mettait-il peu de distinction entre son métier et le mien ; mais il ne fallait pas plus d’esprit et de courage qu’il n’en avait, pour sentir la différence qui devait se trouver dans nos principes, et je rougissais qu’il eût pu m’en croire de semblables aux siens. (280)

However, if the future commander had sufficient self-knowledge to appreciate the irrationality of his behavior during the time he has known Lirno, he might not be so surprised. The future commander’s lack of understanding extends to how he views his role as Lirno’s protector and role model, as he mistakenly assumes that “la seule envie de se conserver mon amitié” will bring him back in line (281). Once again, if he understood his own role in the dynamic of his relationship with Perés, he would not expect Lirno to fall in line simply on the strength of their friendship, which pales in comparison to the future commander’s friendship with Perés.

The paradoxical nature of the future commander's personality persists until the very end of the narrative. His final return to Malta sees yet another renewal of his professional zeal, and an attendant renewal of his passion for Helena. The narrator-commander attributes this change to the removal of obstacles, failing to see that he would begin to have an opposite reaction if new obstacles were not to eventually materialize:

L'amour du devoir et le goût de ma profession semblaient renaître dans mon cœur, à mesure que les obstacles disparaissaient. Je me trouvai si rempli de ses deux sentiments en arrivant au port, que je ne m'imaginais plus que rien fût capable de les suspendre, ou de les troubler. Cependant, j'eus encore une occasion de reconnaître que la vertu demande d'être fortifiée par l'habitude. (282)

The narrator-commander fails to specify what the obstacles are whose removal has permitted this change of attitude, and he frames the forthcoming renewal of his passion for Helena as an isolated final test rather than as a further instance of a pattern of behavior that he has been following since the beginning of his narrative. By remaining vague, the narrator-commander leaves open the possibility of multiple narrative trajectories that lead to this point and that continue from it. There are different ways in which to analyze the narrative trajectory according to how far back one considers the process of removing obstacles to have begun, and the remainder of the text, as well as any hypothetical continuation, real or imagined, has the potential to retroactively alter the meaning of the present narrative moment.

The positions that the future commander adopts vis-à-vis his duty and his passion are incompatible with each other, just as his representation of them in speech at a crucial moment is ungrammatical. While the future commander may believe himself henceforth immune to any forces that might distract him from that duty, principally his passion for

Helena, he nevertheless finds himself “si sensible à l’emportement de sa joie” that he abandons himself “aux dernières faiblesses” with her (282-83). He then begins to conduct himself toward Helena on the footing of their previous relationship by allowing himself to think of his behavior as a favor to Helena rather than a reflection of his own desires, although he recognizes the danger in hindsight: “je touchai peut-être au point de me retrouver plus tendre et plus passionné que jamais” (283). When the Grand Master names him a court ambassador, an appointment that requires him to leave Malta, Helena takes the opportunity provided by a moment of intimacy to express her unhappiness at the prospect of being left behind. This opens the future commander’s eyes to the fact that he has, without realizing it, resumed his relationship with Helena: “Je sentis mon cœur beaucoup plus engagé que je ne me l’étais figuré, et je frémis d’un obstacle que je m’étais formé volontairement” (284). As he is about to leave the room, presumably to remove himself from the source of the temptation to abandon his duty that in fact, paradoxically, enhances his commitment to doing that duty, he makes a point of letting Helena know that he believes himself free of any obligation to choose her over his professional ambitions: “comblé comme je suis de vos faveurs, je ne sais point que je doive vous préférer aux établissements que le cours de ma vie semble me promettre, et que je me ruinerais infailliblement en recommençant à m’attacher à vous” (284-85). Beneath the future commander’s assertion that despite Helena lavishing her favors on him he does not see himself as being in her debt, should we understand that perhaps he is able to see himself as being free of any such obligation precisely because she has given of herself so generously? Whether consciously or not, Prévost has rendered the internal contradiction

of the future commander's attitude toward Helena as a grammatical inconsistency. The parallelism breaks down when the introductory statement "I doubt," which applies perfectly to the first proposition, "that I ought to prefer," fails to correspond to the second proposition, "that I would ruin myself." If the future commander wants to justify his decision to abandon Helena in favor of pursuing his career, the "doubt" in this sentence must be negated if it is to apply to the idea that he should be obligated to prefer Helena over his career, as indicated by the use of the subjunctive mood, and not to the idea that he would ruin himself by taking back up his old relationship to her, as indicated by the use of the conditional mood.

The narrator-commander portrays himself as having undergone significant personal growth that enables him to behave differently than in the past, but fails to acknowledge the continuity of that behavior. The future commander admits the continuity of his behavior: "J'ai le même cœur, [...] les mêmes transports, et je suis capable par conséquent des mêmes faiblesses" (284). The narrator-commander, however, underscores his personal growth:

Ma passion était peut-être aussi violente qu'elle l'avait été dans les plus tendres moments de ma vie. Mais ma raison s'était fortifiée. Je fermai l'oreille d'avance à toutes les objections que j'attendais d'Helena quoique je me sentisse le cœur aussi agité peut-être que le sien. (285)

The narrator-commander fails to compare his current moral fortitude to his lack thereof at any specific prior occasion, although there are other instances of similar attempts on the future commander's part to preemptively neutralize arguments against his desired course of action. All that is different is that on this occasion his course of action coincides with what society expects of him. And yet even comparing this course of action to his very

first decision to maintain his religious vocation despite the death of his older brother does not reveal much difference, given that it could be argued that by doing so he was conforming to a higher level of expectations for himself. In the end, though, all that is clear is that the future commander's actions continually put him in opposition with one force or another, and this newest development is no different. Even Helena's entry into a convent at the end of the novel is perhaps not as definitive as it might seem. True, the narrator-commander has made a reference to his improved conduct, which would suggest that he ended his relationship with Helena, but the very act of writing these memoirs, along with their abrupt end suggest that it may not have been long until the public approval that he earned by handling the entrance of Helena and her mother into a convent with "noblesse" began to inspire a change of heart.

## Conclusion

The narrative structure of the future commander's story has not been a major focus of the limited critical attention that has been devoted to this novel, but my analysis can enrich the perspectives that scholars have taken with regard to it recently. One of the most sustained critical examinations of this novel occurred recently as part of a colloquium organized around the novels that Prévost wrote after 1740, which represent a new period in his artistic career.<sup>132</sup> Several of the participants studied *La Jeunesse du commandeur*. René Démoris notes the comparatively simple narrative structure of the novel in comparison with Prévost's earlier work, but also the interaction between the future

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<sup>132</sup> Published as a collected volume: *Les Expériences romanesques de Prévost après 1740*. Ed. Erik Leborgne and Jean-Paul Sermain. Louvain: Peeters, 2003.



commander's story and that of his friend Perés, which in some ways serves as an asymmetrically complementary counterexample, but fails to notice how that interaction relates to the dispositive boundary between the two parts of the novel or to the narrative structural rhythm provided by the future commander's voyages ("Imposture" 19, 23). Elisabeth Lavezzi's character study of Perés pays little attention to the fact that his story is related in two main periods, though considering his story as a sort of inset frame for the future commander's story would enrich her analysis. Jean-Paul Scheider's contribution to the volume is an argument in favor of comparing *Manon Lescaut* and *La Jeunesse du commandeur*, in which he builds on his earlier rereading of *Manon Lescaut* in the context of the entirety of the *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*, which puts it in touch with concerns related to dispositive structure. However, although he analyses the fragmentation of both narratives, his analysis does not take into account how the interaction between the narrative structure and dispositive structure might differ from each other in these apparently very formally similar novels.

## Conclusion

Two questions provided my point of departure: first, what insight can we gain by analyzing Prévost's novels as if each installment were an independent entity, and, second, what can we learn by comparing the results of that analysis with the results of an analysis based on the divisions inscribed within the novels? While twentieth-century scholars have attempted, on the one hand, to demonstrate the hidden unity of Prévost's works (e.g. Sgard, *Prévost romancier*), and endeavored to prove, on the other hand, that he wrote in ignorance of the overall trajectories of his narratives (e.g. Escola, "Longueur"), my approach has shown that the question of whether these works are unified or disjointed is not the most important one. Rather, Prévost's manipulation of the aesthetic mode of eighteenth-century fiction shows the equal aesthetic importance of both narrative segmentation of various kinds and of overarching narrative objectives—which, while perhaps not as inexorable as those of more "modern" fiction (Escola, "Clou"), did play a definite role in shaping *ancien régime* French narrative fiction. These questions lead to a key realization about the nature of the pre-nineteenth-century novel that research based on other assumptions risks ignoring: novels of the eighteenth century were defined by unstable frontiers. Because it was much more difficult, before the nineteenth century, for readers to positively identify the moment when publication of a novel had ceased definitively, a novel's current state at any moment could be subjected to the same evaluation as that which a "whole" novel would receive after definitive completion.

I began my study by demonstrating that an analysis based on the interaction between narrative structure and dispositive structure can lead to new insight into those of

Prévost's work whose dispositive structures challenge our modern paradigms, which take the chapter as the fundamental unit. To address the most striking difference, periodical publication, which is now quite unusual, I began by studying *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, and my analysis made it clear that another structure was at work in the novel in addition to its dispositive structure, one that might have been more difficult to perceive had the work's dispositive structure more resembled the prototypical chapter-based structure most commonly associated with novels today. By identifying narrative structural transitions at points of narrative relay, narrative summary, inserted narration, and pseudoworks, I was able to demonstrate that the novel's narrative structure is based on the protagonist's gradual transformation from the passive object of his own narration into the active agent of the events of his narration. I also showed that the unity of the two periods of publication derives not only from thematic consistency or from a pre-planned plot, which would have been nearly impossible given the pragmatic realities of publication in eighteenth-century France, but from Prévost's manipulation of the interaction between dispositive structure and narrative structure, which allowed him to graft a second career onto his protagonist's story in a way that is satisfying to read, and which adds detail to the protagonist's self-portrait, both by means of contrast between the mature count and his youthful charge, and by means of an amplified reproduction of the work's original narrative structure.

I then turned my attention to another factor that necessitates this kind of analysis: the presence of pseudoworks within larger works, such as *Manon Lescaut*, which appears as the last installment of the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, although in terms of

narrative sequence it belongs within the body of the work. To more fully address the function of this compositional technique I analyzed its most extreme use by Prévost, in *Voyages de Robert Lade*. By using the lens of intertextuality to study the relationships between the various inserted narrations and texts that appear in this unusual novel, and between those pseudoworks and the larger whole that they form when taken together with the frame narrative, I was able to show that the idea of textual identity allows readers to put themselves in the place of the protagonist, who himself takes a critical stance toward what he encounters during his travels. Going beyond the question of plagiarism allows a modern reader to appreciate Prévost's use of contrast between genres through juxtaposition of different pseudoworks with different kinds of personal narrative to create a work that stands as a "whole" presenting the appearance of assemblage, both to contemporary audiences and today's readers. Although *Voyages de Robert Lade* was not a resounding commercial success, it remains a valid form of narration that was made possible by a certain set of expectations regarding the possible ways in which narrative could be divided up into dispositive units, and we risk misunderstanding it if we ignore all other factors aside from the need to produce text to publish, which may well have motivated Prévost's choice of compositional methods, but which do not account for the entirety of his technique.

Following my analysis of internal segmentation on a small scale with the phenomenon of pseudoworks, I studied a similar phenomenon at a much larger scale, namely that of a long publication hiatus, which occurs in *Cleveland*. While *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* was published in three installments, each installment after the first

represented an unplanned extension of the original narrative framework, transforming what had been a more-or-less unified whole, albeit one that contained semi-independent entities, into a composite whole with interruptions and resumptions, in the case of *Cleveland* the interruption was just as unexpected, but has a different status vis-à-vis the wholeness of the work. Prévost's resumption of *Cleveland* following the hiatus involved recasting the preceding portion of the narrative through complementary retelling and redefinition through the use of retrospective symmetry. However, these techniques do not constitute an artistic failure, as they are the same kind of techniques used in the first part of the novel, and this technical continuity demonstrates that the effects of the pragmatic conditions of publication within which Prévost was working were in force at all moments of composition, and were not merely the result of accommodation after-the-fact of the work's critical reception and the publication of an apocryphal conclusion.

I then studied a variation of the long hiatus scenario that poses a difficult problem for the modern critic: that of resumption of publication after a hiatus and continuation by an unauthorized second writer, which occurs in *Mémoires d'un honnête homme*. Although this novel brings us closer to the relatively unified physical form of the prototypical modern novel, it nevertheless reproduces in miniature two of the main characteristics that make it difficult for modern readers to approach *Cleveland* as eighteenth-century readers did. By comparing the consequences of these two characteristics to the modern phenomena of "reboots" and "retcons," it becomes possible to see both the seemingly unfinished original state of Prévost's text and Mauvillon's modifications of the narrative structure in his continuation as participating in a system of

esthetic norms, rather than discounting them as undesirable byproducts of the limitations of artistic genius posed by less-than-ideal working conditions. Because both writers create different relationships between narrative structure and dispositive structure in their respective versions of the “same” text, it becomes possible for the modern critic to observe what might otherwise be invisible, namely the complex ways in which the interactions between the two structural systems contribute to the transformation of the *text* into a *work*.

My next analysis came even closer to the form of the modern novel by focusing on *La Jeunesse du commandeur*, a novel that was published in a single uninterrupted installment. I chose not to use *Manon Lescaut* as my example, although it might at first appear to be the most obvious choice to further narrow the gap between the eighteenth century and today, given its critical reputation as an early example of psychological realism. Rather, the unbreakable connections between *Manon Lescaut* and its original host work, *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, planned or not, make it less of an ideal example than *La Jeunesse du Commandeur*, which was a complete, independent work at the time of publication. Accordingly, any interactions between disposition and narration that persist despite the novel's more modern-like form cannot be solely attributed to the exigencies of eighteenth-century publication. Modern critics must, therefore, be open to the possibility of modern parallels with the narrative–dispositive interactions that can be observed in *La Jeunesse du Commandeur*, notably the retreat of the seemingly clear-cut interaction between the novel's dispositive and narrative structures, which gives way to a

more complex and ambiguous relationship as the plot progresses, with the boundaries of narrative units becoming camouflaged by dispositive boundaries and vice-versa.

There remains a final barrier to applying the narrative–dispositive distinction to modern novels: the future commander’s projected itinerary of sea voyages provides a readymade narrative structural horizon of expectations, which is not a necessary feature of the prototypical modern novel. Although it would not be impossible to imagine such a feature in a chapter-based novel, an even stricter test case would be a novel like *Histoire d’une Grecque moderne*, which lacks such an obvious projected narrative structural model. And while my analysis of *La Jeunesse du Commandeur* is adequate proof that significant interactions can occur between narrative structure and dispositive structure in a novel whose material form resembles modern novels in every respect save for the presence of chapters (size, publication, and independence from other texts), it is useful to undertake a brief sketch of such an analysis on what is arguably the most formally modern novels of Prévost’s entire body of work.

Even without undertaking a complete in-depth analysis, it is possible to identify some interesting moments of tension and cooperation between the dispositive and narrative structures in the *Histoire* with the aid of a contemporary summary.<sup>133</sup> By comparing a reviewer’s vision of the novel’s narrative articulation with the text itself it becomes clear that while the division into two books is evocative, it does not provide the dominant narrative structure of the work. After describing how the eponymous Greek,

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<sup>133</sup> Article IX. Lettre à Mr. \*\*\* sur l’*Histoire d’une Grecque moderne* par Mr. d’Exilles. *Bibliothèque Française, ou Histoire littéraire de la France*, vol. 35, 1742, pp. 172-75. Cited in *Histoire d’une Grecque Moderne*. Ed. Alan J. Singerman. Paris: GF, 1990, pp. 332-33. All page references are to this edition.

Théophé, came to be abducted and enslaved as a child, the reviewer begins to describe the narrative proper:

Il y avoit six mois qu'elle étoit dans son serrail, lorsque le ministre de France, que l'on suppose auteur de ce roman, y ayant été introduit par le bacha même [her master], fut touché de ses charmes et de son sort. Par l'entremise d'un autre seigneur turc, il vint à bout de lui procurer la liberté. (332)

The narrative unit corresponding to this sentence comes to an end with a form of narrative relay, when Théophé tells her story to the narrator (73-93). The narrator further underlines the narrative transition taking place when he asks the reader to deduce the future direction of the narrative based on this relay: “Si l'on a fait, en lisant ce récit, une partie des réflexions qu'il me fit naître, on doit s'attendre à celles qui vont le suivre” (93). Furthermore, by mentally rehearsing his interaction with her after he leaves, the narrator reveals the nascent personal evolution that will subtend much of the narrative structure to come (93-95). This sequence of a narrative relay or other structural indication associated with a reflection becomes a pattern in the novel's narrative structure, and continues to correspond fairly well to the summary.

It should come as no surprise that the principal instance of cooperation and tension between the narrative and dispositive structures occurs in conjunction with the division between the first and second parts, given that it is the only dispositive boundary in the entire novel (169-70). The nearest major narrative structural boundary occurs significantly earlier, when, in the words of the reviewer, “Théophé déclare ingénument au ministre, que son frere [*sic*] nommé *Synese* [*sic*] avoit obtenu d'elle les dernières faveurs, ayant eu l'adresse de lui persuader que cela étoit permis entre une sœur et un frère” (332).



The narrator's reaction reveals his increasing obsession with Théophraste and marks this moment as a turning point in his attitude toward her, which will be increasingly characterized by suspicion and doubt as the novel continues: "Frère ou non, me dis-je à moi-même, si ce jeune-homme est amoureux de Théophraste, s'il a trompé jusqu'à présent mes yeux, qui me répondra que Théophraste n'ait pas conçu pour lui la même passion, et qu'elle n'ait pas eu autant d'adresse pour la déguiser ?" (157). In comparison to this new stage of the narrator's relationship with his ward, the events associated with the break between the two parts are of much less importance on a fundamental structural level. In the words of the reviewer, who does not note the dispositive division, these are the most important events immediately prior to the break: "Le ministre exile Synese [*sic*] de la maison, mais il y demeure caché ; et outre ce rival, un seigneur turc trouve aussi le moyen de s'y introduire" (332). The very next sentence of the summary is about the first event from the second part of the novel that the reviewer mentions: "Les deux rivaux se battent, et l'un blesse l'autre dangereusement" (332). Yet this conflict, while dramatic, has less of a direct influence on the narrator's personal evolution than the earlier revelation of Théophraste's sexual involvement with Synese. The next major narrative transition happens when, according to the reviewer, "deux amans esclaves, nouvellement délivrés, forment avec Synese le projet d'un établissement dans la Morée, où ils comptent emmener avec eux la jeune Grecque" (332). Discovering the plot exacerbates the narrator's paranoia, but when Théophraste denies having any romantic feelings for his rival, he is so overjoyed by this evidence of Théophraste's virtue, even though it is preventing him from cultivating a romantic relationship with her, just as much as Synese, that he decides

to soften her moral resolution through a steady reading program of novels, poetry, theater, and “quelques livres même de moral, dont les auteurs ont été de bonne composition avec les desirs du cœur et les usages du monde” (206). This is the climax of the count’s efforts to earn Théophrastus’s affection, after which the remainder of the novel consists of the count’s bitterly fought retreat, as he gradually relinquishes his claim over her, which was never legitimate in the first place.

The example of *Histoire d’une Grecque moderne* confirms the overall argument of the current analysis by demonstrating that there is significant interaction between dispositive structure and narrative structure even in an eighteenth-century novel that resembles modern novels in significant ways and that these interactions are not different in kind from those that are present in some eighteenth-century novels that exhibit more striking divergences from the “prototypical” modern novel. If this phenomenon can be observed in an eighteenth-century novel that is this similar to a modern novel, it is likely that the same phenomenon will be observable in modern novels as well. This similarity is significant because while we *expect* eighteenth-century novels to diverge from the modern prototype, we may be less aware of the divergences between *actual* modern novels and the idealized model of a novel that every reader assembles over the course of a lifetime of reading. Even if no specimen of this idealized type exists in reality, it is important to note the influence that it has on the horizons of expectations that we bring to the reading experience, even if unconsciously.

In my study of relationships between whole and part in such works, I have examined how each work’s schema of division into parts operates on both the pragmatic

and dispositive levels, and have demonstrated why it is equally important to examine the interplay of the pragmatic and the dispositive. On the pragmatic level, we can read the novel by installments, i.e. according to what was available to the public at a given moment. An interpretation derived from an installment-based reading differs from one inspired by a reading based on the entire work, and any such difference alters our understanding of how the novel was received at the time it was published, and potentially how that reception may have altered the novel itself. Although precious little remains of Prévost's correspondence and manuscripts, contemporary newspapers do preserve traces of the reception his work received from eighteenth-century audiences, not least important among them being Prévost's own journal *Le Pour et Contre*. While scholars have used pragmatic arguments to show, for example, that Prévost responded to his audience's reception of *Cleveland* by altering the tone of the work or the course of its plot during the extended period between the two phases of publication (e.g. Zagamé), analysis on the dispositive level shows how the inscribed divisions of the text interact with the division into installments, thus providing insight into the way Prévost understood the function of division in his works.

Diachronic research might demonstrate a link between the nineteenth century's magnification of the Enlightenment predilection for rationality and the extension of that rationality to the work of prose narrative fiction. However, such an argument would require not only much further in-depth study of both *ancien régime* and nineteenth-century novels, but also a foray into the third lacuna that Dionne identifies in his study, namely the parallel development of disposition in non-fictional works (530). Another

future direction is the potential for different forms of disposition offered by digital media. Both of these concerns are beyond the scope of the current analysis, but could be the subject of future work.

## Bibliography

Works by Prévost.....	506
Collections .....	507
Studies on Prévost.....	508
History and Criticism of the Novel.....	510
Structure, Division, and Continuation .....	513
Narrative and Journalism .....	520
Readers, Reading, and the Narratee.....	522

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