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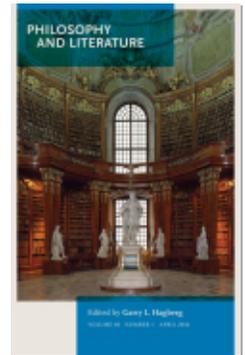
Wittgenstein and Leavis: Literature and the Enactment of the Ethical

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WITTGENSTEIN AND LEAVIS:
LITERATURE AND THE ENACTMENT OF THE ETHICAL

Abstract. For Wittgenstein, ethics cannot be put into words. This does not mean he thought ethics cannot be made manifest; indeed, he took the best manifestation of ethics to occur in aesthetics, and more specifically in literature. Wittgenstein takes us some way toward fleshing out literature's "perspicuous presentations," but not far enough. To do this, I appeal to F. R. Leavis's notion of *enactment* and his view of the autonomous, active role of language in literature. I conclude that for both, the meaning of literature's ethical enactments is determined not subjectively but intersubjectively. Literature imposes, and not merely proposes, ethical meaning.

Shakespeare displays the dance of human passions, one might say. . . . But he displays it to us in a dance, not naturalistically.
—Ludwig Wittgenstein¹

IN THE *TRACTATUS*, WITTGENSTEIN says that ethics cannot be put into words. This does not mean he thought ethics could not be made manifest; and indeed I will suggest that Wittgenstein took the best manifestation of ethics to be in aesthetics, and more specifically literature. Literature uses words in such a way as to allow ethics to show itself. It does this, I suggest, through *perspicuous presentations*, though of a different kind than those of philosophy. Wittgenstein takes us some way toward fleshing out the *literary* nature of perspicuous presentations, but not far enough. To do this, I will appeal to a literary critic: F. R. Leavis.

For those who don't know Leavis, he is considered by many—myself included—the best literary critic of our time. He knew Wittgenstein personally, invited him to his home, went on boat trips with him, and

wrote a chapter recording their relationship in which he says that they never discussed philosophy and that he found Wittgenstein's interest in literature to be "rudimentary."² This, however, did not stop Leavis from affirming his "very positive sense of the nature of [Wittgenstein's] genius" (*CAP*, p. 143). Still, I don't believe they knew how much they shared: their common stance on the importance of language, the difference between *saying* and *showing*, the necessary contextualization of meaning; the fundamental importance of the nonpropositional and the exaggerated importance of the propositional in our accounts of human life and thought. Neither Wittgenstein nor Leavis believed that true and false statements were the crucial constituents in our accounts and expressions of human life and thought.

Oddly enough, literature prompted my interest in Wittgenstein. The question I wanted philosophy to answer was: what is the great thing about literature? Why are we drawn to it? My immediate answer was similar to Aristotle's and Kant's: *cognitive pleasure*. But the problem with cognition—knowledge—is that it's too analytic. Knowledge—justified true belief—was not what I was looking for. The kind of cognition that literature affords us is not of the order of strict justification and veridical correspondence to reality but of a more fundamental and indubitable certainty. I then got my hands on a book of Wittgenstein's that had received very little attention: *On Certainty*. And this is where I found the genius that Leavis was talking about.

The kind of certainty Wittgenstein delineates in that work is one that is more *fundamental* than knowledge, that underpins it; that is not susceptible of proof or verification because it is more fundamental even than those. This certainty, I thought, is what literature gives us; this is how it contributes to the formation of our concepts, our emotions, and generally of our being human. And this, I then found, was very close to the "certitude" Leavis talks about in *The Critic as Anti-Philosopher*:

[The rare real critic] knows that, in the nature of things, he can't attain to the completeness that is finality, and some of his certitudes may be insufficiently grounded. But . . . the nearest the perceptively thinking individual gets to the certainty that he is grasping in direct possession significance itself, unmediated, is in the certitude that he has taken possession of the basic major perceptions, intuitions and realizations communicated with consummate delicacy to the reader in the mastering of the creative work of a great writer. Such certitude of possession is an ultimate; what could a proof, if proof were possible, add to it? (*CAP*, p. 192)

Leavis's contention, here as elsewhere, that "finality" is in some cases unattainable does not contradict *ultimate certitude of possession*; for whereas "finality" or "completeness" is the result of "proof" or "grounding," ultimate "certitude" is *groundless*: "it is characteristic of the most important convictions one forms to admit of nothing like proof"; the "rightness" of the judgment, he writes elsewhere, "stands clear for . . . recognition—it *makes itself, needing no assertion*."³ The parallel with Wittgenstein is striking, not only in the notion of a nonpropositional certainty but also in the Wittgensteinian dichotomy between showing and saying, where—in some cases—meaning cannot be said or asserted, but can only show itself; the showing being done *through* words and deeds. This is reminiscent of Leavis's conception of enactment or presentment, to which I will return after giving a brief account of Wittgenstein on ethics and aesthetics.

I

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein famously writes: "Ethics and aesthetics are one."⁴ This is ambiguous. It can mean that ethics and aesthetics are the same thing; there is no differentiating them at all—so that we could use the words "ethics" and "aesthetics" interchangeably. It is unlikely that this is what Wittgenstein means, for he himself does not use the terms interchangeably. I think the two following interpretations are more likely: (1) that ethics and aesthetics are very similar; they share important features; and (2) that aesthetics is internally connected to ethics: that we cannot speak of aesthetics without it engaging ethics.⁵

In fact Leavis holds the latter view, at least as concerns literature—great literature, that is: it is *necessarily* ethical. Iris Murdoch, Martha Nussbaum, Cora Diamond, and Matthew Kieran hold variants of this view, which might be summed up, in Kieran's words, as the belief that there is "an inherent link between what is represented artistically and moral understanding"⁶—where "artistically" here is not merely a classificatory but an evaluative term.

Wittgenstein, as is characteristic of him, never develops an explicit aesthetic theory, but this does not prevent him from having clear views on the matter. He first makes the connection between ethics and aesthetics—or art—in the *Notebooks*, where he writes: "For there is certainly something in the conception that the end of art is the beautiful. And the beautiful *is* what makes happy."⁷ The words "beautiful" and "happy" are to be associated with the aesthetic and the ethical respectively: "the beautiful" being another term for "the aesthetic," and—since Aristotle—does

not denote what is aesthetically pleasing *in the ordinary sense*, but in a broader sense, which includes artistic representations of ugly or repulsive objects (as, for example, Soutine's paintings of carcasses). As for "happy," this is associated with the ethical, also since Aristotle, for whom happiness or "the good life" is the highest good, the ultimate pursuit (end/good/goal) of an ethical life.⁸ And so the passage I've just read is a laconic formulation, and indeed endorsement, of the view of art as internally connected to the good life, happiness, ethics.⁹ Art makes us happy; that is, it puts us in the world of the happy; the ethical world. The artist, writes Wittgenstein, "looks at the world with a happy eye" (*NB*, p. 86), by which, we now understand "an ethical eye."¹⁰

But how does the artist do this? The moral significance of aesthetics for the Tractarian Wittgenstein lies in the artist's ability to present objects, not as they exist in the empirical world but *sub specie aeternitatis*¹¹—that is: atemporally or noncontingently; essentially.¹² Whereas the "usual way of looking at things sees objects . . . from the midst of them," the *artist* views them from outside, with *Künstlerische Wunder* (aesthetic wonder). And this means that she views them ethically; that is, with the kind of detachment that contemplates not facts, but the *fact* of existence. In the *Notebooks*: "Aesthetically, the miracle is that the world exists [*Das künstlerische Wunder ist, daß es die Welt gibt*]. That there is what there is" (*NB*, p. 86).

Now the world the artist sees is not *factually* different from the world of the ordinary man; it is his attitude toward, his perspective of, that world that is different and transformative. For Wittgenstein, a kind of Gestalt switch takes place in artistic contemplation: where we "usually" see "the bare present image" as a "worthless momentary picture in the whole temporal world," the artist in *künstlerische Wunder* sees it as "the true world among shadows."¹³ It is the same bare, present world, for nothing has been added or removed from it, and yet an altogether different world, where the contingent and temporal fade out to allow the atemporal significance to emerge. Here is a passage from *Culture and Value*:

Nothing could be more remarkable than seeing a man who thinks he is unobserved performing some quite simple everyday activity. . . . [This is] something more wonderful than anything a playwright could arrange to be acted or spoken on the stage: life itself. —But then we do see this every day without its making the slightest impression on us! True enough, but we do not see it from *that* point of view. . . . Only an artist can represent

an individual thing as to make it appear to us like a work of art. . . . A work of art forces us—as one might say—to see it in the right perspective but, *in the absence of art, the object is just a fragment of nature like any other.* . . . (CV, pp. 4–5; my italics)

And so the very same thing that had not otherwise made an impression on us will make one when presented from an artistic perspective. This brings to mind Wittgenstein's notion of a "perspicuous presentation"—whereby something that had always been in plain view, and yet overlooked by us, when properly arranged (perspicuously presented) is brought to our attention and strikes us significantly and as never before. A work of art, that is, a *presentation of the world seen through the eye of an artist*—an aesthetic "presentation"—forces us to see the world, as Wittgenstein says, in the right perspective, with a happy or an ethical eye. Artistic contemplation endows objects and the world with significance. This, then, on Wittgenstein's view, is what art does; and we learn from it: "People nowadays think that scientists exist to instruct them, poets, musicians, etc. to give them pleasure. The idea *that these have something to teach them*—that does not occur to them" (CV, p. 36).

For Leavis, too: "by the study of the precisions created by poetic genius we advance our knowledge of ourselves"; and yet, there is no stating the effect on us of poetic precision "explicitly in direct articulate speech."¹⁴ This takes us back to Wittgenstein's remarks about the impossibility of putting ethics into words: "it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics. Propositions can express nothing that is higher" (TLP 6.42). The noncontingency of the sense of the world, of *ethics*, makes it unamenable to propositionality. Propositions are the means of expression of the empirical, not of the ethical—of what can be true or false, not of what is higher.

And so ethics cannot be put in propositions; cannot, that is, be *said*:¹⁵ yet it is not, for all that, relegated to obscurity. For the *Tractatus* tells us that what cannot be put into words can nevertheless *show* itself: "There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest" (TLP 6.522). And they do so particularly well in literature¹⁶—as Wittgenstein himself indicates in a letter to Paul Engelmann: "The poem by Uhland is really magnificent. And this is how it is: if only you do not try to utter what is unutterable then *nothing* gets lost. But the unutterable will be—unutterably—*contained* in what has been uttered."¹⁷

Engelmann's gloss on this is: "Wittgenstein passionately believes that all that really matters in human life is precisely what, in his view, we must be silent about" (EL, p. 97). And as these passages make clear,

silence here does not mean *not using words*. The poem does not achieve its effect by what it says, but by what its words evoke or show or make manifest—and *that* cannot be said: “What expresses *itself* in language, *we* cannot express by means of language,” writes Wittgenstein (*TLP* 4.121). But how does something express *itself* in language, without it being *us* expressing it? To begin answering this question, we must briefly remember how language works.

II

Practice gives the words their sense.
—Ludwig Wittgenstein (*CV*, p. 85)

We have seen that both Leavis and Wittgenstein take literature to be advancing our knowledge of ourselves; but we have also seen that it is not any *empirical* or naturalistic knowledge that is being advanced here. The heuristic role played by literature in our lives is not empirical, referential, or even epistemic. As Bernard Harrison succinctly puts it: “The notions of reference and truth have no coherent application in literature”; “The place to look for Great Truths is not in a novel but in a physics text.”¹⁸

But if the notions of reference and truth have no coherent application in literature, how can we retain any grip on the idea that literature has something to teach us about ourselves; that is, about reality? Well, correspondence, truth, and reference are not the only ways literature can attach to reality. Whereas science formulates true statements concerning reality and the presentation of evidence for the truth or falsity of such statements, the distinguishing feature of literature or creative language is that it does not use words to illuminate reality by *referring* to it, by *representing* it, by offering us *general* and *transcendental truths*; it uses words to illuminate words, and through illuminating words, illuminate and impact our practices, us (*IF*, p. 57).

For, as Wittgenstein makes clear, language gets its meaning from our practices. But whereas some of our practices merely *place* the natural world in relationship with language (giving us, for example, biological taxonomy), other practices develop from “very general facts of nature,”¹⁹ including basic human behavior (“Our language-game is an extension of primitive behaviour”²⁰); and some practices actually *create* human worlds through language. The civil, political, religious, economic forms of life, for instance, are dependent on language for their creation and maintenance.

This means that our language is inextricably bound up with, not only organizing our world but also transforming and making us what we are. No need for correspondence, there is here an *internal* connection between language and human reality. As Harrison reminds us: "Language is everywhere hopelessly infected by the extra-linguistic: the relationships between its signs run ineluctably by way of the world. So there is . . . a strong connection between language and Reality; only it does not run by way of referentiality and truth" (*IF*, p. 51).

Language is inherently—and not inferentially—permeated by the reality of human worlds; and language, being of course the writer's tool, it is from this "reality-soaked" language (Harrison's expression: *IF*, p. 58) that literature draws its breath and its meaning. Leavis agrees with this. He speaks of language as a collaborative achievement²¹ that, we might say, is *soaked* in "immemorial human living": "more than a means of expression; [language] is the heuristic conquest won out of representative experience, the upshot or precipitate of immemorial human living, and embodies values, distinctions, identifications, conclusions . . . and tested potentialities" (*LP*, pp. 42–44). And inasmuch as, for Leavis, "the fullest use of language is to be found in creative literature" (*CAP*, p. 143), creative literature advances the frontiers of language and, thereby, of our understanding of ourselves. For Leavis, a creative work of literature is both a product and a mover of language—language conceived as more than a means of description and more than a means of expression; language as invested with, carrying, and in great part *constituting* human culture. The work of literature is, then, as he says, the product of "the interplay between the living language and the creativity of individual genius" (*LP*, p. 49). For if language carries and constitutes a great part of our humanity, it should come as no surprise that it, and not only the author, plays an active role in the determination of a work's meaning.

III

"Thank God, I am not free any more than a rooted tree is free": that is the utterance of a great artist.

—F. R. Leavis²²

Although Leavis sees the quality of genius as distinctive and intensely individual, his view of language as "collaborative creativity" entails the essentially collaborative nature of literary creation itself (*LP*, p. 36). This is why the poem does not belong to its maker, but is rather "the creative

product of something other than ego and will”; its author having drawn freely, for creativity, “on the deep-lying source”²³ (*TWC*, pp. 72–73). So that every significant artist can make “the claim that is genuinely a disclaimer”; he “can say, with Blake, of the creative works he produces: ‘Though I call them mine, I know that they are not mine.’”²⁴

This signals the imposing presence of language and, with it, that of reality. The work’s near independence from its author recalls the Romantic notion of poet as a passive Aeolian harp through which the wind of inspiration blows:²⁵ “Not I,—says D.H. Lawrence—but the wind that blows through me.”²⁶ Yet it is not the passivity of the artist that I want to stress here, but the active contribution of language itself in the determination of meaning—something Harrison superbly describes in a paper subtitled “The Limits of Authorial Licence”:

[T]he need to put down some words on a blank page, marks not the point at which the writer enters into the full play of authorial licence, but, paradoxically, the point at which authorial licence begins to encounter limits. Neither language nor the vast web of practices which supply roles, and hence meanings, to its words are, after all, either the property or the inventions of the author. They are public property: the framework of a culture and a world—or, better, system of worlds—which he found ready-made when he entered it at birth, and which will long outlast him. Plot, genre, local colour, choice of characters and relationships, all these are in the unimpeded gift of the author. But ultimately characters must be made to speak, words must be deployed upon a page. It is then that the going begins to get sticky; then that human reality begins to reclaim her own.²⁷

The idea here is not to depersonalize or “kill” the author. Of course, writers are the writers they are because of the individuals they are, but *not only*. The disconnect is in the active, and at times irrepressible, role of language in their writing.²⁸ The art of creation and the pressure of the imagined situations, along with what Wittgenstein calls the autonomy of grammar, generate an autonomous force. Grammar, in his sense, is the reality-soaked set of conditions or rules that governs the use of our words. It is because words are “reality-soaked” that they are not the propriety of a writer; that they can be “interrogated” rather than merely manipulated.²⁹ Words offer more resistance than pliancy; and it is in this reality-impregnated resistance that they, in context, reveal the limits and possibilities of their meanings, and thereby ours.³⁰

Whereas the dictionary serves as a quick reference tool for the general uses of a word, interrogating words requires trying them, testing

them against one another, and in so doing testing the concepts they express. This is how Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* investigates some of the moral ambiguities surrounding such phrases as "bettering oneself" and "getting on in the world"; and how *Madame Bovary* helps constitute the meaning of ennui.

In a literary work, the limits of our ordinary conceptual vocabulary are pushed; we are made to grasp the revitalized sense—or indeed a new sense—in which a human being may be said to have dignity or honor, or to be bored. Because, as Harrison writes, our words are rooted in our practices, because they are the signs and tools of these practices, in interrogating words, and beyond them the practices they articulate, serve, or constitute, both writer and reader interrogate things central and foundational to their concrete humanity (*WFF*, pp. 261–72).

But literature is not a mere battle of words; words, as we know, have meaning only in context, and literature provides these: it sets language in motion, in the context of imagined situations, in ways that make the reader attentive to the nature and implications of the practices rooted in those words.

IV

As Raimond Gaita reminds us, the most fundamental point of Wittgenstein's legacy is that we cannot purify our concepts of their embeddedness in human life without being left with only a shadow play of the grammar of serious judgment.³¹ Indeed, Wittgenstein was instrumental in getting us to see that it is not in propositions that many of our psychological, moral, and aesthetic meanings and beliefs are embedded and deployed but in action³² (that is, *in* what we do and *in* what we say), in the stream of life. He writes: "We can see from their actions that [people] believe certain things definitely, whether they express this belief or not";³³ "An expectation is embedded in [*eingebettet*] a situation from which it takes its rise" (*Z* §67). Here, people's actions are not exterior signs of inner propositional beliefs; their actions *constitute* their beliefs. Another way of saying this is that their beliefs are enacted.

Like Wittgenstein,³⁴ Leavis insists that we must fight the idea that only what can be stated clearly and logically is worthy of acceptance—the most important things defy statement. But they do not defy what he calls "enactment"³⁵ or "creative presentment,"³⁶ which Wittgenstein called "showing": "Nothing important can really be said simply—simply *and* safely; and by 'safely' I mean so as to ensure that the whole intuited

apprehension striving to find itself, to discover what it is in words, is duly served, and not thwarted. It takes a context, often a subtly and potently creative one, to do that" (*TWC*, p. 122).

This makes literature particularly congenial to the manifestation of "the important" (which certainly includes the ethical), in that literature's use of language is attentively and subtly contextualized, and as far removed from what Leavis calls "the stating use"³⁷ as language can get. As paradoxical as it may seem, literature does not *say* what it wants to transmit; it creates contexts and situations that allow the important things to *show themselves*. And that is not a straightforward affair, for meanings—as Wittgenstein makes clear—come embedded in "forms of life," in "patterns of life,"³⁸ and in the "stream of life."

V

Under the pavement of interpretation lies the sand of natural
reactions and direct understanding.
—Christiane Chauviré³⁹

The *essential embeddedness* of meaning is why, as Leavis says, nothing important can really be said simply; why any significant penetration or "perspicuous presentation" of human concepts, emotions, values has also to be embedded—be it in a *fictional* life, a narrative, a story; that is, *enacted*. For Lawrence, writes Leavis, "thought [about the nature, the meaning and the essential problems of human life], to come at all near truth and adequacy, must engage the whole man, and relate [all the diverse elements of experience] in a valid way—such a way, that is, as precludes and defeats the distorting effects of abstraction and selection" (*AK*, p. 11). Because the novel is best equipped to orchestrate this embeddedness, Lawrence calls it "the highest form of human expression so far attained."⁴⁰ The novel is best at wielding the "subtle interrelatedness" by which "*all things*" contributing to meaning are given full play.⁴¹

This interrelatedness is best seen in the inseparable conjunction of form and content—that is, in the internal relation between *how* the work of art expresses and *what* it expresses.⁴² The meaning of a novel or in a novel cannot be prized apart from its form because the formal properties of the novel essentially contribute to its meaning. Try paraphrasing Anna's love, Emma's ennui, or Iago's resentment. You will be left, as Gaita says, with only the shadow play of those feelings and concepts. The novel's impact on us is not to be found in the thoughts summarizing a work of fiction, or even in the very sentences of the

work, but in the way those sentences are *presented* (e.g., as dialogue, narrative, description, etc.), and in the literary and nonliterary devices that bolster and contextualize them,⁴³ intricately informing the novel's "subtle interrelatedness."

Having read the great novelists, we stand enriched—not by statement, proof, or justification, but by the more "direct possession" that "showing" or enactment affords. Here is an example drawn by Harrison (*WFF*) from Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend*. It is a minute example, but I like it because it is an enactment *mis en abîme*.⁴⁴ The passage shows the young Charlie Hexam in his first encounter with Bradley Headstone, his ill-meaning, self-righteous schoolmaster:

"So you want to go and see your sister, Hexam?"

"If you please, Mr Headstone."

"I have half a mind to go with you. Where does your sister live?"

"Why, she is not settled yet, Mr Headstone. I'd rather you didn't see her till she is settled, if it was all the same to you."

"Look, here, Hexam." Mr Bradley Headstone, highly certificated stipendiary schoolmaster, drew his right forefinger through one of the buttonholes of the boy's coat, and looked at it attentively. "I hope your sister may be good company for you."

"Why do you doubt it, Mr Headstone?"

"I didn't say I doubted it."

"No, sir; you didn't say so." (p. 201)

This is a tiny example of how works of art do not state but "enact their moral valuations," as Leavis puts it (*CP*, p. 110). Thanks to the configuration created by Dickens in this short scene whose elements were anticipated and sustained by all that precedes it, we grasp the meaning of the exchange between the pupil and his master, and feel the shadow of an ill-meaning mind trying to extend itself over a child. No paraphrase or summary could convince us more intimately of what is meant here—and by "intimately" I mean nonpropositionally and non-inferentially: the enactive imagination impacting, as Hutto and Myin put it, "before and below" the propositional.⁴⁵ It is like grasping an aspect that emerges from a configuration. What Leavis calls the "irresistible immediacy" (*GT*, p. 204) of our aesthetic reactions leaves no room for ratiocinated judgment.

This is also Wittgenstein's position. He articulates it clearly about music: "If a theme, a phrase, suddenly means something to you, you don't have to be able to explain it. Just *this* gesture has been made

accessible to you” (Z §158); that is, you “understand it”⁴⁶ (Z §159). And this is extended to literature: “A poet’s words can pierce us. And that is of course *causally* connected with the use that they have in our life” (Z §155). “Causally,” meaning here not via interpretation or explanation; for there is meaning that can be explained and meaning that does not come out in an explanation⁴⁷ (Z §156). We can be impacted by, or “understand,” the words of a poem, *directly*, which means noninterpretatively; for it speaks to us, writes Wittgenstein, “the way music speaks. Do not forget that a poem, although it is composed in the language of information, is not used in the language-game of giving information” (Z §160).

Meaning enacted in literature is grasped with what Chauviré calls our “spontaneous, immediate intelligence”⁴⁸ (remembering, of course, that spontaneity can result from training); and such a grasp results in what Hutto calls “a nondiscursive form of embodied cognition” (*RE*, p. 5). This is the kind of cognition that requires no interpretation: we get the meaning or the point; we grasp it—the way we ordinarily grasp language, or the way we grasp emotion on a face:

“We see emotion.” As opposed to what? —We do not see facial contortions and make inferences from them (like a doctor framing a diagnosis) to joy, grief, boredom. We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored, even when we are unable to give any other description of the features. —Grief, one would like to say, is personified in the face. This belongs to the concept of emotion. (Z §225)

Here now is another example of enactment in literature. In this scene from *Anna Karenina*, Anna alights the train where she has just seen the dashing Vronsky and heard his profession of love for her:

At Petersburg, as soon as the train stopped and she got out, the first person that attracted her attention was her husband. “Oh, mercy! why do his ears look like that?” she thought, looking at his frigid and imposing figure, and especially the ears that struck her at the moment as propping up the brim of his round hat. Catching sight of her, he came to meet her, his lips falling into their habitual sarcastic smile, and his big, tired eyes looking straight at her. An unpleasant sensation gripped at her heart when she met his obstinate and weary glance, as though she had expected to see him different. She was especially struck by the feeling of dissatisfaction with herself that she experienced on meeting him. That feeling was an intimate, familiar feeling, like a consciousness of hypocrisy, which she

experienced in her relations with her husband. But hitherto she had not taken note of the feeling, now she was clearly and painfully aware of it.⁴⁹

Karenin's ears are the odd note—prompted, of course, by Anna having just seen Vronsky—that catches and encapsulates the reality and evolution of her feelings for her husband and the turmoil within her. Her observation of her husband's ears *is* Anna's nascent realization of her feelings; and no mere statement of this realization could effectively replace this enactment (or, as we may also call it, particularly aptly in this case, *embodiment*). For though the narrator later in the passage begins to flesh out the meaning of the enactment, he merely gives explicitness to a significance that, as Leavis says, "we have already taken"; a significance that has already been "done in dramatic immediacy" (*DHL*, p. 172). What strikes the reader in an immediate way⁵⁰ is the triviality of the detail that brings Anna to realization—her husband's ears—and how this triviality must reflect the triviality of her feelings for him.

Through such sensitive and creative contextualizations and arrangements of words, literature offers us the most *perspicuous presentations* of ourselves. If an immense amount of being human is present in what we do and say—such as in a contextualized look, gesture, or word—then literature is indeed best equipped to present the texture of being. As Cora Diamond puts it:

It is part of the concept of a human being that an immense amount of what being human is for us can be present in a look that passes between two people; it is part of the concept that *all that* can equally be denied in a look. Novelists and other writers can put before us and develop our concept of a human being by giving us scenes of such recognition or denial of recognition, by showing us, reminding us, that *this* is what it is like to recognize another human being, and that *this* is what it is like to fail to accord such recognition, to refuse it. [They] show us . . . the shape of certain possibilities in human life. Not to know what it is to look at another human being with such recognition or with its denial, not to know how that differs from what is possible with animals, is not to have as fully as one might and as one should the concept of a human being.⁵¹

Because the novel *demand*s the dramatic presentment of embedded internal connections, and is therefore "incapable of the absolute," it is, as Lawrence says, "a great discovery: far greater than Galileo's telescope or somebody else's wireless" (*PHI*, p. 418). By this, he means that—contrary to science, which breaks down the objects of its interest to analyzable

components—the novel is the antithesis of reduction; it is uniquely suited to make perspicuous presentations of wholes: dealing with experience as humans know it, in context and in all of its complexity, with strands of meaning running through in their relations with one another. Of course, other literary genres and other arts do this in various degrees, but none like the novel.

VI

The significance we look for in creative literature is a matter of the sense of life, the sense of the potentialities of human experience, it conveys.
—F. R. Leavis (*CAP*, p. 118)

This capacity for enactment, on Lawrence's view, also makes the novel a great *moral* discovery, for it gives us what philosophy cannot: "a passionate, implicit morality, not didactic. A morality which changes the blood, rather than the mind. Changes the blood first. The mind follows later, in the wake."⁵² The idea here is to deintellectualize morality, to get us to see it as an attitude, a way of being and acting; and to deintellectualize, too, the moralizing process: morality reaches the mind through the blood—that is, through the immediacy of enactment.

For to say, as Leavis does, that "works of art *enact* their moral valuations" (*CAP*, pp. 110–11; my emphasis) is not to say that the author comes to the work with a moral agenda that she intends the work to dramatize. This, to Leavis and Lawrence, would be *moralism*, not morality. For Leavis, the moral in art should be a "deep spontaneous lived question" (*AK*, p. 12): "spontaneous" in that it should *emerge* from the work and not be put into it; "lived" in that it should be enacted; and a question in that it shouldn't be a premeditated answer—for that would be prescription, didacticism.⁵³ This is why Leavis speaks of "the profound *exploration* of moral feeling *enacted* in [*Anna Karenina*]"⁵⁴ (*AK*, p. 21; my emphasis).

The creative imagination is really creative; it doesn't stage the ethical, but allows it to emerge from the artistic fabric. The morality is in the novel, not in the novelist: "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale," writes Lawrence (*SCAL*, p. 8). This is perhaps clarifying further what Wittgenstein means by "What expresses *itself* in language, *we* cannot express by means of language" (*TLP* 4.121).

And so the important things don't get expressed by our *saying* them; it is when language is used to tell stories that the important things get expressed. In a letter to Norman Malcolm, Wittgenstein writes, "I once

tried to read *Resurrection* but couldn't. You see, when Tolstoy just tells a story he impresses me infinitely more than when he addresses the reader. When he turns his back to the reader then he seems to me *most* impressive. . . . It seems to me his philosophy is most true when it's *latent* in the story."⁵⁵

For both Leavis and Wittgenstein, the important things that a work of literature transmits are enacted, and they are immediately perceived. But what of those who *don't* perceive or who perceive differently?

VII

[D]oes the game *end* with one person
relishing what another does not?
—Ludwig Wittgenstein (*PI*, p. 228)

Here, I would say, with Peter Winch, that certain reactions would be inadequate, unacceptable; even—in extreme cases—unintelligible. In “Text and Context,” Winch writes, “what responses *are* possible, conceivable, is internally related to the work responded to. Suppose, for example, that somebody were to say he found Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* funny and laughed at it in the same way as he laughs at Rossini's *Barber of Seville*. Would that be intelligible? Does it even make sense to speak of ‘laughing at’ the *Matthew Passion*?”⁵⁶ Of course, this is an extreme case, but it is the same for less extreme ones, such as the enactment we just witnessed between the schoolboy and his master. And indeed, the same goes for our reactions to emotion in a face. There *is* no misunderstanding some expressions: to react to someone's frowning as he is being pricked by a needle as if it expressed great joy is not a case of misunderstanding but of something in the realm of pathology (dyssemia).

However, although the presentation may be perspicuous, not all readers are properly attentive, or have the experience or psychology required to grasp subtle configurations. Attention, however, can be guided. This is the task of the literary critic⁵⁷ who, as Leavis explains, takes the less attentive reader closely through the text to get her to grasp what she had not grasped:

Though the validity of a total inclusive judgment of a poem cannot be demonstrated, it is always possible in criticism to get beyond the mere assertion [or judgment]. . . . [T]he critic, with his finger moving from this to that point in the text, aims at so ordering his particular judgments (“This is so, isn't it?”) that, “Yes” . . . almost inevitably comes for answer,

the rightness of the inclusive main judgment stands clear for the prompted recognition. . . . (*LP*, pp. 35–36)

And here I would suggest that this kind of instruction in perspicacity is a *grammatical* instruction (in the Wittgensteinian sense of “grammar,” which denotes the conditions for the meaningful use of words, where those conditions include the *Menschenkenntnis* conveyed by language⁵⁸). The critic’s guidance is grammatical or conceptual in that it concerns the use of words to produce meaning: “Do you see how he is using that word here? Or placing that sigh? In such a context, this is what the word, the sigh means.” Of course, there may be rebuttal (“Yes, but . . .”), and yet, as Leavis says, the prompted recognition almost inevitably comes. What the reader is being taught here is not to decide for her- or himself whether the work enacts a particular meaning, but to recognize *that* it does, and *how* it does it; to recognize the grammar of meaning: how words and other modes of communication or expression are used to evoke or produce *that* meaning. So judgment here is far from a merely subjective affair.

Leavis’s “This is so, isn’t it?” simply and potently transmits the blend of objectivity and subjectivity peculiar to aesthetic judgment. “This is so—isn’t it?” There is in that phrase something imperative, and then a softening of the imperative in its appeal for agreement. This finely dovetails with Kant’s view of aesthetic judgment. For Kant, the peculiarity of an aesthetic judgment is that, despite being radically subjective (in that no one can make such a judgment for you), and not strictly objective (in that there is no law or concept that can be appealed to justify it), the judgment is nevertheless *entitled* to universal assent⁵⁹ and validity. The person making the judgment is, as Kant says, “a suitor for agreement”; he is entitled to expect agreement from anyone who approaches the object disinterestedly and properly attentive to its form. Leavis, probably unawares, echoes Kant: first, in the blend of subjectivity and objectivity: “A judgment is personal or it is nothing; you cannot take over someone else’s. The implicit form of a judgment is: This is so, isn’t it? The question is an appeal for confirmation that the thing *is* so. . . .”⁶⁰ Because an aesthetic reaction is subjective—but not merely—and objective—but not strictly—Kant calls it “intersubjective.” And this intersubjectivity also calls to mind Leavis’s “third realm”: “the realm of what is *neither* public in the sense belonging to science . . . *nor* merely private and personal” (*NSMS*, p. 98).

Both Kant and Leavis entreat us to distinguish judgments of aesthetic taste from judgments of ordinary taste—preferring Keats to Swinburne is not like preferring apples to oranges. The significance of a work of art, as Hume also saw, is not in the eye of the beholder; it is in the work—isn't it? All the critic can do is help us see what is indubitably there. As Leavis writes, “one can't prove the rightness of . . . [literary] judgements; the mode of verification that goes with this order of thought isn't proof, and certainly yields no finality. But it is characteristic of the most important convictions one forms to admit of nothing like proof” (*CAP*, p. 204). There is no proof; and yet the text contains “imponderable evidence,” which yields certitude—of the kind I was looking for, and found in both Wittgenstein and Leavis. What the critic does, then, is give, not arguments or proofs, but what Wittgenstein calls “further descriptions,” which are in fact grammatical elucidations. Here is G. E. Moore reporting Wittgenstein's words:

What Aesthetics tries to do, [Wittgenstein] said, is to give *reasons*, e.g., for having this word rather than that in a particular place in a poem, or for having this musical phrase rather than that in a particular place in a piece of music. . . . He said that if, by giving “reasons” of this sort, you make another person “see what you see” but it still “doesn't appeal to him,” that is “an end” of the discussion. . . .⁶¹

What “further descriptions”⁶² do is retrospectively flesh out the route of immediate understanding—as I very briefly did in my gloss of the *Anna Karenina* passage earlier.

VIII

Lawrence's view of the novel's inherent and organic interrelatedness is a refined way of saying that the novel is a *story*, or what Amelie Rorty calls a “structured representation”: “While there is sorrow, grief, loss, pain in life, there is *tragedy* only when the actions and events that compose a life are organized into a story, a structured representation of that life.”⁶³ Similarly, in *Culture and Value*, Wittgenstein notes, “Shakespeare displays the dance of human passions, one might say. Hence he has to be objective; otherwise he would not so much display the dance of human passions—as talk about it. But he displays it to us in a dance, not naturalistically” (*CV*, pp. 36–37). This takes us back to his idea that a work of art forces us “to see [something] in the right perspective but,

in the absence of art, the object is just a fragment of nature like any other" (*CV*, p. 4). And in the *Investigations*, he asks, "Mustn't someone who is painting be painting something—and someone who is painting something be painting something real? —Well, tell me what the object of painting is: the picture of the man (for example), or the man whom the picture portrays?" (*PI*, p. 149).

In art, the answer must be: it is the picture of the man we care about. For the picture is a *structured* presentation of reality, a presentation through an artistic medium, which impacts us in a way life alone cannot do. Indeed, Leavis speaks of the creative imagination as enabling us to see in a gesture or an event, possibilities or "potentialities of human experience" (*CAP*, p. 118). Imagination deploys itself as a kind of attention or attentiveness to an aspect of things we had not been attentive to. To Rorty's "structured representation," Lawrence's "subtle interrelatedness," and Leavis's "dramatic presentment," I have added Wittgenstein's "perspicuous presentation," because it too is a presentation that structures or arranges what is always before our eyes in such a way as to make it perspicuous. But isn't this what philosophy does? Yes, but not in the same way.

As we have seen, both Wittgenstein and Leavis believe that the important things (of which, of course, ethical understanding is one) cannot be expressed propositionally—it takes a context or a story to present them perspicuously. I, on the other hand, would not want to deny ethics a voice; that is, a propositional or philosophical voice. I would uphold the value for ethics of "the stating use," and do so elsewhere at length.⁶⁴ Where I believe the superiority of literature lies is in depicting or presenting, or showing (through enactment) the "imponderable evidence"—as Wittgenstein calls it—that importantly informs our ethical and emotional understanding. Moral principles and rules are essential to moral understanding, but they are not sufficient to provide the nuanced and direct acquaintance and apprehension necessary for a more perceptive and sensitive—and therefore a full-fledged—moral understanding.⁶⁵

Literary perspicuous presentations differ from philosophical ones in that they can stage the vital contextualization, embeddedness, and interrelatedness of human meaning. Where the philosopher must slice through, and deal with, parts, the creative writer gives us the play and possible implications of a concept, like jealousy, in a full human context—and a structured one at that. And so where the philosopher can make a conceptual *analysis* of human passions, it takes a creative writer

to present them, as Shakespeare does, in a dance. This means that literature can produce conceptual understanding in a way philosophy cannot—nondiscursively: through the blood, rather than the mind. “A poet’s words can pierce us” (*Z* §155), in a way a philosopher’s cannot.

A literary work interrogates and pushes the limits of our ordinary conceptual vocabulary; that it does so “in a dance”—in a perspicuous presentation whose descriptions look much more alive than the “descriptions” of philosophy—does not make this less of a conceptual achievement. Literature’s descriptions are such that we cannot disagree with them if we want to make sense; they are not truth-valuable statements. And so literature also operates, though in its own way, at the level of grammar rather than judgment: through its imaginative arrangement of things, it helps us—not judge that this is jealousy or passion or boredom, for no judgment is necessary for that—but refine or extend our concepts of jealousy, passion, or boredom; that is, their grammars. It enables us to better grasp the sense in which a human being may be said to be bored or ambitious.

In doing this, it of course enhances our understanding of ourselves; for, our grammar—as we saw—is rooted in our lives.⁶⁶ Literature, I suggest, incomparably contributes to the formation of our concepts, and therefore to the formation of our selves. This might make it seem as if literature is only about concepts. Well, in a way, this is in keeping with how we speak about literary works: *Romeo and Juliet* is about love; *Othello* about jealousy; *Madame Bovary* about ennui; *Macbeth* about ambition. But of course these are mere crude shortcuts: there is no question of seeing literature as in the business of enacting individual concepts, but of literature as elucidating, extending, and enriching our concepts through enactment.

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

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1. F. R. Leavis, *Culture and Value*, ed. G. H. von Wright in collaboration with H. Nyman, trans. P. Winch, amended 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), pp. 36–37; hereafter abbreviated *CV*.

2. F. R. Leavis, *The Critic as Anti-Philosopher*, ed. G. Singh. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1982), pp. 129, 134, 144; hereafter abbreviated *CAP*.

3. F. R. Leavis, *The Living Principle: "English" as a Discipline of Thought* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1975), p. 36 (my emphasis); hereafter abbreviated *LP*.
4. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), 6.421; hereafter abbreviated *TLP*.
5. Or vice versa. Wittgenstein's view of the relationship in the "Lecture on Ethics" is: "My subject, as you know, is Ethics and I will adopt [Professor Moore's] explanation of that term . . . : 'Ethics is the general enquiry into what is good.' Now I am going to use the term Ethics in a slightly wider sense, in a sense in fact which includes what I believe to be the most essential part of what is generally called Aesthetics" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, "A Lecture on Ethics," in *Philosophical Occasions: 1912–1951*, ed. J. C. Klagge and A. Nordman [Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993], pp. 37–44 [38]).
6. Matthew Kieran, "Art, Imagination and the Cultivation of Morals," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 54, no. 4 (1996): 337–51 (337); hereafter abbreviated "AICM." We conflate "art as *technē*" and "art" when we say that Riefenstahl is a great artist. Riefenstahl may be a great *technical* artist; she is not a great artist: her understanding of the world is moralizing, not moral. The argument which upholds that art isn't necessarily moral in that there are examples of great immoral art is flawed by the conflation of these two senses of art.
7. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914–16*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), p. 86; hereafter abbreviated *NB*.
8. Wittgenstein's awareness of this association is particularly clear in the "Lecture on Ethics."
9. An Aristotelian reading of this would give us something like: art gives us *cognitive* pleasure (teaches us) through its aesthetic or artistic representations of life (see *Poetics* 4).
10. Wittgenstein's thinking so can be seen in his citing this passage from Schiller, where art's gaiety (or happiness) shows it to have taken on the attribute of ethics: "Life is grave, art is gay" (*NB*, p. 86) (from Schiller's prologue to *Wallenstein's Lager*).
11. Literally "from the point of view of eternity"; that is, atemporally, or noncontingently; from outside the world—and this can mean something as loaded as: from God's eye view or something as down to earth, as it were, as "with detachment."
12. "The work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis*; and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connexion between art and ethics" (*NB*, p. 83).
13. "As a thing among things, each thing is equally insignificant; as a world each one equally significant. If I have been contemplating the stove, and then am told: but now all you know is the stove, my result does indeed seem trivial. For this represents the matter as if I had studied the stove as one among the many things in the world. But if I was contemplating the stove *it* was my world, and everything else colourless by contrast with it. (Something good about the whole, but bad in details.) For it is equally possible to take the bare present image as the worthless momentary picture in the whole temporal world, and as the true world among shadows" (*NB*, p. 83).

14. F. R. Leavis, *Valuation in Criticism and Other Essays* (posth.), ed. G. Singh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 296.
15. For all that can be “said” are the propositions of natural science (*TLP* 6.53)—and “it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics” (*TLP* 6.42).
16. As Wittgenstein writes: “You cannot lead people to what is good; you can only lead them to some place or other. The good is outside the space of facts” (*CV*, p. 3). So the writer leads us to a place or other, from which the good makes itself manifest.
17. Paul Engelmann and Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein, With a Memoir* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), p. 7; hereafter abbreviated *EL*.
18. Bernard Harrison, *Inconvenient Fictions: Literature and the Limits of Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 9–11, 47; hereafter abbreviated *IF*.
19. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 230; hereafter abbreviated *PI*.
20. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), §545; hereafter abbreviated *Z*.
21. Leavis encapsulates this in his notion of a “third realm,” which I can only mention here.
22. F. R. Leavis, *Thought, Words and Creativity* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1976), pp. 72–73; hereafter abbreviated *TWC*.
23. That is, “the living principle”: “The ‘living principle’ . . . is an apprehended totality of what, as registered in the language, has been won or established in immemorial human living” (*LP*, p. 68); “the principle implicit in the interplay between the living language and the creativity of individual genius” (*LP*, p. 49).
24. *LP*, p. 44; *TWC*, p. 86. This is why “great art is necessarily impersonal”; Leavis speaks of “the impersonality of genius” (*GT*, p. 32); well, “at once personal and impersonal” (*CAP*, pp. 32, 147).
25. “Like that of all great creative writers, his creativity manifests itself in new shades of suggestion, new felicities of force, got out of the common language—in (we feel) an inspired way, rather than by calculating intention” (*TWC*, p. 67).
26. In “Song of a Man Who Has Come Through.”
27. Bernard Harrison, *What Is Fiction For? Literary Humanism Restored* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015), p. 276; hereafter abbreviated *WFF*.
28. Something of this may be read in the following passage from Seamus Heaney: “In the masculine mode, . . . the poetic effort has to do with conscious quelling and control of materials, a labour of shaping; words are not music before they are anything else, nor are they drowsy from their slumber in the unconscious, but athletic, capable, displaying the muscle of sense” (“The Fire i’ the Flint”).
29. There is much ammunition here to be used in the fight against particularism, relativism, and linguistic idealism, but I use it here only inasmuch as it pertains to the connection between reality and literature.

30. Bernard Harrison: “the communication of a new sense, though enacted merely through the demonstration of a new way of ordering words so that they compose such a meaning, has (because words are not . . . merely counters, but, given the genesis of meaning in action, reflect natural possibility in their possibilities of relationship to one another) the power to disturb our customary sense of what meaning/meanings are possible, and with it our sense of the limits of natural possibility: of how things in the world can stand to one another” (*IF*, p. 12). This is why the major novelists and the major poets are, as Leavis says, “significant for the human awareness they promote; awareness of the possibilities of life” (F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition* [London: Chatto and Windus, 1948], p. 2; hereafter abbreviated *GT*). See also: “language is essentially heuristic; . . . in major creative writers it does unprecedented things, advances the frontiers of the known, and discovers the new” (*LP*, p. 100).
31. R. Gaita, introduction, in *Value and Understanding: Essays for Peter Winch*, ed. R. Gaita (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. ix–xiii (xii).
32. See Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, “Wittgenstein’s Razor: The Cutting Edge of Enactivism,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2013): 263–79.
33. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, trans. D. Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe, amended 1st ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), §284; hereafter abbreviated *OC*.
34. “We feel that even when all *possible* scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched” (*TLP* 6.52).
35. F. R. Leavis, *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1955), p. 143; hereafter abbreviated *DHL*.
36. F. R. Leavis, “Anna Karenina,” in “*Anna Karenina*” and *Other Essays* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1967), p. 28; hereafter abbreviated *AK*.
37. F. R. Leavis, *The Common Pursuit* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1952), p. 111; hereafter abbreviated *CP*.
38. In his last writings and remarks on the philosophy of psychology, Wittgenstein compares life to a carpet or a weave on which emerge, in intertwined patterns, the feelings and behaviors that make up human life: e.g., pain, joy, grief, hope. He calls these “patterns in the weave of life” (*Lebensmuster*) (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*, vol. 2, ed. G. H. von Wright and H. Nyman, trans. C. G. Luckhardt and M. A. E. Aue [Oxford: Blackwell, 1992], p. 42).
39. Christiane Chauviré, “L’art incorporé: A propos des réactions esthétiques,” in *Wittgenstein*, ed. C. Romano (Paris: Cerf, 2012), pp. 225–51 (227–28) (my translation); hereafter abbreviated *AI*.
40. D. H. Lawrence, *Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works by D. H. Lawrence*, ed. W. Roberts and H. T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968), p. 416; hereafter abbreviated *PHII*.
41. D. H. Lawrence, *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. E. D. McDonald (1936; repr., New York: Viking, 1961), pp. 528, 538; hereafter abbreviated *PHI*.

42. "The novel inherently is and must be . . . interrelated in all its parts, vitally, organically" (this is probably Lawrence's way of saying "internally") (*PHI*, p. 422).
43. Occasionally, dialogue, discussion, or thought might, as Leavis says about a passage in *St. Mawr*, "in a wholly dramatic way, bring to the point of explicitness the essential work of implicit definition that has been done by image, action and symbolic presentation" (*DHL*, p. 243), but note that "the affirmation *merely* brings to explicitness what [Lawrence's] art has affirmed pervasively and cumulatively" (*DHL*, p. 256; my emphasis). Again, about a passage in *Women in Love*: its "local explicitness *merely* picks up what has been done in drama, imagery, and poetic organization" (*DHL*, p. 175; my emphasis).
44. It enacts the eloquence of enactment.
45. D. D. Hutto and E. Myin, *Radicalizing Enactivism: Basic Minds without Content* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013), p. 88; hereafter abbreviated *RE*.
46. "But you do speak of *understanding* music. You understand it, surely, while you hear it! Ought we to say this is an experience which accompanies the hearing?" (*Z* §159).
47. A few passages later, he writes: "Understanding is effected by explanation; but also by training" (*Z* §186; also see §170).
48. Chauviré: "The relation of works of art or even musical phrases to the understanding we may have of them is not causal but internal, just as the relation of words that we read or hear in ordinary language is internal to our understanding of them. The drawback of interpretation is that it denotes an explicit verbal development that can engender others *ad infinitum*, each interpretation replacing the previous 'as if we were content with one for the time being, until we thought of the next waiting immediately behind.' And so, whether with regard to art or to rule-following, Wittgenstein reinstates spontaneous intelligence, immediate, silent at times, but always expressive" (*AI*, p. 338; my translation).
49. Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. A. Maude (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 117–18.
50. "The criteria implicit in the reality [Lawrence] presents us with . . . are peculiarly evasive when dealt with discursively; they elude analytic-descriptive generalities. It is in an immediate way that one is convinced" (*TWC*, p. 125).
51. C. Diamond, "Losing Your Concepts," *Ethics* 98, no. 2 (1988): 255–77 (264–65).
52. D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature* (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 162; hereafter abbreviated *SCAL*.
53. If the novelist puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection; if ideology takes control of the artistic impulse, the novel, says Lawrence, becomes a treatise (*PHI*, pp. 479, 528).
54. Leavis: "While what makes itself felt as we read *Anna Karenina* is decidedly a positive or creative *nisus*, it affects us as an exploratory effort towards the definition of a norm. It necessarily, then, concerns itself everywhere . . . with the relations between men and women: love in its varieties, marriage in its varieties, the meaning of marriage. The essential mode of the book carries with it the implication that there *could* be no simple statement of a real problem, or of any 'answer' worth having. It is the very antithesis of a didactic

mode. The book says in effect, ‘This is life.’. . . The greatness of *Anna Karenina* lies in the degree to which, along with its depth, it justifies the clear suggestion it conveys of a representative comprehensiveness. The creative writer’s way of arriving at and presenting general truths about life is that which Tolstoy exemplifies with such resource, such potency, and on such a scale, and there is none to replace or rival it. Only a work of art can say with validity and force, as *Anna Karenina* does, ‘This is life’” (AK, pp. 12–13).

55. Quoted in N. Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 43; italics in the original.

56. Peter Winch, “Text and Context,” *Trying to Make Sense* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), pp. 18–32 (31).

57. Particularly what Leavis calls “practical criticism,” which deals with the concrete poetic experience. It is through the guided reexperiencing of the text that one can be made more perspicacious.

58. So that grammar, for Wittgenstein, includes more than mere sense-determining rules of language, or what we might call *thin grammar* (e.g., “This is (what we call) a table”); rather, many of the grammatical rules absorbed through enculturation are reality-soaked (these, we might see as comprising *thick grammar*), without this making them empirical or epistemic conclusions or inferences (e.g., “Human beings need oxygen, food, sleep, feel pain, smile, lie, etc.”). “Realism without empiricism, that is the hardest thing,” writes Wittgenstein in *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, ed. G. H. von Wright, R. Rhees, and G. E. M. Anscombe, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd rev. ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), p. 325. It is indeed a hard thing for a philosopher to grasp, and get across, that what belongs to experience or reality is not always empirical. For a more elaborate discussion, see Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, “Realism, but Not Empiricism: Wittgenstein versus Searle,” in *A Wittgensteinian Perspective on the Use of Conceptual Analysis in Psychology*, ed. Timothy P. Racine and Kathleen L. Slaney (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 153–71.

59. For Kant, the aesthetic experience is characterized by its inherent subjectivity on the one hand, and its universality on the other: “In the judgment of taste (about the beautiful) the pleasure taken in an object is imputed to *everyone* without, however, any conceptual foundation (for then it would be the good). This claim to universality so essentially belongs to any judgment by which we describe something as *beautiful*, that without implying the universal validity nobody would think of using the term ‘beautiful.’ Without this universal validity everything that pleases without concepts would be counted as [merely] agreeable” (*Critique of Judgment* I, p. 8; my translation). The claim to universality is essential to an experience and judgment of taste being of an *aesthetic*, and not merely *agreeable* (or subjective), nature.

60. F. R. Leavis, *Nor Shall My Sword* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972), p. 62; hereafter abbreviated NSMS.

61. G. E. Moore, *Wittgenstein Lectures, 1930–1933*, in *Philosophical Occasions: 1912–1951*, ed. J. C. Klagge and A. Nordman (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993), pp. 46–114 (106).

62. Wittgenstein: “In what we call the arts there developed what we call a ‘judge’—i.e., one who has judgement. This does not mean someone who admires or does not admire. We have an entirely new element” (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on*

Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief, from the notes of Y. Smithies, R. Rhees, and J. Taylor, ed. C. Barrett [Oxford: Blackwell, 1966], p. 6n3). See also: "What is the justification for a feature in a work of art? . . . What reasons can one give for being satisfied? The reasons are further descriptions. Aesthetics is descriptive. What it does is to *draw one's attention* to certain features, to place things side by side so as to exhibit these features [precisely what the literary critic does]. To tell a person 'This is the climax' is like saying 'This is the man in the puzzle picture.' Our attention is drawn to a certain feature, and from that point forward we see that feature" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge, 1932–1935*, from the notes of A. Ambrose and M. MacDonald, ed. A. Ambrose [Oxford: Blackwell, 1979], pp. 38–39).

63. A. Rorty, "The Psychology of Aristotelian Tragedy," in *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics*, ed. A. Rorty (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 1–22 (3–4) (my emphasis).

64. See Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, "Cora Diamond and the Ethical Imagination," *British Journal of Aesthetics* (July 2012): 52–53, 223–40.

65. An understanding that enables us (to borrow Matthew Kieran's example) to grasp the difference between taking cigarettes from a newsagent's without paying and taking an old lady's photograph frame containing a photo of her deceased husband. Though both fall under the principle that stealing is wrong, if this is all one understands, notes Kieran, then one still lacks a proper moral understanding of the two actions—stealing the photograph being far worse than stealing the cigarettes, in a way in which no principle can account for ("AICM," p. 341).

66. As I hope to have made clear in this paper, the crucial rapprochement to be made between Leavis and Wittgenstein is found in language—in their appreciation of language as soaked in, and conditioned by, life. So, *not* language à la Derrida; not language perpetually playing with itself, as it were; but language steeped, as Wittgenstein puts it, "in the stream of life"; and, as Leavis would have it: "art is a manifestation of life or it is nothing" (*CAP*, p. 115).