Rousseau, if he is anything, is polarizing. At once a revolutionary and a reactionary, a rationalist and a romantic, a liberal and a totalitarian, a solitary and a citizen, Rousseau has been blamed both for the excesses of the French Revolution and the conservative backlash it caused. He has been mocked for his Christianity and decried for his atheism. He has been attacked for his misogyny and chastised for his effeminacy. He has been extolled for his diagnosis of modern man’s unfortunate condition and excoriated for his failure to alleviate it. Robespierre likened him to a deity and Edmund Burke to a beast.

It is no surprise that opinion on Rousseau is so divided or that we care so deeply about our disagreements, for in both his manner and his matter Rousseau invites controversy: questions of human happiness were his central preoccupation, and he speaks directly to his readers about these most personal affairs. He brings us into his most intimate confidences and makes us feel less like students than confidantes; he makes us believe that we understand him as well as he understands us. But if he speaks directly to all, he says different things to each: his intimate style makes us all feel as though we have special access to his intentions, but his studied indirection gives us very different ideas about what those intentions are. The heat of his prose warms the heart but blisters the mind.
In the previous eight chapters I have sought to bring into focus a vision of Rousseau which centers on the development of social relations and emphasizes the complications that attend that process. More specifically, I have sought to show that Rousseau’s theory of human association is best understood to have two distinct but interlocking aims: first, to raise our hopes with respect to what may be hoped for from our associational life and, second, to subtly undermine the very hopes which he himself has encouraged us to entertain. These aims, understood together, show that full human redemption is on his accounting both necessary and impossible in the context of civil society, and do much to point up Rousseau’s curious tendency to disclose the failure of his own projects. Insofar, however, as the “tragic” interpretation I have developed is a reasonable approximation of Rousseau’s own view, serious questions remain—questions about what we, as readers, should take away from Rousseau’s work, and about what kind of impact Rousseau, as author, sought to have on his audience. I would like to conclude by briefly taking these up.

| Living in the Light of the Silver Lining: The Consolations of Tragedy |

Though the tragic interpretation developed above seems to be exegetically plausible, its ultimate meaning and significance remain somewhat unclear. How are we to understand a theory that subtly undermines the very possibilities that it encourages readers to explore? And, perhaps more important, what are we to do once confronted with the futility of our own social desires? One possibility, ultimately embodied by Rousseau himself, is to withdraw from society and seek to recapture natural wholeness through solitude and, by extension, philosophic reflection. This possibility is held out by Cooper (2008, 76) as Rousseau’s final and most satisfactory resolution to the problem of human dividedness: the “most exalted life in Rousseau’s corpus,” he claims, “is not Emile’s but rather his own, that is, the life of a philosopher, as depicted in the late autobiographical writings.” Cooper’s claim has considerable force, as Rousseau’s own words suggest that solitude gave him not only peace and lucidity but also a purity of feeling and expansiveness of soul that eluded him in society. In the fifth walk of the Reveries, Rousseau reports that the time he spent floating aimlessly in a small boat on the “limpid waters” of Lake Bienne were the best of his life. Unlike the “short moments of delirium and passion” which dotted his social (and most especially his romantic) life
and which caused him more pain than satisfaction, the time he spent in solitude on the banks of St. Peter’s Island gave him the “simple and permanent” sentiment of enduring happiness that has no equal and “for which [his] heart longs” (RSW 45). Exiled from society, Rousseau found peace by becoming invisible to others: “I know that the only good which might henceforth be in my power is to abstain from acting, from fear of doing evil without wanting to and without knowing it” (50). Rousseau’s own peculiar virtue, then, consists in inaction; the condition of his being good for himself is being nothing for others. In living thus, he satisfies the requirements of natural goodness, reconciles himself to himself and to the world, and makes himself an exemplar of his own thought. Reports like these do much to point up the choice-worthiness of the solitary life.

However, it is important to note that withdrawal from society and the concomitant embrace of philosophy is neither the only nor, perhaps, the most effective way of coping with the disappointments to which social life gives rise. Such a strategy is, in the first place, potentially more problematic than it at first seems, for when we ask whether the Rousseau of the Reveries can be said to be happy, the sense that that term acquires in the fifth walk is enough to give the careful reader concerned pause. There, he explains that complete absorption in the sole sentiment of one’s own existence—a state completely undisturbed by thoughts of past or future or sensations of pain or pleasure—is the only feeling that carries with it a “sufficient, perfect, and full happiness which leaves in the soul no emptiness it might feel a need to fulfill” (RSW 46). In this state, fully realized only in solitude, we “are like God” and “enjoy nothing external to ourselves.” But after having abstracted away from everything external to us, after having removed all those distractions that compromise the pure experience of oneself as himself, it is fair to ask: what, if anything, is left? The existence that Rousseau describes as most perfect is dangerously close to nonexistence; it appears closer to death than to life. Todorov (2001, 47) elaborates on this concern:

After having eliminated everything, by a remarkable labor of subtraction and introspection, man plumbs his depths. But these depths are, strictly speaking, nothing; the subject coincides with the predicate in a perfect tautology. The self is precisely the very existence of the self—nothing more. We thereby attain repose and peace. Rousseau . . . ends up discovering that his nature consists precisely of searching for himself. The destination is the journey itself. So the quest becomes intransitive and is transformed into reverie; the self-sufficient
man is similar to God, but his existence is now equivalent to nonexistence, to radical repose. Now, nothing separates him from death.

I raise this concern less to demonstrate the unsatisfactoriness of solitude than to suggest that it, at least as embodied in Rousseau’s self-presentation, is not an obviously unproblematic alternative to social life as a means of attaining wholeness. It remains unclear whether the path to wholeness that Rousseau himself walked actually led him there, or whether philosophy, as Rousseau wrote to his onetime friend Mme d’Epinay, leads instead to sorrow.

Even if it is conceded that the alternative embodied by Rousseau is sound on its own terms, the *Reveries* do not establish its absolute priority over social life quite as clearly as Cooper would have it. Rousseau says as much in the sixth walk, where he confesses that the pleasures of the solitary life lack the intensity and emotional expansiveness of the joy of togetherness. The feeling of making “another heart content,” Rousseau explains, is “sweeter than any other,” but it proved intolerable for him because of its fragility. Social life, he explains, carries with it obligations that destroy spontaneity and, over time, sour the pleasure of associating with others: recounting his interactions with a crippled boy to whom he would occasionally give alms, Rousseau—sounding much like Emile explaining why he had cooled toward Sophie—recalls that their daily interaction was initially “a pleasure” but eventually transformed into “a habit” and, finally, into an “annoying” duty (*RSW* 49–50). The pleasures of solitude are preferable not because they are deeper, more expansive, or more rewarding than those of social life—indeed, Rousseau suggests that they are less so—but rather because they are more durable. The fullness of feeling felt through social connectedness still seems to be the existential limit point with reference to which Rousseau interprets the wholeness of isolation. Solitude is for Rousseau a kind of consolation prize, a good to be enjoyed by a singular man singularly unable to sacrifice personal pleasure to duty and, thus, unable bear the commitments that human association entails.

Rousseau’s singularity raises yet another concern about the satisfactoriness of the solution to the problem of dividedness that he himself embodied: can his experiment in living be replicated? Rousseau’s belief in his own distinctiveness—expressed repeatedly throughout his autobiographical works—seems to belie the notion that any and all could strike out and discover repose in solitude. The problem is especially acute if we take philosophic activity to be solitary man’s primary consolation, for since Rousseau consistently reserved
the privilege of philosophizing to a select few and actively discouraged everyone else from its pursuit, it would seem that the very activity that makes solitude rewarding would also be inaccessible to virtually everyone who would seek it. Now, it must be admitted that Emile, an Everyman who lacks Rousseau’s unique gifts, nonetheless appears capable of finding peace in solitude, for in *Emile and Sophie* he tells his tutor that he has found satisfaction despite being isolated. But if this is true, we are entitled to wonder why, first, Emile was educated for society at all and, second, why he felt the need to communicate his self-discovery with someone else; absent an answer, we may reasonably view his claim to have found peace in solitude to be rather unreliable—a form of protesting too much. It would certainly not be the only instance in which Emile proved to be self-deceived.

Insofar as the individualist, philosophic path to wholeness trod by Rousseau is not a viable alternative to social life—either because it replicates the failures of social life or because it is inaccessible to most people—we are obligated to return to society and search for consolations within it. But what, if any, consolations does Rousseau make available to us? We can begin to answer this question by noting from Rousseau’s point of view that wrestling with the question of human relations as a question is part of what it means to be human. The development of self-consciousness and social feeling effect irreversible changes in the structure of human being—changes that lead us to seek the greater part of our happiness through social recognition—and insofar as we wish to live in accord with our nature we cannot remain in ignorance of the difficulties that attend such changes. One who concerns himself with the question of what may be hoped for from his associations, far from indulging the “vain curiosity” Rousseau so violently declaims in the *First Discourse*, instead follows Rousseau’s own example in considering a matter that bears directly and immediately on the character of the human good.

Because our prospects for happiness are affected so powerfully by the way we are connected to others, it seems clear that we cannot afford not to think and feel through these connections. Indeed, to retreat from sustained and honest consideration of social possibility is to retreat from the burdens of genuinely human life; it is to leave our natural capacities for social feeling underdeveloped, to quit our estate as human beings and try futilely—with kings and beggars—to be something that we are not (*E* 446). With this in mind, we can see that the failure to seriously inquire after the character of human association would appear to magnify rather than ameliorate the dif-
difficulties to which social life gives rise, for such a failure precludes real engagement with the intransigently difficult question of self-knowledge, and leads to moral blindness, breakdowns of self-awareness, a diminished feeling of the sentiment of existence, and the very psychological dividedness Rousseau was so concerned to mend. Social beings that are unwilling or unable to think through the possibilities and limitations of their associational lives owe their obscure feelings of dissatisfaction, their “conflict and drifting,” to their incuriosity. Salutary ignorance is not an option.

If social beings must reflect on their relations, and if (proper) reflection leads inevitably to an awareness of the limits of human connection, then what prevents this awareness from engendering despair and moral paralysis? I believe that Rousseau provides at least three consolations that compensate us for the disappointments inherent in social life and, thereby, also keep us from slipping into disillusioned drift. The first, most evident in chapter 6’s analysis of friendship, is that connectedness of a less ambitious but perhaps no less comforting kind becomes possible once our divided condition is exposed for all to see. The public disclosure of our various failings—be they of mind, body, or soul—may weaken the esteem others feel for us, but it simultaneously creates a new emotional space in which social bonds, albeit of an aim-attenuated kind, are consummated and strengthened. Friends like Bomston and St. Preux, to say nothing of well-educated persons like Emile, find in their failures and imperfections a ground for community, for they know the sting of disappointment and that no one is exempt from humiliation. Emile’s example, and its effect on the reader, is especially instructive in this regard, for though Emile is ultimately unsuccessful in his quest to find wholeness through marriage, we do not begrudge him his failure but rather admire his effort. It is, in fact, his very failure that allows readers to identify with him: in the end, we no longer see a “model of perfection” whose excellence we could never hope to approximate, but rather a victim of fate whose difficulties we have lived out. His grizzled reflections on the trials of life, won by hard experience, excite our sympathy without inspiring our disgust. They also command our moral attention: the courage that he and Sophie exhibit through their hardships attracts us in spite—or because—of the fact that it does not shrink from but rather partakes in the imperfections of the world. The shared awareness that such imperfections attach to everything, that the human condition is one of weakness and travail, that life is too strong, too great, and too confounding for even the best and brightest, creates a ground for sympathetic community among all human beings and allows us to identify
with—and, importantly, to approach—the everyday heroism of figures like Emile and his beloved.

The second, borne out most fully in chapters 2 and 3, has to do with how the development of social sentiment activates and sharpens the sentiment of existence. The experience of this sentiment is not only a vindication of life itself (and hence an answer to Camus, who histrionically wondered two hundred years after Rousseau whether death was preferable to life) but also a standard for determining the choiceworthiness of our own lives. To live a good life, Rousseau avers, “is not to breathe; it is to act; it is to make use of our organs, our senses, our faculties, of all the parts of ourselves that give us the sentiment of our existence.” He goes on: “The man who has lived most is not he who has counted the most years but he who has most felt life” (E 42). The mere absence of pain is thus not the appropriate standard for a final assessment of human life (cf. DI 132); that standard is supplied, rather, by the quotient of felt life that we are able to enjoy, by the richness of experience and range of emotional and intellectual sensitivity through which we are able to make use of all our capacities, to press the boundaries of being, and to acquire knowledge of ourselves by acquiring knowledge of our limitations. Even with all its disappointments, then, a genuinely human—that is to say, social—life is, on Rousseau’s accounting, far preferable to the delusively grandiose aspirations of a tyrant or the petty, mechanical pleasures of an honest bourgeois because it gives expression to the full range of human powers while providing consolations when those powers, as they are so often, are insufficient for their task.

The third and final consolation that emerges from Rousseau’s tragic theory of social relations is the acquisition of virtue. This acquisition is significant, for Rousseau himself heaped so much praise on virtue that many commentators have ultimately concluded, with Reisert (2003, 10), that virtue is the “central lesson of Rousseau’s constructive works.” While this “lesson” has hardly been our central preoccupation, we have nonetheless seen how it figures into Rousseau’s mission: he has shown us how public and domestic forms of virtue emerge from different kinds of social arrangements and, in many cases, endure beyond the social structures that help to produce them. Emile’s example most clearly illustrates not only how the desire to be virtuous grows out of the eroticized desire to be social but also how the consolations of virtue help to soothe the wounds inflicted by frustrated eros. After the breakdown of his marriage to Sophie, Emile finds solace in his resolve
to be virtuous and in “finding his daily duties” around him. Though he had abandoned the hope of exclusive and enduring sexual love, he kept the moral discipline that that hope had cultivated in his youth. Trying to discourage his pupil from marrying Sophie simply because cold weather will make it more difficult to travel to see her, Jean-Jacques tells Emile that the marriage will outlive the snow (E 447). He leaves it for Emile to discover that virtue would remain after the marriage disappeared.

Reforming the Reader: Rousseau’s Mission as a Writer

We have now seen that Rousseau’s veiled social tragedy holds out important consolations for readers who might otherwise become disillusioned by his skepticism concerning human relations. But in continuing to tease out the implications of the “tragic” interpretation it is necessary to shift our gaze from reader to author, and to seek to understand a bit more about the kind of writer that would develop a teaching like the one I have found in Rousseau. It is worth mentioning at the outset that throughout the twentieth century Rousseau has been often interpreted, both by his defenders and his detractors, as a preeminently political thinker who wrote in order to effect practical political change. The criticisms of Karl Popper, Robert Nisbet, and J. L. Talmon all presuppose that Rousseau wrote the Social Contract animated by the hope that the regime depicted there would one day be realized, and John Rawls (2007, 207–8)—seeking to save Rousseau from those very criticisms—characterizes him as a reasonable optimist seeking social progress through institutional reform. If, as I have argued above, Rousseau is too circumspect about the limits of social connection to believe that the possibilities he explores could be fully realized in the world—especially in the modern world—then this “practical” interpretation of his work will not do. Why, then, did he write? What did he hope to achieve, if not practical political reform?

The question is a good one, and for guidance I turn to an eminently qualified, albeit somewhat unsympathetic, source: Voltaire. Writing to Geneva pastor Jacob Vernes, the arch philosophe complained of Rousseau’s obscurantism and unwillingness to address himself directly to the concrete problems of his day. “Jean-Jacques writes only in order to write,” sneered the lord of Ferney, “and I write in order to act” (Adams 1991, 162n46). Though wrong to dismiss Rousseau’s work as mere armchair speculation, Voltaire’s
frustration with his onetime friend is nonetheless instructive, for it reveals important differences in the two thinkers’ respective conceptions of how philosophic writers ought to engage with their readers and, more broadly, with world they inhabit. For Voltaire and his fellow philosophes, to be engaged in philosophy is to seek to bring the world into conformity with reason; it is, therefore, to be necessarily engaged in a political program of reform. And since philosophy qua philosophy is a tool of social change, philosophers themselves have an obligation to improve society by bringing both its design and its customs into accord with reason. Assuming this obligation meant, among other things, taking strong stances on a variety of concrete social questions: Voltaire had his Calas affair, Diderot his Encyclopedia, and D’Alembert the vaccination debate. They united under the slogan *Ecrasez l’infâme!* and univocally cried for toleration, liberation from superstition, and rational institutional design.

Rousseau, by contrast, could never find harmony with the heavenly chorus or bring himself to fully endorse its understanding of the philosopher’s role in society. To the degree that he felt compelled to address current events or the questions of the day, the views he expressed were, because of their complexity, far less amenable to policy prescription than were those of his contemporaries: he supported toleration but defended a well-educated fanaticism; he depicted a virtuous atheist but insisted that religion was necessary to a healthy political society; he inveighed against medicine but had very little to say about vaccination; he pioneered a new educational theory but discouraged efforts to institutionalize it. This, of course, is not to deny that Rousseau contributed meaningfully to the debates that surrounded him (see, e.g., Hulliung 1994; Mostefai and Scott 2009), but rather to say that his intellectual mission was not defined by his contribution to those debates. To the contrary, when Rousseau raised the questions of his day, he did so not to resolve but rather to problematize them, and in so doing he invited his readers to think about them more deeply and more productively. This more nuanced and individualistic authorial mission emerged most clearly in the aftermath of the publication of the Second Discourse: by the spring of 1756 Rousseau had grown so weary of the philosophes’ intrigues, and so skeptical of their radical activism, that he found it necessary to leave the bustle of Paris for the quiet of Montmorency. There he would dispense with efforts to reform society and focus instead on reforming himself—he sought the country in order to escape the distractions of the capital and embark on a personal program of moral “reform” that would coincide with a period of astounding literary
productivity (Cranston 1991, 100). Thus it would seem that Rousseau’s decision to leave Paris was not motivated simply by a need for a change of scenery; it was, rather, an essential condition for living out his distinctive vision of what it meant to be a philosopher. In order to live and philosophize as he thought appropriate, it was as necessary for Rousseau to leave Paris as it was for the philosophes to stay there.

Rousseau’s extreme inwardness and attendant need to distance himself from the other “opinion makers” of his day point, I think, to the distinctive way he viewed his mission as an author. In this respect, he shared a great deal more with the French moralists of the seventeenth century than with the social reformers of the Enlightenment era, for it was not the reform of large-scale social institutions—but the moral improvement and transformation of individual readers—that Rousseau sought to effect through his writing. He wanted first and foremost to produce a revolution in the understanding, and it was in the service of this goal that his efforts as an author, including his occasional forays into practical politics, were largely devoted. Indeed, it is in light of this goal that we can understand Rousseau’s “tragic” theory of human relations, for insofar as the romantic, fraternal, and political ideals he evokes may be understood not as templates or blueprints to be replicated in the world but rather as pedagogic tools intended to help readers better understand themselves, their aspirations, and their condition, we have a sense of why he would invite us to explore possibilities that he himself ultimately finds it necessary to undermine. These possibilities, however unrealizable, are themselves part of the structure of social life, and it is only in their light that a properly human happiness may be approached and approximated.

Rousseau’s concern for the salvation of individual readers is evident even before his symbolic move from Paris, for he begins the preface to the Discourse on Inequality (91) by invoking the famous inscription at the temple of the oracle at Delphi and claiming that “the most useful and least advanced of all human sciences seems to me to be that of man.” Modern man’s complete lack of self-knowledge becomes the principle theme in the Discourse’s preface and exordium, with Rousseau taking up the actual question asked by the Academy at Dijon only insofar as he thought it might help his fellows better understand themselves and one another. The Second Discourse was, of course, only the first of many efforts to get readers to view themselves in a new way and in light of new possibilities. Thus we find Shklar (1969, 2) claiming that Rousseau wrote not to alter government policy but rather to “induce moral recognition in the reader,” to shake him out of his dogmatic
slumber and awaken in him an “outraged awareness” at his condition. “The object of [Rousseau’s] models,” she avers, “was not to set up the perfect community, but simply to bring moral judgment to bear on the social misery to which men have so unnecessarily reduced themselves.”

Lest we think this goal too modest for a writer of Rousseau’s range and power, Scott (2012; 2014, 533) has shown how difficult it is to get readers to view the world with new eyes. He identifies a series of rhetorical techniques that Rousseau utilized in order to persuade others of his new and radically different interpretation of human experience, and on that basis argues that “Rousseau’s mission as an author . . . is to make his readers see what he saw” and, in so doing, to “transform [their] perspective.” This reading of Rousseau’s intention both underscores the Shklarian view that Rousseau was more interested in helping individual readers with their personal salvation than with institutional or policy change, and it shows Rousseau to be an intentionally difficult writer rather than, as has so often been claimed, a muddleheaded obscurantist. Scott deftly reveals how Rousseau strategically and deliberately utilizes obscurity, indirection, and paradox as ways of helping readers see the limitations of their own understandings of reality and envisage social possibilities previously blocked from view by the ossified telos of Aristotle, the antisocial hypocrisy of Christianity, and the reductive bilge of Hobbes.

Insofar, then, as we can understand Rousseau as deliberately sowing confusion for the pedagogic purpose of helping readers interpret their experiences more productively, we may conclude with Zaretsky and Scott (2009, 100) that in Rousseau, “paradoxes were not mere extravagances; they were critical to his philosophical enterprise.”

Both the style and substance of Rousseau’s work tend, I think, to support the view that he wrote less to effect programmatic social change than to show individual readers the limitations of their old ideas and conceptions. Rousseau’s tone, for one, is not that of a reformer but of a confidante. It is intimate, confessional, immediate, and highly personal; he directly addresses his reader with great frequency and spends an unusual amount of time anticipating their criticisms, undermining their presuppositions, disclosing his own sincerity, and ingratiating himself into their confidences. Even when he addresses the entire species, as he does in the Discourse on Inequality, he manages to speak in an immediate way to each member of his audience. Thus we find Reisert (2003, ix) saying what so many readers of Rousseau have felt: “Whenever I read Rousseau, I feel that he is speaking directly to me—not in the way that all great thinkers who address universal human
concerns necessarily speak to each reader because they speak to all—but in a more personal way.” The “personal” tone to which Reisert refers has an important effect: it helps soften the skeptical reader and prepare him to accept Rousseau’s authority as a knower and a teacher. To be sure, the tone that Rousseau adopts does not preclude a separate intention to reform society’s basic institutions, but surely it is better suited to an individualized pedagogic intention than a reformist, “political” one.

It is, however, not just the intimacy but also the indirection of Rousseau’s style that distinguishes his work from that of a more practically minded reformer. Rousseau combines his highly intimate and confessional tone with a love for jarring paradoxes, and his distinctive blend of emotional immediacy and philosophic ambiguity is designed to generate deep uncertainty in individual readers—uncertainty not only about Rousseau’s meaning but also about the reader’s own interpretation of reality. The paradoxical and somewhat obscure nature of Rousseau’s work has, of course, been noted by many, but the response it elicited from one his earliest and most distinguished readers—David Hume—is particularly instructive. Writing to a mutual friend of his and Rousseau’s, Hume noted that though Rousseau’s works were “admirable, particularly on the head of eloquence,” so, too, were they inevitably “intermingled [with] some degree of extravagance.” To this he added that even a reader as attentive as he did not quite know what to make of Rousseau: his writings were less texts than “performances” that, it seemed to Hume, had been undertaken not to demonstrate truth but rather “from the pleasure of showing his invention and surprising the reader with his paradoxes” (in Zaretsky and Scott 2009, 100). A writer as practical as Hume saw that Rousseau’s peculiar, aporia-inducing manner was ill suited to the task of concrete political reform. What he failed to see, however, is that Rousseau had a different understanding of how a writer ought to engage in the world, and that the paradoxes he deployed were essential to this alternative vision. At least part of the reason Hume failed in this regard is that he made very different assumptions about his reading public than did Rousseau: serving in his self-appointed role of ambassador between the learned and the layman, Hume wrote to and for a world that he believed to be fundamentally sensible or, at the very least, not in need of complete moral and intellectual transformation. Rousseau, on the other hand, believed his readers so corrupt, and the world they inhabited so rotten and irredeemable, that nothing short of complete moral transformation would be at all useful. Hume could be content with informing and edifying his public, but Rousseau
had to fundamentally *reorient* his, and his ingratiatingly indirect style was one of the many ways he got readers invested in his reformation project.

None of this, of course, is to deny that Rousseau believed the modern world could be better than it was, or to say that he was simply uninterested in the realm of practical politics. *Poland*, the *Constitution Project for Corsica*, and the *Letter to D’Alembert* all suggest otherwise: they address themselves to concrete political problems, make reasonably specific suggestions for reform, and, on the whole, suggest that more sensibly designed institutions could play an important role in ameliorating human misery. It is, however, to say that Rousseau’s significance as an author does not lie in his having made this or that policy prescription, but rather in the novel way that he interrogates—and thereby *remakes*—his readers. It is in light of this aim, and no other, that both his tragic theory of human relations and his success or failure as a writer must be judged.