THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Post-Modern Menippea: The Satirical Works of Jack Hodgins

by

Gail Catherine Roberts

A Thesis
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to my small, very dear family
which rests so precariously
within the "arms" of my larger
one, The Family of Man, and
to Jack Hodgins who gave me a
deeper appreciation of these
affiliations

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Abstract

This thesis contends that through the use of Menippean satire Jack Hodgins is able to take a broad, revealing look at Canadian culture and human experience. The Invention of the World (1977), The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne (1979), The Barclay Family Theatre (1981), and "Change of Scenery" (1982) attack men's moral faults in a witty light-hearted fashion. The informing theme of these works--as well as the sober Spit Delaney's Island (1976) and the sinister "In the Museum of Evil" (1974)--is that mastering the art of living should be one's most pressing concern. Menippean satire empowers Hodgins to indicate ethical directions which could have a salutary effect on his contemporaries in a time marked by a general upheaval of society and its values.

The first chapter of this thesis answers Hodgins' critics, defines Menippea in relation to his work, and shows how he uses the genre to elucidate the life of the island and the culture from which he comes. The second chapter examines Hodgins' parody of literary forms: the Greek myth; the Homeric epic; the biblical parable; the journal/scrapbook. The third chapter analyzes Hodgins' parody of intellectual and philosophical notions, particularly as they examine the natures of history and art. The fourth chapter examines the writer's satire of envy, ambition, prejudice, dishonesty in government, insensitivity of media, American domination of Canada and ecological mismanagement. The conclusion demonstrates that through Menippean satire Hodgins questions not only the most fundamental assumptions upon which our society and our lives are based, but the validity of the position of

the satirist himself.

Research for this thesis has involved a reading of the body of Hodgins' published work, a reading of the small number of reviews, notes, articles and interviews that have been produced regarding his writing, and an in-depth study of the natures of parody and satire, particularly Menippean satire. It is significant that no extensive study of Hodgins' work has been published to date although he has been published in the United States, Australia and nearly every literary magazine of consequence in Canada. In addition, he has won the Gibson Literary Award for his first novel and the Governor General's Award for Fiction for his second. This author has currently two novels in progress.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One

You that intend to write
what is worthy to be read
more than once, blot frequently:
and take no pains to make the
multitude admire you, content
with a few judicious readers.

Horace, Satires, Bk. I, Vol. X
(ed. A. Palmer, London: 1883)

Traditional critical tools which suffice for the discussion of realist fiction do not work adequately in approaching Jack Hodgins, who refuses to submit to the tyranny of the unities and conventional narrative techniques. Most of Hodgins' critics, while celebrating the fact that he has broken out of the mould, base their negative remarks on the notions that short stories and novels are mimetic, psychologically developmental and ultimately social. Hodgins, however, has moved far beyond presenting slice-of-life realism to the invention of verbal worlds. Critics who condemn Hodgins for failing to adhere to the tenets of literary realism--and even those who would "forgive" him for his departure on the basis that he is a "Magic Realist"[1]--do not comprehend fully what this writer is doing. It is in understanding Hodgins as a Menippean satirist that the structure of his work becomes clear, and mistaken or irrelevant judgments of it are prevented.

David L. Jeffries holds that Jack Hodgins' domain is the private psychological landscape, the "Island Mind."[2] Hodgins admits that his stories originate out of "the mystery of human personalities"[3] and it is true that they are populated by strong, well-established characters whose lives have come undone but literary realism does not account for

the complex process by which, acting out of the blind compulsion to create from chaos or the more refined but equally blind desire to create utopia from a fallen world, Hodgins' figures dispel old, unworkable "realities" by inventing new ones. Geographically and symbolically "the end of the world," Vancouver Island becomes through Hodgins' art a place of suspended time and memory, an Edenic place of discovery for those who are struggling to endure.[4] As the narrator in the preface to The Invention of the World explains, it becomes a place where chaos may be absorbed, confronted, re-ordered, transformed into realities based on living experience, released by telling and thus finally made one's own.[5] The sea, forest and mountains, because they are uninhabited and therefore unshaped, serve only to heighten the significance of the characters' discoveries.

Typical of Hodgins' protagonists who must learn assimilation and accommodation when their world views fail is Hodgins' first "hero" Albert "Spit" Delaney of Spit Delaney's Island. Having spent forty years living in the nuts-and-bolts reality of steam engines, timetables, cogs and gears, Spit is forced by altered circumstances to re-define his life. He "goes into himself" and emerges with a vague but vital sense of the power of imagination. This liberating discovery is enhanced when Spit allows the outrageous poet Phemie Porter to develop in him a sense of the freeing power of language. By the last story in the collection Spit is ready to accept--albeit reluctantly--the responsibility for inventing his own story.

Hodgins' powers of imagination and language are fully operative in The Invention of the World and The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne, where sustained verbal texts independent of realism's conventions emerge

under his hand. John Moss, while sophisticated enough to appreciate Invention as a world made out of language, reverts contradictorally to mimesis as his criterion for judging the quality of the novel's characterization:

> [Maggie Kyle] is as earthy a character as we have in our literature--many times married, fiery, proud, [Keneally] is beautifully unreal. . . . The language surrounding him is rich with Irish brogue. Maggie's word-milieu has a realistic Island twang to it, evoking the setting rather than invoking it. . . . It is language, ultimately, that binds them all into the same compelling vision.[6]

Similarly Moss adheres to criteria appropriate to the analysis of realist fiction when he condemns Joseph Bourne for "verbal mannerisms" and underdeveloped characters and plot.

Many critics, including Moss, R. P. Bilan, Robert Harlow, and J. Hofsess, mistake epistemological reality with literary realism in discussing Hodgins. Even George Woodcock confuses life with text when he speaks of "recognizing" Hodgins' characters. He says of Maggie, the crude but attractive protagonist of Invention, "I have known such a loud, leggy blonde from northern Vancouver Island whose career and character were not much different."[7] Hodgins himself confuses authenticity with literary realism in discussing his work:

> I started to write that book [Joseph Bourne] after being up there [at Nanaimo] only once and I had gotten about a hundred pages into it and I thought I'd better go back and see if I'd got the flavor right. It was really almost scary because I was meeting people I thought I'd invented. I was having conversations I'd already written and it was as if I'd invented the whole town and there they were walking around, living up to my expectations![8]

Hodgins' confusion of "reality" with "realism" arises primarily from his passion to be believed. He frequently remarks that his most pressing concern in describing life on Vancouver Island is "to tame it down enough so that people will believe it."[9] His confusion arises secondarily from

the intensity of the creative process. Hodgins explains how his most powerful stories "arrive":

> Stories arrive in a variety of ways. Some must be shaped out of the materials I have gathered, then polished and patterned in much the same way as any other craftsman works. Some stories grow out of history or memory and my task is to uncover them, as an archaeologist uncovers history, and to give them artistic form. And once in a while a story arrives which is neither created nor uncovered. It reveals itself as if it had already existed somewhere else without me. Writing this third kind of story can leave me shaking, sweating, frightened and thoroughly exultant. It has a life of its own from the beginning. Reading it over afterwards, I discover there is more in it than I could have put there deliberately, there are questions I had never thought of asking, and there are characters whose lives become larger than I could have fashioned consciously. . . . Every story is an experiment in magic. The task is to create an illusion of real people living real lives out of what is nothing more than a lot of strange marks on a piece of paper.[10]

Clearly Moss, Bilan, Harlow, Hofsess, Woodcock and like critics, too eager to suspend their disbelief, have been taken in by Hodgins' skillful illusions.

Hodgins indicates that sometimes his larger-than-life characters commandeer his consciousness. Jacob Weins, the absurd mayor of fictional Port Annie in Joseph Bourne, is a case in point. Weins "arrived" with all the Chamber of Commerce personality traits that Hodgins deplores and all the values of which he disapproves. Yet, drawn to the appalling Weins, Hodgins is convinced that Chaucer would approve of the attitude he developed toward Weins for, as he says, "Chaucer loved even his bad guys."[11] As a matter of fact, Hodgins became deeply taken by his mayor. The author travels frequently and he reports that "Jacob Weins came with me without my permission when I went to Tokyo. He was demanding to be in another book."[12] The keen interest that Weins developed in Hodgins made it necessary for the writer to continue the retired but unretiring mayor's story in a later work, "The Sumo Revisions." Hodgins reports

having had a similar experience with another principal character "who just wouldn't go away": Maggie Kyle, Invention's restless seeker, earlier "began life" as Patsy in "The Importance of Patsy McLean."[13] In addition to being motivated by characters who take possession of him in order to have their stories told, Hodgins is motivated by a desire "to write the books that nobody else has written for me to read."[14] It is appropriate in this regard to note that Hodgins has Jenny, the stripper with pink hair in Joseph Bourne, rejoice because "there [are] still some mysteries left . . . and lots of room for new ways of looking at things."[15]

Hodgins feels free to probe into the truth of things in a way that is not contingent upon verisimilitude and admits to employing elements of fantasy in his work to defamiliarize life so as to take his reader beyond habits of perception,[16] but he protests loudly the label "Magic Realist." Jorges Luis Borges identifies how limited this genre is when he describes the four techniques available to the "Magic Realist": the work within the work, the contamination of reality by dream, the voyage in time, and the double.[17] In "Separating" and "Spit Delaney's Island," the first and last stories of Spit Delaney's Island, Hodgins toys with the idea of the work within the work to comment upon the nature of the world. In "By the River" and "Three Women of the Country" he contaminates reality with madness to question the nature of knowledge. In "At the Foot of the Hill, Birdie's School" he adapts the voyage in time to consider the nature of mortality. In The Invention of the World and The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne he relates the double to the nature of the self. Certainly Hodgins uses fantasy to deal with ontology, epistemology, chronology and identity, but his work exists beyond the limitations of "Magic Realism." It would seem that Hodgins

is motivated by the desire to solve Plato's conundrum and write "true fiction."

Hodgins is motivated too by his interest in the work of William Faulkner and contemporary South American writers:

> I felt justified when I read that Marquez and the other South American writers I like in turn looked to William Faulkner, who was also my great hero. It's a vision of the world and of literature, rather than a region. With the South American writers you get a sense of energy, of exuberance you don't get that often with North American writers, and the sense that a novel has the right to include a cast of thousands, a whole village, a whole town, or the whole world if you want, whereas most North American writers will concentrate on one person for a whole novel.[18]

It is significant that in Joseph Bourne life and energy are drawn out of the heart of South America. Raimey, the Terpsichore from darkest Peru, irradiates miraculous beauty and grace from her restorative powers. She resurrects Joseph Bourne and inspires Jenny Flambe Chambers to bring the residents of Port Annie to their feet to swing and sway together in a symbolic affirmation of their connection with one another and their hope for a happier life.

It is illuminating to locate such interests generically. Like Marquez in One Hundred Years of Solitude, Brandao in Zero, Rubião in The Ex-Magician and Other Stories, Pinter and Becket in their major works, and Huxley in Brave New World, Swift in Gulliver's Travels, and Voltaire in Candide, Hodgins shows a gift for parody which frequently takes the form of Menippean satire. Common in antiquity and the Middle Ages, this genre is being used increasingly by contemporary Canadian writers, notably Robert Kroetch and Leon Rooke. Named for its Greek originator, the cynic Menippus, it is sometimes called Varronian satire, after a Roman imitator, Varro. Northrop Frye, in Anatomy of Criticism,

suggests an alternative name, "the anatomy," after Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy. Frye explains that the short form of the Menippean satire is usually a dialogue or colloquy in which the dramatic interest is in a conflict of ideas rather than of character. The form is not invariably satiric in attitude but may shade off into more fanciful or moral discussions. According to Frye, Menippean satire shows its exuberance in intellectual ways, for example by piling up an enormous mass of erudition or jargon. The deliberately digressive narrative, the catalogues, the stylizing of characters to effect humor, the marvellous journey, the ridicule of philosophers and pedants, the dialogue form, the mixture of prose and verse, and the rural setting combine to provoke gentle raillery against a society.[19]

Hodgins' menippean world requires that one accept as necessary the presentation of simultaneous, equally legitimate, unresolved points of view, and that one expects no resolutions at the usual level. The features of Menippea identified by Mikhail Bakhtin in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics provide a particularly good filter for examining how Hodgins uses the satire to elucidate the life of Vancouver Island and the culture from which he comes. Whether or not Hodgins, a joker about serious things, has heard of the term "Menippea," the critical construct is helpful in making sense of this postmodern writer's work. It is particularly useful to apply Bakhtin's rich definition to Hodgins for Bakhtin itemizes fourteen Menippean features and discusses each feature in considerable detail. Most importantly he shows Menippea's potential as a genre. F. Anne Payne contributes to Bakhtin's comprehensive description when she identifies seven more salient characteristics of Menippean satire in Chaucer and Menippean Satire.

Although there may be great variation from one Menippea to another, the comic element in Menippean satire is great, Bakhtin argues.[20] Hodgins' humor ranges from charming absurdity through ludicrous improbability to gross hyperbole. In Resurrection his rich imagination constructs from realistic detail an enchanting intrigue for Angela Turner:

> Just when Angela Turner had decided to give up and leave Port Annie . . . the giant wave had washed up into town and left a Peruvian sailor on the flowered sheets of her unmade bed. . . . Limpits glued themselves to his shoulders; periwinkles nested in the curly hairs of his belly. "Oh, Lord," she said, "I hope this isn't a mirage." (p. 39)

In contrast to the delicacy of this lovely nonsense is Jacob Weins' hare-brained scheme to attract tourists to Port Annie by towing the world's largest cactus into the harbor where it rots to death:

> The poor thing had been subjected to such a series of shocks--uprooted from its native soil, transported over land and sea, rained on and saturated to the point of nearly exploding, burned by heat lamps, dried out by electric heaters, and stared at contemptuously by one family of tourists from its own home state--that it has shrivelled and dropped in its enforced afterlife and slumped against its glass wall like a boneless drunk. (p. 209)

There is no better example of Hodgins' masterful use of hyperbole than the outrageous banquet scene--a traditional "staple" of satirists--at the conclusion of Invention, unless it is the catalogue of gifts Maggie and Wade receive from their many friends:

> There were pillows and sheets . . . toasters and irons and mixers . . . pots, pans, jars, vases, toilet seats and towels . . . a subscription to Macleans, a trip to Hawaii, a bucketful of bolts, a crate of Japanese oranges . . . a car . . . a side of beef . . . a tin of peaches, a promise of peace. A painting. A shrub. A bird cage. A ring . . . Junk mail. Thirty acres. Twin grandchildren. American oil tankers. Bad television programs. Tax notices . . . The French language. Surprises. Suspicions. Celebrations. Revelations. Meditations . . . Psychology. Biology. Lethargy. Jealousy . . . Desire. Wonder. Worship. Pride. Immortality. Humility . . . Restless youth . . . (pp. 352-53)

Appropriately for "the new man and the new woman," the new Adam and Eve, love completes this litany. It is love that has endowed Maggie with the "Power(s)" to come to terms with old ghosts, set the past to order and get back into life. Like Larry Bowman and Angela Turner who grow to love each other in Resurrection, Carl and Gladys who reaffirm their love in "More Than Conquerors," and elderly Geoffrey and Elma who set out to adventure together in "Change of Scenery," Wade and Maggie's newness is a mark of their freedom from all that has gone before and a mark of their readiness to invent the world in their own way.[21] The victory of love balances Invention's opening fracas and gives a positive focus for the enormous life-force released into the community by the rowdy, ebullient, comic wedding brawl.[22] There is a subtle irony in that the "true story" of their wedding reception is recorded by Becker, the failed historian, who has convinced the reader in the course of the novel that "words only nibble at reality" (Invention, 319).

Like Seneca's in the "Hercules Furens" ("Mad Hercules"), Hodgins' comic gift is not above self-parody: The Barclay Family Theatre is a collection of stories loosely arranged around the seven lively Barclay sisters of Waterville who correspond to Hodgins' mother and her vibrant sisters of Merville as the author recalls them from his youth.[23] Barclay Philip Desmond, son of the least melodramatic Barclay sister, serves as the vehicle for Hodgins' parodic self-revelation in the first story of the collection. A gangly, inept thirteen year old, his unlikely aspiration to become a Finn conflicts with his mother's equally unlikely aspiration that he become a pianist on "The Concert Stages of Europe." In the persona of Clay, Hodgins appears in the last story as an imaginative "little liar" with as much talent for "stirring up a ruckus" as his notorious aunts.[24] Lest she be outdone, Clay's most audacious aunt,

Eleanor, advises him in the last sentence of the book to become a writer, "the perfect job for a person who was--let's face it--dull and uninteresting and totally lacking in flair" (Barclay, p. 299).

As we follow Bakhtin's definition, Menippean satire is fully liberated from historical forms and is not bound by external verisimilitude. It is characterized by extraordinary freedom of invention in philosophy.[25] "Scrapbook," the most unusual chapter of Invention, expresses Hodgins' beliefs that human experience generates myth, that conflicting realities co-exist, that time may be discontinuous or multilinear, and that words provide only an approximation of the truth. "Scrapbook" demonstrates too the topicality and publicist qualities of Menippean satire.[26] Composed of letters, editorials, tape recorded interviews, a death notice, a chronological list and a child's story, "Scrapbook" is in effect a composite of individual perspectives: characters from past and present convene to tell amateur historian Strabo Becker what they "know" about the legendary Donal Keneally, his Revelations Colony of Truth, and the deaths in 1909 of his first wife and her supposed lover, Chris Wall. An analysis of the entries in Becker's scrapbook reveals that although each character believes he is in sole possession of The Truth, each offers a unique view arising from his selective perception/memory, conscious/unconscious prejudices and sense of self/audience. William New notes that Hodgins focuses less on Keneally than on various perceptions of him, "perceptions which assert in the course of present-day events how ordinary the old-world myth turns out to be," because of the perspectives which the characters can develop toward their own ambitions, pasts and personalities.[27]

Menippean satire, unbound by traditional form and external verisimilitude, is characterized by extraordinary freedom of invention in

plot.[28] John Walker, in Canadian Fiction Magazine (1980), remarks on Hodgins' 1979 Governor General's Award winning novel:

> The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne is a wonderfully inventive, marvellous, human, humorous, complete Canadian novel . . . though not blatantly a source of social comment, it has much to say about politics and business at all levels . . . as well as indicating the foibles of the (extra) ordinary people of the (extra) ordinary town of Port Annie. [It] is a novel about life and death, of despair and hope, of birth and regeneration, about the natural and the "supernatural," about real reality and imaginary reality.[29]

Clearly a novel of such scope demands an inventive approach to the delineation of events. In addition, Hodgins' belief that one discovers reality by entering one's own story head first and living it out with all its unruly characters and unpredictable contingencies requires that each of his stories develops in its own quirky way.[30]

As "Separating" unfolds, Spit Delaney becomes separated from everything that is important to him:

> Cheated in a single summer out of Old Number One, his saved-up overtime money, the tourists rightfully expected fun, and now out of wife as well. The world was out to cheat him wherever he turned.[31]

Kicking and screaming all the way, Spit is forced to make a new beginning. Stella Delaney's parting words are interlaced with Spit's fantasy of a pilgrimage to the genesis of things. Naked, raving, prepared to throw himself headlong into the "blind heavy roar" of the Pacific Ocean in search of the dividing line "Between what is and what isn't" (Spit, p. 8), Spit appeals to his chosen priest to preside over his birth, baptism and spiritual evolution. "Separating" and its companion piece "Spit Delaney's Island," which closes the collection of that title, show another salient characteristic of Menippean satire: bold invention and fantasy combine with philosophical universalism and complex theories so

that complete questions are stripped to the bare essentials.[32]

The purpose of the fantastic in Menippean satire, Bakhtin suggests, is to create extraordinary situations in which philosophic ideas may be tested but not to act as the embodiment of "The Truth."[33] Hodgins' somewhat surrealistic story, "At the Foot of the Hill, Birdie's School," is a post-modern experiment which considers the effect of intellectual and moral limitations on man. Drawn by the myth of the McLean gang--who were "doing their deeds for all he knew in someone else's lifetime" (Spit, p. 137)--the innocent Webster Treherne descends a physical and spiritual mountain to become a party to their wicked ways. Indoctrination into evil requires that Webster "lose" what little understanding he has of truth, love and life. Much to Webster's surprise, his "reward" for successful intellectual and moral devolution in this perverted parable is corporeal corruption. Balk-eyed Birdie, director of Webster's "instruction," congratulates "the best pupil she's had yet":

> That is the reward you get for learning your lessons well, to get sick and die and then rot in the ground . . . I've never seen anyone go through [my school] so fast . . . You really must have wanted it . . . (Spit, p. 150)

Webster's protest that he is indestructible because he is "an idea in the Old Man's mind and therefore perfect" (Spit, p. 150) liberates him from Birdie's ravishing power and facilitates his ascension from whence he came. In offering a metaphorical rather than an absolute resolution to the story, the author emphasizes its inquiring rather than its didactic nature.

Menippean satire is an organic combination of free fantasy, symbolism and mystical-religious elements with extreme, crude naturalism.[34] In "At the Foot of the Hill, Birdie's School," Hodgins portrays evil's fatal power over man in terms of the death-whore Birdie's seduction of

Everyman, Webster:

> He slept badly and woke up the next morning with a burning forehead and pains in his chest. When Birdie came in she made a face and opened the window. "It stinks in here," she said. Then she took off her clothes and crawled into bed beside him.
>
> "Your chest rattles," she said, and ran a hand down over his groin.
>
> "I can't move it," he said. "I feel as if the ceiling has come down to sit on me."
>
> She rubbed her hands in his sweat and dried them in his hair. She rested one huge breast on his throat and sang a lullaby. She climbed on top of him and lay down but he couldn't breathe so she wrapped her arms and legs around him, gave a few heaves, then rolled right over onto her back and held him prisoner . . . cradled in the soft arms of Balk-eyed Birdie, fighting for every breath, rocking gently on her white belly, he saw a quick dark movement out of the corner of his eye. (Spit, p. 148)

This horrible parody of mother-love hints at necrophilia. Another example of what Bakhtin calls "slum naturalism" occurs in Hodgins when villainous Jeremy Fell and his wife Cynthia, proprietors of The Museum of Evil in a short story of that name, reappear as sinister minor characters in Resurrection. There the extent of Jeremy's fall is shown in his hostility toward truth, miracle, charity and joy, even to the point of wanting to destroy those who respond positively to these things.[35] Sin personified clings to pale, red-eyed Jeremy "like a barnacle":

> Cyn . . . a dry hot discontented woman . . . offered him only one part of herself grudgingly, once a week like Sunday chicken (only quicker, and with less attention) . . . Fat but dry, no juices flowed in her at all, she might have been made from cut cedar . . . (Resurrection, p. 53)

Crudity in Hodgins never appears for its own sake, to shock or to sensationalize. It appears only when the author's narrative powers are fully engaged to enhance plot, theme, mood or characterization.

Although scandalous actions, events and vulgarisms are characteristic of Menippean satire, obscenity generally appears without pornog-

raphy. In "More Than Conquerors" Gladdy Roote vociferously--but reluctantly--rejects the sexual advances of her husband, Carl, on a public beach. The motivation for the incident is character revelation, not licentiousness:

> "A swim before supper. You'd think we were kids." He slid a hand in the gaping side of her bathing suit and bounced a breast. "Kids," he said. "Here!" she said and slapped at him. "Get your horny paws out!" She looked up the beach to see if anyone was watching. No one was, no one ever was. . . . A sailboat, though, was slicing through the water in this direction. "Can't you ever think of anything else?" "What else?" he said, and laid one arm across his eyes. "Go on back in the water," she said, and stood up. "Another dip in that cold will freeze the ideas off you." Though she couldn't help just a glance at the wet black hairs going down his belly out of sight. (Barclay, p. 50)

In contrast to Gladdy's hypocritical restraint, Fat Annie's enthusiasm for love-making is boundless. Some of the titanic energy which characterizes Menippean satire is released in Resurrection during Fat Annie's orgasms. This scene, which in other hands may have been offensive, is hilarious in its hyperbole:

> [Fat Annie and Dieter Fartenburg] were so crazy about each other that they got that whole float-camp rocking every night of their lives together and sent waves sloshing up and down the inlet that would've capsized any boat that got itself caught in it. Fat Annie's great jubilant whoops clapped thunderlike across the bay, kept everyone awake . . . [the loggers] called Fat Annie their tub of love and secretly envied the little bundle of dried sticks who had the power to provoke such shouts of joy, such hoots of satisfaction, to kindle such an abundance of overflowing love. There wasn't a man in the camp who didn't dream every night of wallowing in that enormous tub of love, tickling those generous folds of fat, causing those sighs and moans and ecstatic whoops . . . (Resurrection, p. 67)

Other "climactic" examples of Hodgins' celebration of the tremendous energy and joy radiating from his Menippea are Invention's chaotic wedding celebration and Resurrection's abandoned dance.

Sharp contrasts and oxymoronic combinations are further earmarks

of Menippean satire and Hodgins specializes in dramatically contrasting grotesques.[36] Fat Annie's bulk in contrast to Dieter's scrawniness produces a stereotyped comic effect. Giant Keneally's dark good looks contrast with the appearance of his misshapen familiar Gems the Cripple. Hefty, outspoken Phemie Porter, in her domination of tall, thin, taciturn Reef, confirms that he is "just [her] portable prick" (Spit, p. 186). Occasionally Hodgins uses physical contrast between characters to underscore philosophical, psychological and/or moral differences. Prim, proper and practical, Mrs. Left/Wright in "Three Women of the Country" prides herself on "knowing what's what" based on rational interpretations of information obtained from her five sharp senses. A lack of imagination is her shortcoming. Sloppy, sentimental and sensitive, Edna Starbuck loses her son and her life because she responds inappropriately to the moral, social and biological laws compelling adults to love and nurture children. A lack of reason is her flaw. Hodgins' sympathetic treatment of Mrs. Starbuck juxtaposes to his harsh rendering of Mrs. Left/Wright, forcing the reader to question which woman's loss is the greater.

Through the effective use of contrast Hodgins maintains a constant tension between the pedestrian and the preposterous without forfeiting his credibility. That Spit Delaney is overcome periodically by the need to listen to his tape recording of Old Number One as he travels far from home for the first time is pedestrian; that he should be overcome at the foot of the pyramids and at Anne Hathaway's Cottage is preposterous--but credible ("Separating"). That Lenore Miles should be very calm when facing other people's troubles is pedestrian; that she falls to pieces when facing her own is preposterous--but possible ("Other People's Troubles"). That mushrooms persist in growing where farmers

do not want them is pedestrian; that they should attract pickers from the far reaches of the earth is preposterous--but true ("The Plague Children"). That Bella Robson should be concerned with her son's romantic involvement is pedestrian; that she should challenge Soviet authority to "save" him is preposterous--but feasible ("Invasions '79"). And so it goes.

Hodgins' stories are most interesting when incongruity slips into the grotesque.[37] Mrs. Starbuck demonstrates a split personality in that she acts maternally toward her neighbor, the motherless Charlene, yet keeps her son imprisoned in an attic room ("Three Women of the Country"). Crystal Styan, a forlorn young woman, is seen to be mad when the reader discovers that the husband she expectantly awaits has long since deserted her ("By the River"). Dennis Macken, a law-abiding citizen of Waterville, becomes so deranged by the presence of mushroom picking trespassers on his property that he attempts to run the invaders down with his bull-dozer ("The Plague Children"). Spit Delaney suffers from strange ideas that "pop all of a sudden into his head" and unrestrained daydreaming ("Separating"). Menippea often describe unusual psychic states like the ones experienced by Mrs. Starbuck, Crystal Styan, Dennis Macken and Spit. Split personalities, insanity, psychosis, strange dreams at night and/or during the day and similar elements prevent Hodgins' characters from becoming epic or tragic heroes.

In Menippean satire, one character of the satire may be involved in a quest which may involve a journey into another land while another character of the central dialogue comments on his/her activities and in a sense "helps" him/her.[38] In Invention, Strabo Becker persuades Maggie Kyle that when she begins to disbelieve in Donal Keneally she can begin

to believe in herself. Once the legend of Keneally and the ashes of his widow who "didn't believe in Maggie" (p. 45) are consigned to the "broken arc" of a Druid circle, Maggie is free to invent a "perfect round" of love for her small colony (p. 351). In Resurrection the mudslide that destroys Port Annie destroys simultaneously the external and internal worlds of the town's flamboyant mayor. "A man who'd spent his lifetime becoming an actor" (Barclay, p. 254), Jacob Weins finds the role of audience thrust upon him by "fell" circumstance to be nearly fatal. Seeking a raison d'etre, Weins travels to Tokyo in "The Sumo Revisions." There he attends kabuki and a sumo wrestling match, experiences which affect him profoundly. Ironically the veteran artificer detests kabuki where illusion is a fine art but relishes sumo wrestling where "very little . . . is done just for the show" (Barclay, p. 228). The catalyst in Jacobichi Weinsanaka's revitalization is an aged Japanese visionary on a bicycle whose comments on Weins' activities are non-verbal. Riding incessantly at top speed in and out of Wein's life, "blind to things that happen . . . obsessed with things that were not" (Barclay, p. 258), the old man demonstrates that it is possible in this world for a man to be free. Ultimately Jacobichi the Big-Eared is recalled to life through his fantasy of rescuing a drowning man from the Emperor's moat. Metaphorically the drowning man Weins saves is himself. Newly "baptized" in his sustaining vision, he prepares an heroic return to Vancouver Island.

As in the case of Jacob Weins and the cycling mentor with whom he communicates fleetingly through touch and vision, Menippean satire frequently employs a "dialogue" between a pair of characters "speaking" from two differing, clear-cut levels of perception. F. Anne Payne, in

working out her own definition of Menippea, has argued that in this form one character is omniscient, free of the restrictions and responsibilities faced by ordinary human beings. The other, his interlocutor, has a view of man's struggle with his human burdens from up close but is persuaded to listen, like it or not.[39] It is interesting that Spit Delaney's relationship with the black-haired youth who arises Proteus-like from the sea in "Separating" reverses this Menippean principle at first but confirms it by the end of the story. Spit's single-minded determination to tell the boy his "whole life story" has a Coleridgean quality to it. The boy reminds Spit of their initial encounter:

> "I was waiting for a ride, to come up here, and I came into your house to use the can. Hell, man, you gave me a beer and sat me down and told me your whole life story. When I came out my friend had gone on without me." (Spit, p. 18)

This incident demonstrates another common Menippean feature Payne has identified--the characters exhibit a courteous attention, or a compulsion to go on conversing no matter what happens or no matter what must be given up.[40] The end of the story is ironic in that it sees Spit much against his will "seeking out" this same young "son of a bitch" (Spit, p. 23) for spiritual guidance.

A special feature of Menippean fantasy is an unusual point of view.[41] For instance, in "Every Day of His Life," the courtship of oxymoronically named Big Glad Littlestone and Mr. Swingler (a pun on "swindler"?) takes place on the roof of Glad's house, reminding the reader of councils of the gods found in the Menippean diatribe in Greek. In "Mr. Pernouski's Dream," patterns of descent and ascent reinforce the theme of tri-level construction--heaven, earth and hell--which frequently marks Menippean fantasy. Mr. Pernouski's dream of selling an undesirable seaside property to a couple newly arrived from

the prairies becomes a hellish nightmare when he discovers at the bottom of the "damnable" cliff that he cannot hoist his considerable bulk "uphill to the world" (Barclay, p. 96). Mrs. Eckhart, a perverse "saint," upon leaving him stranded in what she sarcastically calls his "paradise," indicates the moral issues this confinement to "hell" should clarify for him:

> "You can think about things while you're waiting to be rescued. I should imagine, at a time like this, a man has no shortage of things to contemplate. I imagine you will think, for instance, about your family, and the kind of success you have been as a family man. You will think about your career, I'm sure, and estimate its importance to you." (Barclay, pp. 97-98)

In the physical and spiritual darkness of his ordeal, Mr. Pernouski dreams of an aerial rescue:

> [The helicopter] hovered above him, slicing the air with its blades, and lowered a man on a ladder who strapped Mr. Pernouski into a giant sling on the end of a rope. Up into the air went Mr. Pernouski, arms and legs dangling, like an elephant being rescued from a pit. . . . With the helicopter throbbing above him he rose up over the coastline, over the trees, up over the town and the Strait . . . and ascended . . . to become engulfed in the clouds before breaking free to clear sunny sky. (Barclay, p. 100)

The illuminated ascension that Pernouski imagines contrasts sharply with the grey dawning of physical reality:

> When he awoke it was a grey dawn, and there were no helicopters. . . . He was damp, cold: his legs ached. (Barclay, p. 100)

The conclusion of the story sees him determined to escape the "hellish slope" on his knees, a posture associated with contrition, supplication and prayer.

Like "Mr. Pernouski's Dream," Invention employs the tri-level construction of heaven, earth and hell with associated patterns of descent and ascent. After "the fall" of his colony, Keneally digs

furiously to "screw himself into the earth" (p. 282). He is killed by the collapse of one of his tunnels, but according to Lily Hayworth, his widow, authorities never find the entrance to his catacomb (p. 284). Many years later Lily plummets down the well and suffers fatal injuries (p. 287). Then, to exorcise Keneally and Lily from her life, Maggie Kyle must travel to the origin of their myth. On a wind-swept hill near Carrigdhoun, Ireland, the novel reaches its climax as Maggie climbs to the "edge of the world's top," encouraged by Becker, her guiding spirit:

> The road . . . twisted through low-hanging branches, nearly level, then turned suddenly for the long last steepest climb of all. . . . Becker, far ahead, nearly to the top, looked back down on them, raised a slow hand in greeting, or benediction . . . (p. 311)

The view from the top of the hill shows the "whole world laid out" in its awesome beauty, infihite variety, pastoral tranquility--and inevitable modernity:

> Ocean and mountains and valleys and church spires and roads and patchwork farms and animals and moving cars. To the right, to the north, hills like giant blue and purple domes pushed against each other, folded and fell, crowded across the top end of the valley. Down the valley, which was a long sharp gash slanting like a pried-open chute to the sea, the silver road ran loose and lazy, disappearing behind clumps of trees, swinging up around farms and their little white houses, twisting along the hedges, nipping past grey ruins of houses and one crumbling tower of a castle. Along the opposite slope, farms climbed as high as they dared, laid their green and blue and yellow fields, framed by darker ruffled hedges, right up nearly vertical and then stopped so that the rest of the hill, a wide expanse, was only a dark green patchy dome freckled with sheep.
>
> "And . . . oil tankers," Maggie said. (p. 313)

Although Wade expresses disbelief that Keneally ever was "thrown up out of the earth" of the Druid circle around them, Becker explains the necessity of laying his legend to rest there. Taking the cylinder containing Lily's ashes from Maggie's hands, Becker remarks, "By morning

the rain will have washed them into the ground . . . Myth, . . . like all the past, real or imaginary, must be acknowledged" (p. 314). From up the "silver" road which links the shrine and the three pilgrims to the world, a carload of celebrants arrives to recall the trio to earth with thanksgiving. Ironically the revellers never become aware of having performed this vital function.

The recall from death of Joseph Bourne (perhaps a play on the name of the satirist Earle Birney[42] or an allusion to Hamlet's meditations in Act III, Scene 1) demonstrates two important Menippean principles: first, that man's most elating gift and terrifying burden, his ability to think, is unsuspendable in life; secondly, that because of man's ability to think, to know and to fantasize, the physical world frequently is incapable of imposing what are generally thought to be its usual limitations.[43] Sent by the archetypal earth-mother, the fundamental life-force, Bourne's Jamaican wife, Raimey sets about her mission to restore Bourne's past to him. Recalling the Gnostic myth of the Saved Savior, she shocks the world-famous poet to death, helps him recover consciousness of his identity, then vanishes. Bourne emerges from seclusion revitalized. His cranky, vulture-ridden ways are displaced by a benevolent nature so that the old man becomes in his turn healer, savior, and sage for the community. Bourne's resurrection is "living" proof of the "vital" truth Hodgins perceives in I John 3:14.*

In Menippean satire no "God" or unquestionable authority is represented. The satire is based on the feeling that there is probably

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* "For he that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14). See Resurrection, p. 210).

no abstract certainty outside of us that we can know, merely the infinitely elating possibility that there might be, if only we could get by the clap-trap of our own concoctions.[44] Biblical images are often inverted in Hodgins and it is ironic that Joseph re-Bourne examines, polishes, then bites into an apple as he discusses man's fallen state and "things of soul" with Resurrection's "caretaker god" of knowledge, town librarian, Larry Bowman. Bourne-again explains that once one successfully overcomes materialism "there's nothing left . . . to do" but love one's fellow men:

> Larry looked at Hill Gin rubbing her head with the hand that wasn't anchored to the stove. How did you bring yourself to care for a hag like that? . . . "Is it even possible?"
>
> The old man suddenly became very serious. "Is it ever any easier?" He turned away, as if to keep his words from reaching Hill Gin's ears. "Isn't love of any kind an attempt to see what God must see--with His perfect vision? Which means," he added, with a nod that directed Larry's attention back to the woman on the floor--old, foolish, cranky--"that you have to be prepared to see through quite a bit!" (p. 229)

It is ironic that Hill Gin, the earthy object of Bourne's compassion, ridicules his spiritualism and remarks that it would "have us floating off into space like ghosts" (p. 228).

In Menippean satire the insertion of diverse genres, which are usually parodied, intensifies the already apparent variety of styles and tones.[45] Hodgins models his chapter titles, his rubrics and much of his narrative style on eighteenth-century fiction, most notably Fielding. The affectations of Fielding's characters usually arise from vanity or hypocrisy; vanity and hypocrisy serve as the source of the truly ridiculous in Hodgins' aesthetic.[46] The scale of Hodgins' mock-heroic satire is Swiftian, although the gentleness of his character assasinations is reminiscent of Chaucer, whom he quotes in

Resurrection. Philosophical echoes abound: St. Augustine is distinctly heard wherever Hodgins' people interpret according to who they are[47] while Milton and the Bible resound in the author's thematic pre-occupation. Hodgins parodies mythology (Greek, Celtic, West Coast Indian and Island Contemporary) demonstrating his understanding that insofar as man is a symbol-using animal, his world is necessarily inspirited with the emblems and/or the words through which he conceives it.[48] Irish fable and folklore are parodied extensively for the same reason and to much the same effect. The Invention of the World is an undertaking of epic proportion where epic conventions are parodied. Biblical phraseology, cadences, images and forms abound in Hodgins and often are parodied. For example, in his attempt to win the battle in Resurrection between "real" estate and spiritual estate, Damon West offers the townspeople a "hymn to the praise of the future . . . a psalm to the glories of progress" in which the verbs "seize," "get," "take," reveal West as the spirit of cupidity.[49] Hodgins parodies the journal/scrapbook in Invention and shows it to be fallacious as a source of "fact" or "history." In The Barclay Family Theatre he presents as delightful a parody of the theatre and his own profession as Shakespeare was wont to do.

Hodgins' Menippea explore the relationship between reality and unreality, art and life, truth and lie, wisdom and innocence and, ultimately, that between an author and his creation. In light of the possibility that Hodgins is trying to write "true" fiction, it is helpful to consider in some detail his parody of literary forms, of intellectual and philosophical notions, and prevalent social and cultural attitudes.

Chapter Two

Life: Learn how to live it.

- Menippus

In his work Hodgins parodies many literary forms, satirizes writers and burlesques the literary enterprise. By twisting Greek, Celtic, Hebrew, West Coast Indian and contemporary Island mythology, he enhances the fabulist quality of his fiction. Irish fables and folklore, which are often rendered comically, are a particularly rich source of archetypal figures, themes and structures for Hodgins. He masterfully parodies epic conventions, especially in The Invention of the World where he undertakes the heroic task of inventing a world through language. Occasionally Hodgins updates the parable to effect a pseudo-religious tone. An extended parody of the journal/scrapbook shows its lack of credibility as "history," "fact" or record of "reality." The Barclay Family Theatre is essentially a melodrama whose unifying metaphor is theatre. In an hilarious short story published in 1980, "Change of Scenery," Hodgins pulls out all the comic stops: he pokes fun at "professional pioneers" who write local histories, writers' workshops, and those who would teach literature.

Hodgins delights in parodying the classical myths. In Invention Maggie is a Juno figure, stately, somewhat masculine and easily jealous. She presides over a kingdom not of immortals but "krazies." Becker, who ferries people to and from an "Isle of the Blessed," is a contemporary Charon. Doppelganger figures in Invention and Resurrection are drawn from the Narcissus myth while Invention's "The Wolves of Lycaon" is a

parody of the story of Zeus' punishment of an Arcadian king. In "After the Season" (Spit Delaney's Island) Hodgins parodies the Pluto-Proserpina myth and in Invention he combines the Tarus-Europa myth with the Tain Bo Cuailnge story of Celtic mythology.

In the first sections of Invention, a youthful Keneally resembles the trickster character of Irish folklore. When he creates chaos in Carrigdhoun by dividing into the good and bad twins, he exhibits man's moral duality. That an unprovoked act of violence by Donal, the bad twin, breaks the spell so that Brendan, the good twin, disappears, is a comment on the fragility of virtue (p. 85). Wade Powers, who becomes a hero and a suitable mate for Maggie in the last section of the novel, also portrays man's moral duality. The appearance of his "buried twin," Horseman (whose name connotes man's beastial-rational dichotomy), signals--according to folkloric tradition--that Wade is about to die. Indeed the old Wade does "die," for Horseman shows him a new way of seeing, that the world is wider than "yourself," that "the important thing . . . is motive," and that "any gift, offered with love, has some value" (pp. 159-160). It is Horseman who, at the novel's close, returns Wade and Maggie to the Elysian Fields where the House of Revelations stands amid American mobile homes, Volkswagen vans and assorted recreational vehicles.

As befits a legend of her proportion, Resurrection's Fat Annie has a multitude of pseudo-dopplegangers. Her "monstrous double," Gregory Wong, parades around Port Annie in the mayor's Fat Annie costume mincing and giggling and helping Weins promote greed. Wong presides over the wild and wonderful Fat Annie Festival:

> Greg Wong sashayed from table to table, swinging his padded behind in those old-fashioned skirts, sitting

> on men's knees and puckering his over-painted lips to be kissed . . . while he batted his eyelashes and threw his legs up in the air to show off his garters and hairy thighs. (p. 238)

Because the present moment constitutes reality, Hodgins' characters are most alive when they are hedonistically involved in the sensuousness of the world around them,[50] and this certainly holds for those who mirror Annie. During the entertainment scheduled for the festival, "fourteen Fat Annies materialized from somewhere to engage in a free-for-all that saw bodies thumping and snorting around on the stage . . ." (p. 239). The vitality displayed by Annie's doubles makes her cadaverous appearance at the festivities even more shocking than it otherwise would have been. Because she was a legend that has outlived her time and usefulness, "there was no hair left on [Annie's] head, just a few nearly invisible threads. A dry shrivelled up vegetable root remained" (p. 245). Annie's ultimate metamorphosis into a dry husk parodies the fate of Tithonus who sought immortality from the Olympians when he would have been wiser to seek eternal youth.

Just as Fat Annie dies once her power is broken and her myth is exploded publicly, so "The Wolves of Lycaon" in Invention records the public disclosure and subsequent decline of the legendary Donal Keneally. In this chapter Hodgins parodies the story of Lycaon, a wicked king of Arcadia, who served Zeus the flesh of a Molossian slave and was punished by being turned into a wolf. Lily Hayworth explains to Becker how at seventy years of age Keneally fell victim to his own evil vision. Coincidentally his followers rebelled and Paddy O'Mahony found it easy to strangle old Thunderbird, the once fierce, black hellbound that manifested Keneally's spirit. Forced by O'Mahony to kneel and eat dirt in public, Keneally finds his myth and pride were broken so that

he literally and figuratively began to dig himself into his grave.

In "After the Season" Hallie Crane, who is "tall and straight" and "could walk like a youngster on her long narrow legs" (Spit, p. 153), identifies with Prosperpina, queen of Hades. Each fall she consents to ride in the chariot of sensuality when her Pluto, Morgan, reaches the point in their off-season courtship where he threatens to "rape" her. This year, however, she strives to resist him. When Mr. Grey, a transient "shade," indicates that she elects to live in a wintry hell because she chooses to pay attention to things only through her five senses, Hallie realizes she will never return again to "the world" of laughter, family or friends. Angry because Hamilton Grey has complicated her simple way of looking at things by showing her the truth, Hallie wishes him dead. When she gets "immediate results" (Spit, p. 167), she recognizes her dark power and accepts her place as consort to the dark king of the "after [life] season."

In an article entitled "Haunted by a Glut of Ghosts: Jack Hodgins' The Invention of the World," Robert Lecker explains how Hodgins parodies the Taurus-Europa myth by coupling it with the Tain Bo Cualinge story from Celtic myth. In Hodgins' reference Europa is transformed into an ugly, moronic, local prostitute who is raped by a black bull on a remote Irish hilltop. Keneally, the prodigious offspring of this union (the corrupt outcome of the corrupted mythical structural) becomes, like Minos, the king of an island, but unlike Minos he is unjust and eventually deserts his subjects. The Celtic Tain Bo Cualinge saga records the battle between two potent bulls--the Finnbhennach, or white-horned, and the Donn, or brown bull of Cualinge. Donal Keneally, who supposedly has the scrotum of a large bull, is

connected to the Donn beast by his name and parentage. Eventually the dark Donn bull defeats the white Finnbhennach and rampages across Ireland in a rage of destruction just as Keneally, "roaring like a bull," destroys his enemies by storming from town to town across the Irish countryside.[51]

Hodgins adapts Hebrew mythology most readily to his fiction. The title, The Invention of the World, alludes to Genesis, while the title The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne sets in motion a series of connotations associated with the New Testament. Becker, we are told by the narrator in Invention's preface, "wants to be God." He aspires to confront, absorb and possess chaos and eventually--through language --invent a world (pp. x-xii). In a postscript placed at the beginning of the last chapter, however, Becker confesses his lack of divinity. He is surprised to discover the story he has created exists independently of him:

> Believe what you want, trust me or not, this story exists independent of the both of us. (p. 339)

In the final analysis, we recognize that Becker, like all storytellers, is a "caretaker-god" (p. xii) in the service of a higher order.

Most major characters in Hodgins experience, at one time or another, a sense of homelessness and so embark on a literal or figurative quest for a "promised land." In Invention, "messiah-monster" (p. 120) Keneally is a parody of Moses, seeking to lead his people out of oppression into "a brand new land of opportunity" (p. 97)--opportunity for himself. Later in the novel Wade and Maggie's fitful search for the Druid circle that will give them peace is contrasted with the stay-right-where-you-are contentment of the "happy, holy" Irish villagers of whom they ask direction. Wade, upon receiving no useful information

from the villagers who congregated to talk in the middle of the street he is trying to navigate, remarks ironically, "They may be sure of their soul's destination . . . but they haven't any idea where this Carrigdhoun might be" (p. 297). In Resurrection "the ragged green edge of the world" (Chapter One) serves as a verdigris promised land for most of Port Annie's residents. For Jenny Chambers, however, the sense of homelessness remains. Everyone who reads Bourne's poems sees himself --a phenomenon not unknown among readers of scripture--and Jenny is of the conviction that every one is about "the terrible feeling of looking for a place where you belonged" (p. 93). At the conclusion of "Spit Delaney's Island," Spit senses that one day he will follow Phemie Porter "up the mountain" to where "Porter" keeps the gate of Spit's entry into spiritual "liberation" (Spit, p. 199). Philip Desmond, a successful writer, in "The Lepers' Squint," (Barclay, p. 160) seeks his personal and literary roots in Ireland but finds only disappointment. In a quaint village church, however, he mistakenly decides that building a psychological "leper's squint" will sharpen his artistic vision. For Hodgins' characters, quest most frequently results in the discovery of the quest itself.

Island man's attempt to seize the land on his own terms deeply offends Hodgins. This is shown in Resurrection where Mammon replaces God, neighbor and the world for Mayor Weins. In the disused church turned by the "converts" into real estate there is a Biblical text painted on the wall which reads, "For he that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Over it Weins posts "Grab your chance, don't think too small; the Future's coming, with fortunes for all." Another verse, "For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world" disappears beneath

"When opportunity knocks on your door will you answer the call, or hide your head in the sands of lethargy?"[52] This is Weins at his most misguided. Even "the Lazarus man," Bourne, has no interest for the scheming mayor except, marginally, as a potential money-making sideshow for the town.

In "Separating" Stella alludes to a West Coast Indian myth to convince Spit of the power of forces that lie below the surface of things:

> "There's a story that some kind of Sea-Wolf monster used to come charging up out of the Pacific here to gobble up people. It came up to sire wolves for the land too, but went back into the sea to live." (Spit, p. 8)

Stella's references indicate that while forces of change may be destructive, they are also generative. This is the lesson that Spit ultimately masters in "Spit Delaney's Island," and one that is repeated for the benefit of Port Annie's residents in Resurrection.

In Resurrection Christie continues the oral tradition as he "tells" bald-headed Pete and George Beeton Hodgins' contrived native myth about Fat Annie's origin, "what he'd heard himself from his grandparents, members of the band of natives whose longhouses and sweat baths had once stood by the edge of the inlet" (p. 64):

> "The ocean swelled up during a huge earthquake and suddenly belched up a gigantic blue whale, which shot up the inlet and found itself beached a hundred yards up the shore. . . . The whale cried like a human, threw its weight around, breaking off trees, slapped its enormous tail on the ground to cause tremors that rivalled the original quake. Everyone ran away. . . . When they came back the next day there was no whale in sight, just this female human sitting on the beach, a great fat lady with pale blue skin, miraculously tiny ears, and a mouth that could swallow you up whole." (p. 65)

The story Christie goes on to relate about how Fat Annie created Dieter Fartenburg from twigs tied with vines and seaweed is a parody of a

Dogrib myth that explains how Manitou created man from a bundle of sticks.

Vancouver Island has been historically the site of numerous colonies established out of a variety of motives and for a variety of purposes. These colonies, recalled in contemporary island lore, have provided Hodgins with some basis for this fictional Jimmy-Jimmy Arts and Crafts Commune in "The Importance of Patsy McLean," The Revelations Colony of Truth in Invention and even Squatters' Flats in Resurrection. Robert Lecker maintains Hodgins embroiders specifically on the demented 1920's cult of Brother Eleven in inventing Keneally and his colony,[53] while the U.B.C. Chronicle recently used the name "Brother Twelve" to refer to a similar if not the same cult as a source for The Revelations Colony of Truth in Invention. Supposedly Canadian Brother Eleven was surrounded by a group of follower-slaves on Valdes Island.

Utopia is a myth that never dies in Hodgins' fiction. In "Separating" Hodgins satirizes the hitch-hikers who "like a lot of shabby refugees" await rides to the Island's west coast:

> They are heading for the west coast of the Island, [Spit] knows, the Pacific, where they have heard it is still possible to live right down on the beach under driftwood shelters and go everywhere naked from morning until night. (Spit, p. 4)

Beleaguered island farmers in "The Plague Children" believe the myth of their own invention that one such migratory youth is "a spy, a scout, an advanced guard" (Baclay, p. 262) for the annual invasion of mushroom pickers.

Hodgins is perhaps at his best when he parodies epic conventions in The Invention of the World. Keneally, a giant of super-human strength and Odyssean wit, is an anti-hero steeped in legend. His quasi-divine

origin is remote in time and space. As a youth in Carrigdhoun he engages in epic "games" such as challenging O'Sullivan's meanest bull, tearing down bridges and rebuilding them where they are of no use, and knocking people over with the potency of his farts. Keneally has supernatural talent for creating illusions such as "God-in-my-pocket" (p. 100) and for enthralling his subjects because he was instructed in magic as a child by "Quirke," a perverted Merlin figure.

Keneally's battles are of epic scale, though put into question when the narrator candidly remarks that with each telling they gain "a little more colour, a little more noise, a little more blood" (p. 87). The Battle of the Bailiff's Retreat echoes the battle between Beowulf and Grendel:

> Keneally drove the bailiff down onto his back and began to choke the life out of him, but the bailiff lifted a foot and kicked his attacker in his famous crotch, causing him to let go of his hold on the throat. In a moment they were both on their feet again, and the bailiff with his head tucked down dove fist after fist into Keneally's belly, backing him down the road past two or three farmhouses and the houses of the village. Then Keneally, roaring, clamped both hands on the bailiff's shoulders and lifted him into the air. He set him down on the top of Widow Donahue's wall and twisted his arm until it came out of its socket, crunching like a bone bitten through by a dog, and came away from the body altogether. The loud wails of the bailiff woke every sleeping person . . . the terrible cry was followed by another and another and another as the hunched and dying bailiff staggered down across the mountain fields into the valley leaving a trail of blood behind him that scorched the grass and melted the stones. (p. 88)

Like most epics "The Eden Swindle" has an uncomplicated plot--it is an account of Irish emigration to Canada. However, like Homer's Odyssey, it effects a "loop" in chronology and geography: Keneally leaves one island, travels to another, returns to his starting place, then sets out on a second journey homeward. Not without difficulty he finally reaches his destination. This chapter is written in an elevated

style yet manages to remain true to turn-of-the-century Irish colloquialism and cadence. It includes an epic catalogue, a Hodgins' trademark. In small part, these are the "warriors" who accompany Keneally:

> The widow Donahue had her six living children with her . . . including Mary-Delight who was the wife of Brendan Murphy now and the mother of five, and Mary-Dervit who was Brian O'Connell's wife and the mother of six . . . Seamus O'Mahony and the whole O'Mahony tribe--the doddering old Daniel and his wife Min who didn't understand what was happening to them, and the four bachelor brothers Paddy, Ned, Andrew, and Michael . . . (p. 109)

Unlike the Greek heroes of The Iliad who sailed to Troy, these people are cowards, victims of "the Year of Mist," the year in which they lost their faith.

A journey to hell is another epic feature which Hodgins effectively parodies. On the journey "to set up a civilization of their own where fear of God would be a forgotten thing and living a satisfying life the only goal" (p. 100), Keneally outlaws prayer. Aspiring to Godhead like Milton's Satan, he forces his followers to address him as "The Father" (p. 111). Widow Donahue, horrified at discovering "what sort of a man they'd followed" (p. 111), calls Keneally "Ananias, father of lies" (p. 116). The despair Keneally's "fallen angels" feel upon surveying the awesome, inhospitable tract which is to be their new "home" recalls the dismay of Satan's rebel forces as they become sensible to their newly created prison in Paradise Lost. It is interesting to note that in addition Hodgins parodies Death's incestuous impregnation of Sin in Paradise Lost. Whereas Sin's Hellhounds, her cannabalistic offspring, continuously gnaw on her bowels, Nora O'Sullivan succumbs to the ravenous force feeding on her entrails that was engendered in her by Keneally before his emigration.

Late in Invention Becker serves as a Virgilean guide, escorting

Maggie through her personal hell. "Strabo" Becker is modelled to some extent upon a Celtic historian and geographer who wrote an epic about the life and times of his people. He is modelled too upon an earlier Strabo who was born about 63 B.C. at Amasia in Asia Minor. Strabo of Amasia criticized earlier geographers who had split the Atlantic Ocean. By encouraging Maggie to cross the "continuous" Atlantic to bury Keneally's legend, Becker indicates that all myths that gave Maggie's colony vitality were Old World myths which now must give way to new myths arising from living experience. Strabo of Amasia was out of the mainstream of historians: a witness to the rise of the Roman Empire, he created history out of his participation in the events, as his namesake Becker comes to do.[54]

In Fiction II, R. P. Bilan shares his impression that Resurrection is so loosely organized as to seem "like the amorphous epic poem one of the characters is writing about Port Annie,"[55] and in this novel Hodgins parodies the epic poet as well as the epic form. Amelia Barnstone, whose compound surname connotes a rudimentary intellect and sensitivity, dismisses enlightened ideas out of hand. Her object is to record "excitement" in her epic:

> Some [ideas] were all right perhaps to read, in certain books, where you could skip right over them and decide they didn't matter, forget them fast or throw the book away. . . . What she was after was the action . . . (p. 229)

However, Amelia has the uncomfortable feeling that "although her masterpiece was recording all the action she could find, the real story was going on behind it somewhere" (p. 236). For Hodgins, words can never say it all. Called upon to read "that thing she's been writing on" before the assembled community, Mrs. Barnstone protests as writers invariably do, "It isn't finished, it isn't finished" (p. 240). Unde-

terred, the crowd hoists her, still madly scribbling on her sheets of newsprint, to center stage:

> She . . . cleared her throat. Ahem, ahem, she cleared it again, the pen in her right hand still writing, and waited until the crowd had grown quiet enough. The first few lines she read apologetically, nervously, as if she were ready to take them back, eat them even, if people didn't like what she'd written. (p. 241)

Mrs. Barnstone's deservedly unpublished epic poem, "in the tradition of Homer and Milton with a touch of Robert Service thrown in" (p. 223), sees casual comments become blows, disagreements become skirmishes and active campaigning become all-out-war. The piece, a travesty of Bourne's epic of Port Royal, Jamaica, begins with an invocation which quickly establishes its mock-heroic style:

> Of life and death, oh Muse, these lines will sing;
> Ambition, love, the soul, and other things.
> Of streets still strewn with seaweed, all a mess;
> Port Annie people living under stress.
> [this is a reference to Damon West, Californian real estate developer and "handsome devil"]
> The handsome devil, has he come to stay?
> When that mysterious fellow first drove in
> And set a hundred female hearts a-spin,
> Who could have guessed that what he'd come here for
> Was nothing more or less than start a war? (p. 241)

Because everything and everybody in Port Annie has found its way into Mrs. Barnstone's poem, the work is enthusiastically received. The fact that she does not once mention rain goes unnoticed. Only after the landslide occurs does Mrs. Barnstone begin "to get a glimpse of what her epic poem had entirely missed" (p. 254): the magnitude of Port Annie's natural canvas and the close link between it and the human canvas she attempted to paint. In a characteristic Menippean convolution Hodgins sees fit to use the conclusion of "The Last Days of Port Annie" in Resurrection's preface. The lines set the novel's satirical tone and foreshadow its plot:

> But oh, what fuss these earthbound mortals make
> When asked to pull up roots, or new life take;
> You'd think the sky had fallen on their heads,
> The earth in ruins, or even pets found dead! (PREFACE)

How reminiscent these lines are of the Swiftean heroic couplets and the devastation theme of "A Description of a City Shower,"[56] a work largely influenced by Juvenal's comic realism:

> They, as each torrent drives with rapid force,
> From Smithfield or St. Pulchre's shape their course,
> And in huge confluence joined at Snow Hill ridge
> Fall from the conduit prone to Holborn Bridge.
> . . . . . .
> Drowned puppies, stinking sprats, all drenched in mud,
> Dead cats, and turnip tops, come tumbling down the flood.[57]

That Mrs. Barnstone's devotion is to her epic and not to the town is apparent when she leaves Port Annie after the slide without so much as a backward glance.

Although Resurrection may be seen as a semi-sacred parable, Hodgins most frequently parodies the parable form outright. In "Spit Delaney's Island" during a visit to an antique shop, Phemie Porter uses a parable to convince Spit of the importance of the written word:

> Eloff Nurmi was the little fat cabinet maker who built me my very own chest of drawers when I was small, something like this one. Inside it, he told me, he'd built a secret compartment where no one, not even my mother, would find it. It was the invisible soul of the chest, he said, where I could keep things that belonged just to me. But I never found it myself, and I was afraid to admit it to him, so I learned to store everything important in my own mind, and later in poems, and gradually began to suspect this was what he intended. (Spit, p. 193)

Although this parable is based on a particularly mundane, concrete image, it is appropriate to the earthiness of the character who tells it and the limited imagination of the character who hears it. Tim Struthers sees this parable as containing the ultimate theme of the book: the mind of the artist becomes the soul of the place. Struthers

suggests coincidentally that Hodgins' mind and the stories it creates are a treasure chest containing the invisible soul of Vancouver Island.[58]

In "More Than Conquerors," (Barclay, p. 101) Carrie "Payne", who is suffering the agony of losing her only child, justifies her anticipation of a miracle by way of a parable. She sees the ever renewing arbutus tree outside their window as a symbol of physical and spiritual regeneration. Her husband, who would have been better called (Doubting) Thomas than (Beloved) David, has "no idea what she [is] getting at" (Barclay, p. 118) as she tries to explain metaphorically her conviction that her daughter will rise from the dead:

> Remember Aunt Gwennie at Christmas, when she came out from the prairies she said, My word that's a leaf tree but it's still holding onto every one of them at the end of December . . . not one of those leaves fell off the tree until the new ones had already opened up like flower buds on the end of every tiny twig and shone like fake wax leaves in the sun! (pp. 118-119)

Although Carrie Payne is living in the bleakest of emotional Decembers, she holds to Christmas as a time of birth, promise and rejoicing. It is her obsession that her child should be restored and "open up to the sun like a flower" but the jarring word "fake" in her parable signals to the reader the deception and disappointment she ultimately will experience.

Hodgins extends his parodies beyond fabulist texts to include even the journal/scrapbook: he shows its lack of credibility as "history," "fact" or record of "reality." In the chapter entitled "Scrapbook" in Invention, characters from past and present convene to tell Becker what they "know" about Donal Keneally, his Revelations' Colony of Truth, his wife Nell and her supposed lover, Chris Wall.

Although each character purports to present "the facts" of what "really" happened, an analysis of the letters, editorials, tape recordings, newspaper clippings, chronological list and child's story that make up the chapter shows each character presents a highly subjective account. In the "light" of the conflicting truths in Becker's scrapbook, it is appropriate that Virginia Newman has this final word:

> "You're wasting your time with all this, because the best you can hope for is ignorance and prejudice. None of us will ever know what really went on" (p. 216)

In parodying the journal/scrapbook Hodgins shows how the selective natures of perception, memory and prejudice combine with the sense of self-in-relation-to-an-audience to make truth slippery, even in a putatively objective recording.

Hodgins' impulse to mock inherited forms continues unabated, into his latest work. The Barclay Family Theatre is a collection in which the unifying metaphor of theatre is parodied directly and indirectly. In "The Concert Stages of Europe" Hodgins draws from memory a portrait of the desire to perform that burns so fiercely one would risk public humiliation. "Invasion '79," a protest against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Hodgins' only truly political piece, shows the demolition of the civilized facade called "Soviet-Canadian Cultural Exchange" when Bella Robson challenges a swinish, world-famous Russian poet during the question period after his dramatic reading. "Mr. Pernowski's Dream" parodies the crass self-dramatization of an island real estate salesman who aspires only to commercial success. "More Than Conquerors" and "The Sumo Revisions" are complex enough to be regarded as novellas, even though each condenses the past on which it depends into the action of a single day: the first revolves around two public

displays that fail--an art show and a resurrection; the second is the continued story of Port Annie's flamboyant mayor, Jacob Weins, whose love for fancy dress is far exceeded by the Japanese capacity for masquerade.[59] In "The Plague Children" Waterville is the stage and the world is the audience as the annual psychedelic mushroom harvest begins.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, the Fabulous Barclay Sisters," the most theatrical of all the stories in what Hodgins calls punningly a "family of fictions," provides the title of the collection dedicated to the author's mother. In this story young Barclay Philip Desmond literally and figuratively finds his place in the dramatic Barclay family's circus. Committed to entertaining the citizens of Waterville with their "flair" for stirring up trouble and indulging in wild hi-jinks, the seven Barclay sisters periodically formalize their dramatics and put on a show to which the whole community is invited. Frieda, Lenora, Christina, Mabel, Bella, Gladdy and "Eleanor the Tramp" may parody scholasticism's seven virtues, the ancient world's seven blessings of heaven, the seven heresies, the seven gifts of the spirit, the seven wise virgins, and/or the seven names of God. Lenora's son Barclay complains that in the carnival called Barclay Family Circus his part lacks melodrama:

> Should I have refused to play the part of a rhinoceros in the Barclay Family Circus? Pacing on my hands and knees inside an overturned baby crib, I had little to do but ram my horny nose at the kids who poked their hands between the bars. Hardly melodramatic. Not when you consider that Mabel was dressed as the fat bearded lady you had to sneak into a darkened tent to view. And not when you consider Eleanor, innocent Eleanor, set up business in the root cellar where she looked into an overturned fish-bowl and told children about futures so horrible that half of them left in tears. "Don't go to sleep tonight," she told Cornelia Horncastle. "Your mother is looking for a chance to slit your throat" . . . My brother and sister were the Headless Twins. They mingled with the crowd in outfits that were built up on the shoulders to hide their heads,

> each with a papier mache skull under an arm. When things threatened to get dull they picked a fight and rolled on the ground, puncturing bags of watered ketchup that splashed on people's legs and smeared their clothes. (p. 287)

Barclay describes the climax of the circus, a garage performance of a play in which a beautiful Polish princess, maddened by the loss of her prince, murders the entire royal family before turning the gun on herself. This is a fitting highlight to the rest of the story's sensational goings-on.

The only story in The Barclay Family Theatre which does not allude directly to theatre is "The Lepers' Squint." However, this story considers "performance" in literary terms, and is true to the moral of the book--that our dreams may be realized only in art, on the stage or the page.[60] But those possibilities are not easily fulfilled. "Change of Scenery" ridicules "professional pioneers" who write local histories, writers' workshops and English teachers. This story is based on the irony that Old Geoffrey Morganshack, who "no longer believes in the printed word," is expected by his coastal community to write its local history.[61] Like Hodgins, Morganshack is a reader of writers "from Chaucer to Octavio Paz" (p. 33). Morganshack is convinced that books are a thing of the past and what is more, he doesn't regret the prospect. Like Hodgins too, he is a confirmed talltale teller and Morganshack looks forward to literary tape recordings in a "new" oral tradition. Sent "inland" to attend a local history writers' workshop in Saskatchewan, Morganshack is uncomfortable in the company of elderly, blue-haired school marms who are writing treatises on trivia: tourist brochures, the history of farm machinery, government attempts to turn Badlands into a park. Morganshack reacts to the triteness of the situation by trying to shock his fellow students but the "real surprise" is

his. Wise and winsome Elma Green succeeds in breaking down his "stockade" of defenses, then demands he "act like himself" (p. 42). At the end of the story the two go looking for surprises together.

Hodgins' concern with the act of invention and the writing process leads him to parody a wide variety of literary forms, then. Through Menippean satire he reveals the artifice of the strict art form, strives to change it and succeeds in expanding and enlivening it. It is not by chance that there is no strict form to a Hodgins story: the reader is able to look forward from one work to the next, certain that each will be unique.

Chapter Three

> "There are lots of ways of being miserable, but there's only one way of being comfortable, and that is to stop running round after happiness. If you make up your mind not to be happy there's no reason why you shouldn't have a fairly good time."
>
> Edith Wharton
> (The Last Asset)

Jack Hodgins satirizes intellectual and philosophical notions, particularly traditional views of art, history and literature. Repeatedly he portrays the failed artist/historian as the one who neglects to love living while pursuing "a glimpse into the harmonious world of truth" (Barclay, p. 133) or while struggling to reconstruct the past; repeatedly he proves that art, history and literature are contrived, never "real," never "true," and repeatedly he proposes that language, even his, is the most counterfeit thing of all. True to the spirit of Menippea, it is in the moment-by-moment practice of the art of living that Hodgins sees the fulfillment of man's powers, hopes and desires.

Hodgins consistently maintains an ironic detachment from characters who have abnegated their humanity, even for art's sake. In "More Than Conquerors" Elias Wainamoinen mistakenly sees himself as an heroic savior in the tradition of his Viking namesake (Barclay, p. 107). A warrior for the cause of his art, in acts of "violence against the perfect canvas" (p. 111) he "draws blood" every time he paints. Red lines "shock the viewer's sensibilities" (p. 107) as Wainamoinen strives to wake him/her to "reality" (p. 111). Ironically the very agency of his creative expression betrays the artist's mortality: at his first

show in Canada--the only country in the world in which, Hodgins ironically notes, an artist is required to spend forty years "proving" himself--Wainamoinen strives to hide the red smear of paint along the side of his hand by keeping it thrust in his pocket (p. 128). A favorite subject for the artist's work, "crimson boats that bled their reflections into dark water" (p. 107), serves as a metaphor for the seepage of Wainamoinen's lifeforce onto his unenlightening canvases. This idea is reinforced when Sylvi, his wife, surveys the walls of the ballroom as the artist's show is about to open. Hanging before her is the irrefutable evidence that in his single-minded pursuit of unity, harmony and truth, Wainamoinen has allowed his life to become fractured, discordant and shallow:

> There were 250 paintings . . . She could stand there in the centre of that hall and, by turning slowly all the way around, follow the seventy-five years of her husband's life.
>
> And could even if he himself disappeared. His life was broken up, reflected, mirrored in these 250 rectangles. Those people out there would see nearly as much of him as she'd ever seen. If he'd welcomed them naked he'd be no more exposed than he was already. (p. 127)

The lifeless canvases encircling Sylvi and the cold wedding band on her finger that she toys with as she surveys them, symbolize the fatal coils she has permitted her husband to place around her life. The rectangular frames of the paintings are emblematic of the containment of her life with the egocentric, temperamental artist. Because, like Invention's Becker, Sylvi suffers from artistic illusions she is prepared to serve as a "caretaker-god," and consequently she will never be free. Trapped by her desire to bask in Wainamoinen's reflected glory, she dreams of release into the martyrdom of widowhood and longs for the "opportunity" to live in the past:

> I dream of myself welcoming pilgrims, travellers who have come from all parts of the world to our house, which has become a shrine. "You," they say with emotion that closes the throat. "You are the widow? You knew the Wainamoinen? You lived with him all those years?" The house is owned by the government as a museum . . . and I show them through the studio, show them the unfinished canvases, let them touch the furniture in our home. It will be easier then . . . much easier. (p. 127)

Tragically Sylvi does not know what her creator does--that we live in moments, not years and certainly not in lifetimes.

In contrast to her parents, Eli and Sylvi's daughter is a successful artist and a fulfilled "caretaker":

> Caroline . . . had married a mechanic and moved up-island to help him run a broken-down crossroad service station. She was poor and bone-tired from bringing up those kids in a pile of discarded car parts but she knew every inch of that piece of land and could sing of it so that you'd think she'd seen the backyard of every wife in the world (p. 129)

At home in a "nuts-and-bolts" reality, deeply committed to the rough and tumble of child-rearing, Caroline is connected in an intimate, loving, vital way to her subject. It is from this connection her successful artistic expression evolves. Her brother, like his father, has failed to make such a connection between his life and his art: in Hodgins' view it is poetically just that Robert, in going to the United States to become a movie director, has been absorbed by American culture.

Ironically, "out of all the crowd" at the art show, Gladdy Roote --to Wainamoinen's deluded mind a "poor, simple, silly cow of a woman"-- gets more enjoyment out of it than anyone else because she truly loves living (p. 131). Her response to Wainomoinen's pretentious speech is one of disdain:

> "Perhaps a man's life is a journey toward heaven. . . . Perhaps some people from time to time achieve moments there. Perhaps an artist is the man who can show you glimpses of those moments . . . I hope, . . . sometime this evening, my work will give you a glimpse into the harmonious world of

> truth."
>
> Not offering much is he, Gladdy thought. The harmonious world of truth, for crying out loud! (p. 133)

The artist's vision is far removed from the painful reality of Gladdy's too tight shoes. It comes as no surprise when later she is unimpressed by Wainamoinen's paintings, preferring the realism of photographs cut out of magazines to his "fuzzy leaves and silly messed up skies" (p. 134). Although she may be called naive, even crass, for being insensitive to the things she has not learned to appreciate, Gladdy's interest in the show is not in its stiff, vainglorious art. Her interest is the living, breathing and responding viewers, themselves works of art. Like Hodgins, Gladdy most values human uniqueness.

Although Wainamoinen claims that his "hand has captured more truth than [his audience's] eyes have seen" (p. 137), Carl Roote, "rooted" in reality and sensitive to man's mortality, protests against the artist's romanticized renderings:

> "Maybe he knows about light, but he don't know nothing about a logging claim. Them trees are all too clean and perfect. Where's the dead limbs? Where's the rotten snags and widowmakers? Where's the windfalls?" (p. 135)

In a further sign of how badly he violates life, Wainamoinen claims that Carl's portrait, No. 97, is his best work: he declares that he has immortalized Carl in it. Ironically he fails to notice that in a bid to ensure his own immortality he has painted his face on Carl's body (p. 145):

> [Carl] couldn't deny the tuft of hair at his throat. Or the white stretch of forehead high into his thinning hair.
>
> "Well shoot," he said.
>
> Because it wasn't him at all. Not his face. Not any face he'd ever seen in a mirror. . . . "That looks more like old Wainamoinen himself than me." (p. 145)

The irony is compounded when the portrait is sold to a building con-

tractor whose interest in the picture is purely utilitarian. He does not care about the figure, nor about the artistic vision portrayed. He cares only about the foundation of a house being built in the background and is prepared to pay eight hundred dollars to hang the painting simply as a display, as a commodity, in the office of his house-building business in Victoria (p. 150).

> Gladdy Roote could've bawled. Right into her pink lady. Men! She gritted her teeth to keep from speaking her thoughts.
>
> They expected at least a clap of thunder. Or slashes of light. They thought that scales should fall.
>
> Though she felt warm at the gaining of friendship, Kit O'Donnell had come in here with them, and argued with her against Carl's preference for the beer parlour, had ordered a pink lady too. (p. 146)

Carl's sulking violates Gladdy's life-enhancing Menippean philosophy of "gladness." She believes that "You can't let anything spoil anything. . . . Not when you expect it will end. Some day" (p. 150). Having been disappointed by art, Carl rushes across the street from the lounge to the Blessed Sleep Funeral Home. There he experiences a second disappointment when Anna Payne fails to rise from the dead. Carl's conviction that "there's got to be something" that uplifts man and makes his existence meaningful is confirmed in a way he has neglected to consider until now. In despair and confusion he seeks out Gladdy to recognize in her for the first time a miraculous life force:

> "But there's got to be something!" His eyes bloodshot, toured the room until they found Gladdy. She could feel their two glances lock like the snap of a screen door closing. "Because if I lose her! Because if I goddam lose her!"
>
> Then he bolted.
>
> She could've cried, the way he looked at her. As if somebody had come up behind and hit him on the head with a great wooden mallet. Seeing something he hadn't seen before, or hadn't been there. . . . "Well, if anybody's risen this day it wasn't in the flesh . . . " (p. 158)

At the conclusion of the story, as Gladdy comforts Carl on the front steps of the funeral home, a laugh from out of the dark triggers her vitality so that she "swells and throbs with the rich blood" of her life-giving "possibilities" (p. 159).

Latent poet, Spit Delaney, is tragically flawed in his single-minded dedication to the past. When he first appears in "Separating," people rushing by on the highway caught up in the mainstream of [island] life fail to notice the obsolete man sitting musing under an obsolete sign. Spit isn't afraid to envy" (Spit, p. 4) their involvement in the ever-moving, ever-changing world and from the fringe of life this Menippean observer ruefully "admits only to being a figure on the edge" (p. 3). Uncoupled by modern technology from a twenty year "marriage" to his steam locomotive at the mill, Spit must learn the painful but invigorating lesson that all things pass away to make room for the new: as Mrs. Bested bluntly puts it, "Either you die or you get yourself born again" (p. 173). Spit's blind devotion to the past is signified by the cast in his eye. Over time this cast has blinded him to "all life's big questions" (p. 178) and to his alienation from his family. The solution to Spit's need to adjust to the loss of his "true love," Old Number One, and to meet the challenge of "real" life is illuminated by Spit's guiding star, Stella, when she advises Spit to "find your own life in yourself" (p. 180).

Like the Spit Delaney of "Separating," Mrs. Wagonwheel of "In the Museum of Evil" is devoted to preserving the past. However, unlike Spit who acts out of blind impulse, she operates from a faulty philosophical base which violates the sense of joy Menippea celebrate. Having gathered together a display of "momentos of killers and thieves and

every other sort of outlaw imaginable, records and details of sicknesses that more than once had wiped out whole families in this very town, photographs and paintings of wars and poverty and injustices,"[62] Mrs. Wagonwheel makes a good living showing tourists what they want to see--that evil, illness, cruelty and death are things of the past. Mistakenly convinced that she "had long ago conquered and destroyed" (p. 6) these fearsome opponents, Mrs. Wagonwheel believes that others can overcome them too. She sees herself going on "forever, unchanging, untroubled, gradually and certainly becoming an institution in the town, a living testimony to all she wished to represent" (p. 6). Ironically but predictably, when Evil personified enters the front door of her museum, Mrs. Wagonwheel fails to recognize it. Consequently, Jeremy Fell becomes a bogus historical artifact in her museum for she eagerly accepts his lie that he is Bill Bittle's grandson (p. 7).

Because she thinks that Jeremy Fell-from-Grace and her granddaughter, Cyn/Sin, will continue her tradition in the museum, Mrs. Wagonwheel presents Jeremy with it in her will as a Christmas gift. Because their decorated fir tree lacks a Christmas angel, Mrs. Wagonwheel transforms herself into a grotesque parody of "a symbol of the voice of God" while Jeremy and Cynthia satisfy their voracious demonic appetites with turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes and burnt peas:

> She put on the nightgown first, pulled it right over top of her clothes. It was a long silk negligee she hadn't worn since her husband left her but she could see in the mirror that it was just as pretty now as it ever was, a pale, pale blue, delicate as mist. She slipped into the bathroom and found Cynthia's darkest tube of lipstick, then painted it thick and heavy on her mouth. The rest of her face she covered with enough white baby powder to fill up every crease, then rubbed a round smear of lipstick into each of her cheeks. Her dark eyes in the mirror shone back at her; she looked, she was nearly sure, like a young girl again.

> Once Cynthia had gone . . . she went out into the kitchen and wrapped a cooking pot lid up in gold Christmas paper to put on her head for a halo but there was no way she could think of to keep it on. Then she made two cardboard wings out of a dress box but she couldn't put them on her own shoulders either so she decided to ask Jeremy to pin them on for her. (p. 9)

Provoked by her grandmother's apparent hypocrisy, Cyn challenges Mrs. Wagonwheel's belief in Jeremy's authenticity:

> "do you still believe that crap? Can you honestly think that once you'd brought him into this place it could still be what you wanted it to be? . . . he's not old Bill Bittle's grandson at all" (p. 9)

Confronted by the falseness of "history," the old woman almost crumbles but her angel costume sustains her.

Herodotus wished to preserve the memory of what the Greeks and Barbarians did so the deeds of men should not be lost in the passage of time. Thucydides attempted to illustrate the struggle for power, a trait he considered characteristic of human nature. Polybius wanted to show that the whole history of the world converged toward the Roman Empire and also that the experience gained from studying History can be the best education for life. Livy intended his contemporaries to find in history models for themselves and their country. Hebraic authors of the Old Testament hoped to prove the existence of a divine plan and the intervention of the Supreme God in the life of a people. In Invention's "Scrapbook" Hodgins demonstrates that "facts" become obsolete and that "the truth" is multitudinous as Menippean satire consistently affirms. Each character, living or dead, named or unnamed, who contributes to the story of Donal Keneally, his wife Nell and her supposed lover, Chris Wall, purports to give the "true" account. But each account is highly subjective, influenced by selective perception, faulty or selective memory and/or personal prejudice.

Becker's introductory remarks describing concrete details of Henry Burke's property and the road leading to it prepare the reader for the curmudgeon's materialistic perspective. His tirade against the "stupid American spy-woman" (Invention, p. 178) who now controls Keneally's property brings together his misogyny, his anti-Americanism and his obsession with the site of the former colony where he grew up. In a typical Menippean reversal Burke's refusal to discuss the inquest into "the murder" terminates the interview where, given Becker's prompting, it should have begun.

Edward Guthrie jumps up and acts out what he is telling. Much of the time he addresses the floor, "seeing his audience there" (p. 206), and he laughs aloud at memories which he may or may not share. Often underscored for emphasis, Guthrie's remarks are as idiosyncratic as is his manner of speaking. He warns Becker not to be so foolish as to "believe one word anybody tells you about that Keneally," then demands Becker attend to "the truth" about "that Irishman" (p. 207). Amusing anecdotes about conflicts between the Irish and French Canadians, a neighbor and his wife, and "pasty-face Miller" and himself, highlight Guthrie's account of Keneally's affair with Arbutus and the leader's subsequent return to the colony. The old man relives the anger he felt when the volatile giant rebuked him for interrupting his conversation with Gems:

> "Guthrie shut up," he says. To me. The bloody old ape. All of a sudden I was a dog to be barked at. "Guthrie, shut up." The man's crazy, I think to myself, the man's as loony as they say. You can't trust him a minute. Well, bugger you, I think to myself, if you expect to go on eating my food and sleeping in my house. Just bugger you. (p. 212)

When Guthrie describes Keneally's embrace of his loyal servant, he expresses disdain for a man who would demonstrate such tenderness.

Whereas Guthrie portrays Keneally as unexceptional and even weak, Durrand offers an impression of Keneally's physical and psychological dominance:

> Oh, he was a big man. You can see that I'm no shrimp. Never have been, but sitting beside him on that ride out to the place I felt like there was a giant beside me. I got the feeling he took up a lot more space even than his big body seemed to. (p. 205)

Because Durrand's description is chronological and detailed, it appears to be objective but his chronicle is not as unbiased as it seems: he calls Keneally a "bastard" and "a rich so-and-so" whose followers are "a pack of slaves." At the conclusion of Becker's interview, Durrand bluntly offers the opinion that the less a person had to do with Keneally the better (pp. 204-205).

Dairmud Evans prefaces "the story he wants to tell" Becker with an expression of admiration for Arbutus, Keneally's "beautiful Indian Princess," the same woman of whom Edward Guthrie remarked, "I sure as hell wouldn't call her no raving beauty" (p. 209). Whereas Evans is mild-mannered and self-effacing, "Gold Man" Coleman Steele is tremendously self-centered. He is the harsh, piercing element Keneally runs into. Annoyed by Steele's vanity and belligerence, the reader fails to share his hilarity as he dramatizes the incident in which he "cuts" Keneally in the common street:

> Well, I wish you could've been there the one time I seen him. Funny? I thought I'd bust! Look, I'm standing out in front of the courthouse, see, like this, and this fellow comes out. A tall man, with this red face and big ears like jug handles, thumping down out of that courthouse like it was on fire or something and nearly knocked me over. "Hey mister," I says. "You watch where you're going!" And he turns, swings see, like this, and hunches over, scowls at me from under his brows like he thinks I'm a bug, or maybe he can't see me at all and is trying to get me in focus. I didn't know who he was. Well why should I? Did you

> think we had nothing better to do with our lives in those days than run circles around him? "Oh I'm sorry," he says just like that, all flustered, and "some of them think that I murdered my wife." So I says, "Who are you?" and he says, "Donal Brendan Keneally" like it was a title or something, and of course I knew then who he was, and says, "Well of course, it was nothing less than what we expected of you." Oh, I was a fearless one in those days I'll tell you. And laugh? I thought I'd bust. You should've seen the look on his face. Like I'd clubbed him one on the neck. He swung away and walked off in a huff but I laughed, Lord I must have stood there and had a good laugh for another ten minutes at least. I couldn't stop. I mean that's what I said before, it's a funny thing when people gets what's coming to them. How could I help but laugh? (p. 175)

Neither Steele nor Becker nor any other commentator in this chapter offers evidence to support Steele's opinion that he was giving Keneally "what was coming to him," thus undermining the credibility of his entire account.

A newspaper article and a child's story included in this chapter give even greater texture to the Menippea. An article from a Northcove newspaper of 1910 reports the pertinent "facts" relating to the discovery of the bodies of Nell Keneally and Christopher Wall. This "objective" account is followed by a sensational editorial which focuses upon the "murder so foul" in order to advance the editor's established bias against the Revelation's Colony of Truth. Several letters from newspaper subscribers protest the editor's "malicious and slanderous persecution" of the Colony while several others support the editorial viewpoint and join in condemning that "snake-nest of devilish misfits" (p. 181).

A child's story given to Becker by Virginia Newman tells how "a Monster" murdered his wife and her lover:

> Once upon a time a long time ago there was a beautiful princess named Nell who was a princess of the kingdom of Arland. She was so beautiful that every prince in the Kingdom wanted too mery her and other countrys to like England. But the beautiful gorgeous princess Nell was meryd

> to a horrible Monster who took her a long ways away to live in the bush. Insted of a castle she had to live in the scarry forest. The Monster was meen to her and made her workhard.
>
> Then one day the princess Nell met a real prince who was desgized as a minér and they fell in love but the Monster would not stop being meen and let her go free so they had to meet secretly in the forest and kiss!!
>
> Then the horrible monster fond out and snuk up behind them and bashed there heads in with something and beryd them. This is a sad story.
>
> Mary Turner
> Grade Two
>
> P.S. It is also true. My mother knew her! (p. 182)

Mary's failure to indent her first paragraph implies her eagerness to tell the story. Subsequent paragraphs, indented but invariably beginning with "Then," give the whole an episodic effect. The pace of the story accelerates as the child's involvement in the telling intensifies and the exciting events of the second and third paragraphs are relayed in breathless run-on sentences. The spelling errors, the inconsistent capitalizations, the liberal use of exclamation marks and the postscript as afterthought serve to "authenticate" the story as the work of a grade two student. However, the most convincing "evidence" that the story is "in fact" a little girl's is the romantic screen through which Mary perceives reality: forests are frightening, princesses are beautiful, mean husbands are "monsters" and "real" princes and princesses are meant to be in love regardless of social conventions and laws governing marriage.

The satire of this chapter is compounded by Morris Wall's account of his brother's death seeming to be colored by his youthful love and admiration for Chris. Although he tells Becker that he, Morris, was once a good-looking man, he emphasizes that Chris was "taller" and

"stronger" and consequently "handsomer" than himself. He reports too that their mother idolized her first-born. Grisly black humor--tasteless but appropriate to Menippea--marks his denial to her that he knew about Chris's dangerous affair with Nell:

> I lied and said I had no idea what it was all about and we'd just have to wait and see what the police dug up, which was an unfortunate way of putting it. (p. 184)

The interview with Morris's wife that follows immediately effectively counterbalances Morris's apparently idealized view of his brother:

> And Christopher. I could tell you a thing or two about that Christopher. He was not the angel his mother and brother believed him to be. Not by a long shot. (p. 189)

Mrs. Wall attempts to maintain her credibility by not making an extreme statement:

> Oh he wasn't the hellion either that you're expecting me to say, he wasn't one of those perfect-at-home-but-devil-away types. He was a brooder. (p. 189)

In concluding her interview Mrs. Wall alludes to the murder:

> Not that I think Christopher did what some want you to believe he did. I guess we all know who really did it. (p. 190)

Her vagueness hints at a dark secret, a body of knowledge commonly shared but not to be uttered and her comment is an invitation to Becker to share in that secret.

Richard Ryburn, an instructor at satirically named "Regional College," prides himself on being a man of reason who thinks it is important "to see things as they are" (p. 196). He strives to dissuade Becker from believing "any of that baloney" the elusive "they" tell about Keneally. In his eagerness to persuade his interviewer that there was nothing exceptional about Keneally or his colony, Ryburn defines the myth-making phenomenon itself as being "fairly common."

He argues from authority:

> "when people feel that their own lives and life around them is basically dull, they begin to spin tales that will turn a slightly eccentric neighbor into a mythological creature of epic proportions, and start to imagine life in the nearest exclusive group as exciting and perverse and perhaps dangerous. It's not uncommon, and there's a whole field of psychological language related to it which I won't bore you with now." (p. 196)

Although Ryburn condemns Keneally's hold over his followers, he is fair enough to admit the evidence on which he bases his opinion is subject to subjective interpretation (p. 195).

The mystery surrounding Keneally, Nell and Chris Wall is insoluble, for in Menippea, as in life, Truth is not One. Instead of "The Absolute Word," "Fact" and "History" there is only private mythology. Yet nobody ever really invents a successful private mythology, says Hodgins through Keneally, and nobody owns the story--not even his own story, all fantasy to the contrary.[63]

In Invention's "Eden Swindle" Hodgins is delightful in a clever parody of the conglomeration of fact, myth and wishful thinking that sometimes passes for history. Dewit O'Connell, Ned O'Mahony and Peter Scully pool their ignorance to draw a portrait of the famous Irish-Ameri-Canadian Sir Sean A. McDermott. Their version in effect is a political cartoon:

> The man himself was spawned in a log cabin somewhere in the wilds. Did his lessons by the candle light. They called him Honest Sean for refusing to cut down a cherry tree no matter how much the English bastards tried to force him. . . . The boy came out of those wilds wearing a raccoon on his head and shooting up the redskins right and left. He . . . marched himself straight as you please to the big white palace up in Ottawa where he crowned himself the king. (p. 113)

Although British and American domination of Canada and Canadian culture is rendered humorously here, it is an issue to which Hodgins is particularly sensitive.

In Resurrection the assorted reactions by town residents to a book of the elusive Bourne's even more elusive poetry (ironically entitled Possessing Me) demonstrates Hodgins' belief that literature, like history, may be subjective, erroneous and/or inadequate. Because Menippea allows for simultaneous, diverse points of view, the reader must be prepared to consider in turn the idiosyncratic positions held by any number of characters on a given matter as in the various readings we have seen of Keneally. Bachelor Larry Bowman, the librarian, maintains that "the whole book--every word was about copulation" (p. 93). Lonely Jenny Chambers, for her part, believes "every poem in that book was about . . . the terrible feelings of looking for a place where you belonged" (p. 93). "Angelic" Angela Turner feels that Bourne "raises human love to the divine, where it belongs" (p. 94). Charlie Reynolds, the activist newspaper editor, thinks Bourne's poems deal with "human communication" (p. 94), and, in a story about the poet says that Bourne considers that "Poems weren't about things, poems did things" (p. 98).

Bourne's poetic theories, themes and techniques clearly reflect Hodgins' Menippean interests:

> [Bourne's works] started out talking about something a person could relax about, like a walk through an alder grove, then just when you were nodding yes you knew what he was talking about, he snuck up and hit you with something bizarre that went hand in hand with what you'd just agreed to. One of the poems told the librarian, just when he was nodding in recognition over a described boat journey up a coastal inlet, that a search for a home in this earth was pointless. . . . Another suggested that the librarian . . . was really a windowpane! His sole purpose on earth, according to the poem, was to let through a light that shone from somewhere else. (pp. 91-92)

It is ironic that the amateur but would-be authoritative author Mrs. Barnstone cannot understand why, when Bourne writes, he keeps "looking over every line from a dozen different angles before recording it" nor

why he even questions "the value of his work while he was at it" (p. 226). Unlike Invention's bilious poet, Julius Champney, who weeps despairingly because he cannot transcend his discovery that words betray, Joseph has been re-Bourne into an appreciation of living from which his successful art springs. Convinced that "the old metaphors for eternity--such as Keats' urn and Byron's ocean--don't work any more," Bourne voices Hodgins' conviction that "eternity can only be expressed by implication, by the way we live our lives" (p. 226).

For Hodgins, art, history and literature are never "real," never "true" in any simple or final way. Still they are to be cherished as ways through which man may express his "faith in the absolute power of good" (Resurrection, p. 97), or even transcend. Hodgins is convinced that an artist must appreciate the goodness inherent in being human before he may hope to master his muse. Clearly this author's own mastery of the art of living in accord with Menippean principles has engendered in him a satirical vision from which springs his compelling invention in the world.

Chapter Four

> Is a very short one, and may appear of no great importance in its place, but it should be read notwithstanding, as a sequel to the last and a key to one that will follow when its time arrives.
>
> Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist, preface to Chapter XXXVI

True to the spirit of Menippea Hodgins satirizes many prevalent social and cultural attitudes in an attempt to release the power of the human spirit. He rejects the narrow view that consanguinity constitutes "family" and ridicules the conventional belief that blood ties are synonymous with ties of affection. He criticizes the political system that serves its own ends at the expense of the unfortunate and the economic system that encourages "progress" at the expense of the environment. He rebukes the media for insensitivity in the face of disaster, destruction and despair. In "At the Foot of the Hill, Birdie's School" he satirizes education while in "Change of Scenery" he satirizes the entire literary enterprise. With gentle but effective cynicism the author relentlessly assassinates the self-serving, self-righteous and self-centered. Through Menippean satire Hodgins reduces a wide range of complex moral issues to their most elemental forms.

Ironically "blood" dissevers rather than unites a family in "Other People's Troubles." The opening of the story associates Lenore Miles with fresh green mint, a metaphor for regeneration, and dissociates her from the color red, an emblem for disaster:

> she often dressed in green as pale and just as gentle as the wild mint patch growing not too far from the house. Oh,

> they [her children] would tease her for it . . . saying maybe she was blind to any other colour and afraid of wearing red by mistake, which was her only hate. (Spit, p. 123)

Lenore works healing "miracles" (p. 128) throughout her community. Over the grumbling of her family she comforts women like the battered Emma Melville and the afflicted Mrs. Eddie Baxter who loses her husband to a raging forest fire during the "orange-sky summer" (p. 123) in which the story takes place. When a car "the color of fire and just as fast" (p. 131) brings tragedy to Lenore's own door, her son, ten year old Barclay "Duke,"

> watched it approach, something not quite human, something between those two men, setting its feet down as if it did not have his father's caulk boots on and as if the wooden walk were broken glass. It wore his father's blue plaid mackinaw too . . . it had a mouth all right, but everything above that was just a big white globe with black holes for eyes. A mummy. Pure white bandages wrapped around and around. A faceless mummy. There was blood on the mackinaw, he saw, a dark stain along the collar. And the hand, too, the hand, smeared red, moving up slowly to touch the white mask. (p. 132)

Lenore runs away from her defaced husband in his hour of greatest need, causing the family to be ruptured beyond repair. Duke thinks of his sisters, "both off to a neighbor's and safe for the time being from whatever it was he was having to face" (p. 133), then takes his cue from his mother:

> the man . . . said, "You take your daddy inside and don't make no noise to bother him."
>
> [Duke] did not answer that, but walked right past the three of them standing there on the walk as if he could think of a thousand better things to do. Because that was no father to anyone in his world, or she would have run to him. . . . He . . . lay down in the mint beside the verandah to wait. (p. 133)

Once Duke "has sucked all the smell out of the [life-giving green] mint" (p. 133), he assumes the nuturing role so recently abdicated by his mother. Although he returns to aid his helpless father, with

their customary roles reversed, their relationship is strained, and formal. Duke knows that the family life he enjoyed "at some earlier time when life was much simpler" (p. 133) is gone forever.

Hodgins condemns families that isolate themselves from the rest of society to become entrenched in their individual mythologies. In "The Trench Dwellers" Aunt Nora Macken, unmarried and childless, is convinced "there [is] no substitute for family" (Spit, p. 73). As self-appointed matriarch, she rules over three hundred people whom she considers "The Immediate Family" (p. 73):

> she thought it her duty every time there was a wedding or a funeral to call a reunion of The Immediate Family the day after the ceremony . . . her own generation spent the day in the house telling each other stories about Black Alex. . . . The young adults drank beer outside in the grassy yard or on the verandah and talked about their jobs and their houses, and each of them tried to find out how much money the others were earning. The children chased each other. (pp. 73-74)

Reacting against the oppression of this family that is as exclusive and as demanding as "a club. Or a religion" (p. 81), and against the obsolete myth of its founder, his grandfather Black Alex, Gerry Macken truncates his name, secretly marries an only child and escapes with her to the mainland. The only member of The Immediate Family to leave the island (p. 74), Gerry settles "in a little town on the edge of the strait, facing across to the Island, directly across to the valley where he had grown up" (p. 75). Each day he concludes his radio broadcast to the area with the insulting rebuff, "So long, Nora" (p. 76). This cryptic sign-off leads to much silly speculation on the part of Gerry's perverse listening audience which feeds on his many opinions, "outlandish ideas" and rudeness to people who phone in to the station (p. 75). Ironically, Aunt Nora is pleased with Gerry's cheekiness for it confirms

her conviction that he is "the only real Macken in the whole kaboodle" (p. 83). Gerry senses that island and mainland reflect each other socially as well as physically and using a geographical metaphor tries to explain to his listeners the tragedy he dimly perceives--that families composed of people who have their humanity in common live in opposition to each other in deep dark trenches of tradition with mountain ranges at their backs to protect against the encroachment of others who may have a broader world view.

Gerry's wife and children return to the Island where April, the "outsider," eventually assumes Aunt Nora's place as head of The Family. This irony is compounded when Gerry's life comes to parody that of his progenitor, Black Alex:

> years later . . . [Gerry] sold the seaside house and moved in with a woman far up a gravel road behind town, in a junky unpainted house beside a swamp. She had nearly a dozen children from various fathers, some Scandinavian, two Indian, and one Chinese, and her name was Netty Conroy. Which meant . . . that she was related to more than half the people who lived in that mainland town, not to mention most who lived in the countryside around it. (p. 85)

No longer willing to live separately from "the rest of North America" (p. 80), Gerry moves inland to become not patriarch of but part of The Family of Man.

In "The Religion of the Country" Hodgins satirizes the conventional view of the parent-child bond as sacred. Brian Halligan's shallow life is marked by selfishness and insensitivity toward those whom society would call "closest" to him:

> When Brian Halligan's mother telephoned him from halfway around the world in West Cork to tell him his poor old father had died, Halligan, who never failed to make the proper expected gesture, offered to fly over immediately for the funeral. "What rush is there?" her voice screeched at him. "Haven't I waited fifteen years for a visit out of you? Little good you can do the old fellow now." So

> Halligan told her he would be there by the end of the month: he needed that much time, he said, to find someone he'd trust with the bookstore while he was away, and he wanted to get as much use as possible out of his season's theatre ticket before it became out of date. (Barclay, p. 98)

Halligan's mother has fared no better in maintaining family ties for she had deserted him and his father when Halligan was three years old to return from England to her "home" in Ballyvourney, Ireland. There, in spite of having sacrificed husband and son, Mrs. Halligan, the village's lone Protestant, ever fails to belong.

Halligan worries about his mother's loneliness but "he couldn't help knowing that while he was concerned" about hers, "he was actually worrying about his own" (p. 105). Because Halligan visits his mother out of guilt rather than love, out of duty rather than compassion, it is ironic that fine old Michael Donegan compliments him on his "love"ly devotion when their paths cross at St. Gobnait's shrine. The shrine, an emblem of the parent-child relationship, may be neglected and overgrown with weeds (p. 104), but St. Gobnait's nunnery, an emblem of supression of birth and the life force, has become a graveyard. Contrary to society's expectations, Donegan expresses no regret over the lapsed ties between himself and his sons and it is ironic that Donegan's sons turn out to be worth more to him dead than alive:

> "But it's a lovely boy ye are, to be coming home like this. Those two bostoons of mine have not been seen in this land since they caught the ship that took them away." . . . the eyes twinkled, as if this too was a joke on Halligan he hadn't been able to foresee. (p. 104).

Punctuating his remarks with a finger pointing heavenward, the wise ancient indicates to Halligan the way to salvation. Halligan's steps have lead him unwittingly to St. Gobnait's shrine in search of just such a revelation but because he is unprepared for its simplicity, it

is lost on him:

> On his last visit he'd crept up to [the shrine] silently, hoping to witness some pilgrim stand up from praying, throw crutches or wheelchair into the hedges, and walk away. It had been a disappointment, of course . . . (p. 102)

Tragically Halligan is lost from grace.

When her son returns to his bookstore on Vancouver Island, Mrs. Halligan pitifully clings to her last living relative. A fool overlooking what love and companionship neighbors and friends have to offer, Mrs. Halligan allies herself with her cousin, Polly, who "addled-brained as she was, at least . . . was related" (pp. 109-110). Polly's death leaves Mrs. Halligan despairing "What's a woman without a family?" (p. 109). It also provides occasion for a visit from Halligan, sponsored financially and morally by the bride to whom he--in his arrogant ignorance--feels intellectually superior.

Mrs. Halligan's emotional blackmail fails when Halligan denies the spiritual umbilical cord society perceives uniting them:

> "they sent word up last week that she'd dropped dead in chapel. Poor old thing. And now what have I left?"
>
> Suddenly Halligan felt angry. "What you have left is the rest of your life to do with as you please. You can sit around feeling sorry for yourself if you want, but you'll have nobody to blame but yourself."
>
> She turned and let him see that her eyes were full of tears, tipped up her chin at him accusingly. There is no end to the cruelty you can expect to suffer at the hands of a heartless son, she seemed to be saying, and if Babe hadn't clomped up the front walk at just that moment he would have found himself making all kinds of impossible promises. It was not easy for a man like Halligan to meet those watery eyes or ignore that chin. (p. 110)

Ironically, Halligan's rejection of her precipitates his mother's salvation. Returned to the peace and serenity of Eden by her decision to be "received into the [Catholic] Church" (p. 113), Mrs. Halligan informs her son of her intention from "inside the circular labyrinth paths

of [a] rose garden" (p. 112). Fearing the loss of his inheritance to the parish, Halligan frantically races around "the outside edge" of the garden "to be closer" (p. 113):

> From the outside he stood and hollered at her:
> "Now what have you gone and done, old woman" . . . (p. 112)

In a selfless, loving act--her first--Mrs. Halligan "comes out from behind the roses" (p. 113) to try to sooth her son's indignation by sharing her enlightenment with him:

> "Tch, tch, Brian my son. Don't I know my own mind the same as the next one? Don't go blaming the sisters. 'Tis no idea of theirs at all."
>
> "Sold out is what you did. Sold out for the sake of belonging."
>
> The old woman gathered her coat together and fumbled with her thick fingers at the button. "And what is it I've sold? What have I lost?" (p. 113)

Toward the end of the story the reader shares Babe's gratification "when a colored snapshot arrived in the mail" shows Mrs. Halligan to be a "radiant bride" of the Church, washed of "all her loneliness and confusion" (p. 114). However, the reader is more amused than gratified by Babe's own decision to sell her hotel in favor of motherhood.

It is ironic that Halligan moves toward "loneliness and confusion" at the end of the story as whatever sensitivity he once possessed gives over to grasping materialism. Earlier his love of books and "the patterns of their words" (p. 105) had enabled him to see how the Islanders "waste their lives accumulating things, grabbing and hoarding, fighting over bits of land and stabbing each other in the back to get ahead. And if they have any spare time . . . they're off somewhere in the mountains shooting animals or killing fish" (p. 99). Now that he has "expanded into a book-and-record shop with an emphasis on the faster-selling rock albums and entered the real estate business, the man who

once "never failed to make the proper expected gesture" (p. 98) does not "bother" (p. 114) to attend his own mother's funeral:

> "I wouldn't understand a word it is," he said, "whole lot of nonsense." And besides, he had discovered an old man who just might be ready to sell a hundred-acre piece of waterfront property which was ideal for subdividing, and if he took time to go galivanting around the world someone else might get there first to grab it. Land development was a cut-throat business, he said, and there was no room in it for sentiment. (p. 114)

It is ironic that Halligan has embraced "the values of the people he lived amongst" (p. 110), the values he once vociferously condemned. He accepts the common creed that "to belong" in this "land of greed and ignorance" means one must "race through life trying to grab all they can" (p. 104).

In Resurrection Hodgins ridicules Jacob Weins for his ineptness as a politician and his egotism but particularly for his materialistic view of the world. Obsessed with American "civilization," the mayor envisions "used car lots right on your doorstep," "a dozen hamburger drive-ins along the highway, with golden arches and rotating buckets" and "neon lights as far as the eye could see" (p. 169). Port Annie Saguarus is Weins' first "serious" attempt to catapult his town into the twentieth century:

> Jacob Weins . . . hungered night and day for Port Annie's very first tourist. By the time the expensive glass walls were installed in the cactus tower, the complicated de-humidifiers added, the electric heater with the thermostat control wired up, and two suspended Mill workers hired to act as caretakers for Canada's Largest Natural-Growing Cactus, he was more than ready, he was desperate. He was so obsessed with this need for a tourist, in fact, that when one of George Beeton's children came into the magazine shop to tell him the miracle had actually happened, he nearly swooned. (p. 183)

That the tourists from Arizona were lost, that they pronounced his cactus "dead as a doornail" (p. 184), that they "got their look for

free" and drove away "without spending a single penny in the stores," without buying gasoline for the "monster" they drove and without stopping for lunch in the hotel (p. 185), nothing shakes Weins' determination to make "his" town the place "where the future will get its start" (p. 224). In satirizing Weins, Hodgins parodies his master Varro who often appealed to the simplicity of bygone days.

Weins does not sympathize with Slim Potts' unexpectedly eloquent plea that there have to be places like Port Annie for people who (like him, although he does not admit it outright) need stability in their lives:

> for people who need to know that every morning when they wake up their neighbors will be the same people they were yesterday, not strangers, the trees will be in the same place, not bulldozed out of the way for a building, the sea the same as it always was, not filled in for a parking lot. (p. 168)

The mayor resorts to violence to expel Squatters' Flats innocent inhabitants in the name of social "progress"--and to turn the land over to the "Evergreen" Real Estate Company of San Francisco. Facetiously named, the company revitalizes itself in the economic rather than the natural sense. When his diabolical alliances with representatives of the exploitive company, Satanic Jeremy Fell and Demonic Damon West, threaten to fall through, Weins becomes frantic to realize his dream. As a last resort he snatches Fat Annie Fartenburg from her "grave," a dark, secluded room above the Kick-and-Kill Saloon. Momentarily disappointed that she is "a dry, shrivelled-up parsnip" of a woman rather than "the giant he'd expected" (pp. 244-245), the ever optimistic Weins concentrates upon fulfilling the plans he has for "using" her:

> Somewhere inside that decomposing head [of Annie's] there was probably still enough human sense left to appreciate the plans he had for her. A little make-up, an old-fashioned

> dress, perhaps a wig and a bonnet, she could still prove to be more than useful. (p. 245)

Intent upon resurrecting her, Weins chooses to disregard Annie's "vital signs," the six fish tanks containing "tiny discoloured bones" covered with green slime (p. 245) that the old woman insists upon keeping near her. The bones are emblematic of Annie's birth out of the sea, her current corporeal corruption and the deteriorated state of her myth in the modern world. As he carries Annie facing forward in her rocking chair down the stairs into the tumult of the Fat Annie Festival and the future, Weins trips. Annie is propelled through the air. When she comes to rest at Larry Bowman's feet, she is dead:

> Weins looked, but he couldn't believe it. What was this? What had he done? He looked at those faces, looked down at the lifeless root, and felt a terrible cold doubt fill up his body . . . everyone in that room . . . could see that though the mayor refused to take responsibility for anything that had happened up to now, he was clearly preparing himself to accept the blame for everything that happened next. The future, whatever it may include, was already all his fault. (p. 247)

Jacob Weins' blind materialism soon costs him his only daughter who runs off with "the handsome devil" (p. 248) Damon West "within minutes of the death of Fat Annie Fartenburg" (p. 247). It also provokes the cataclysmic destruction of the town.

After a mudslide obliterates Port Annie and the legend of Fat Annie, the townspeople are forced to foster their imperilled sense of community. "A democratic crowd," they absolved their mayor as they "spread the guilt around equally" (p. 257) among the "money-grabbing mill owners," "that damn government," "those dumb logging companies," "the stupid guy that planned the town" and "the greedy real estate people" (p. 258). It is tragic but fitting that the slide claimed the life of Slim Potts who would be unwilling and/or unable to relocate

and that of Eva McCarthy whose material possessions were her raison d'etre. Hodgins satirizes the shallowness of the media as it pushes its cameras and microphones "into Ian McCarthy's face, swollen and red from weeping. Even when he turned away, blowing his nose, the cameras continued to purr" (p. 263). The author satirizes too the bias of the media as it forces words into Jenny Chambers' mouth:

> Microphones shoved into Jenny's face did not go away just because she swatted at them and gave them a look that should have melted their cables. Didn't she think that someone down in Victoria should have foreseen this and tried to stop it? If there were an election tomorrow would she change her vote? Would she be willing to ride in the helicopter and give their viewers a blow-by-blow report while the cameras played over the hideous devastation of that mountainside? Wasn't this proof once again that the federal government was spending too much of its attention on Quebec and not enough on the Coast? (pp. 263-64)

Ironically Weins' materialistic dream has survived the disaster it caused. "Always eager to help the media wherever he could" (p. 264), the misguided mayor declares his intact vision to big-city viewers "out in the world" (p. 265):

> For those with the courage to stay, he told them there would be the joy of seeing that luxury hotel rising right here on this spot they were sitting on now. The Cathay Towers Resort, swamped with thousands of glamorous tourists from the south, all with more money than they knew what to do with . . . shopping malls, the most carefully designed subdivisions, the most tasteful rows of fast-food outlets and car-dealers and tourist attractions . . . Port Annie the Second . . . would have blacktopped parking lots, and towers of glass scraping the clouds, and even stoplights, just wait and see? (p. 265)

By showing no more enthusiasm than before for Weins' singular nightmare the community asserts its collective sanity and secures for its future the "love and perfect vision" (p. 270) Bourne anticipated.

"Love and perfect vision" is the theme of "At the Foot of the Hill, Birdie's School." Here Hodgins, the former secondary school teacher, scathingly satirizes education. Upon arriving at Birdie's school naive

Webster objects to the ugliness of the institution and insists on painting the "halls of learning" a pure, enlightened white with trimmings of "gold" to accentuate the worth of wisdom "or green" to declare the vitality of knowledge (Spit, p. 143). As soon as he finished, Mr. McIntosh, who teaches a class in love, begins to "knock" love out of Webster, by giving him "a hundred reasons why love wasn't a natural thing for a man to feel" and trying to convince him "there wasn't anything in this world that deserved it anyway" (p. 145). Daydreaming always provides students with a means of ready escape from unwanted instruction and in this regard Webster is no exception. Because Webster's night dreams too effectively counteract Mr. McIntosh's instruction, the teacher resorts to brainwashing by posting a primitive "handpainted cardboard sign" (p. 145) on the wall beside the boy's bed. That the instructor would take such a desperate measure indicates the extent of his commitment to his damnable message and his diabolical mission.

Birdie, a pseudo-Eve, purports to teach "Life," or rather "how to lose" it (p. 141), a parody of the Menippean tenet "Life: learn how to live it." Her approach is practical rather than theoretical. In the first phase of her instruction of Webster she signals to the youth the soft, secret recesses where mortal knowledge is to be found:

> She sucked in her breath, tossed a blood-red apple straight up behind her and stepped back to catch it in the deep soft V of her dress front. (p. 141)

The athletic trick whereby Birdie "devours" a parody of the Biblical fruit pre-figures the deft sexual "trick" whereby she attempts to devour Webster's soul:

> She rubbed her hands in his sweat and dried them in his hair. She rested one huge white breast on his throat

> but he couldn't breath so she wrapped her arms and legs around him, gave a few heaves, then rolled right over onto her back and held him prisoner. (p. 148)

It is ironic that Webster's eagerness to learn what Birdie and her school has to teach causes him great pain and almost costs him his life.

Mr. Muir, who teaches "Truth 122," instructs Webster as he suffers from the terminal moral sickness the school has induced. Suffused with passion for his perverted subject Mr. Muir "laid out" for the failing youth "symptom after symptom . . . each one more gruesome than the last . . . [He] was talking with so much enthusiasm in his face that he might have been describing a circus" (p. 147). Like many instructors who love the sound of their own voices, Mr. Muir's "eyes rolled up to watch the beautiful picture he was painting, his hands darted back and forth, like busy birds" (p. 147).

Webster survives Birdie's school by clinging to the belief that he is "an idea in the Old Man's mind and therefore perfect" (p. 150). Birdie's reaction to his claim to innate perfection is one of fury that he failed to learn what she and her colleagues tried so hard to teach him. She resorts, as some teachers do, to crude punishments:

> She cracked a shoe across the side of his head. "Is that all the gratitude you can show us." She stood up and threw things at him, tossed floor mat and lamps and books and pictures and shoes and hair brushes at him until he was nearly buried. She stood in the doorway, her face twisted and red, and screeched, "I don't think you've learned a goddam thing!" (p. 151)

In this condemnation of souless, institutionalized instruction Hodgins makes it perfectly clear that schools must do more than teach students that they are "fish, frogs, sacks of bones or bags of turds" (p. 150).

"Change of Scenery" offers a witty, light-hearted look at the literary enterprise. Old Geoffrey Morganshack is a retired English

teacher who "no longer believes in the printed word" (p. 33):

> After thirty-five years of teaching high school English, Morganshack had decided that literacy was neither valued nor necessary in this world of computers and television. His job had become irrelevant. So had he. . . . In future reading would be something reserved for the special joy of only a few, like hang-gliding or playing bridge. Everyone else would get by just nicely without having to read a word. Sesame Street had backfired--Karoom! Instead of making learning to read more fun, it had made watching TV more fun. He was tired of breaking his neck to compete with situation comedies when every student knew he was making a fool of himself for a long-lost cause.
>
> In the five years following his retirement, he'd spent most of his time alone in his beach house, rereading favorite writers from Chaucer to Octavio Paz with a lump in his throat. Poor fools, they didn't know that in a generation or two they'd be as inaccessible as Latin, as mysterious as petroglyphs! P. 33)

Morganshack finds himself literally and figuratively "high and dry" in Saskatchewan. Sent by a delegation led by his town's librarian, he is charged with attending a Local History Writing Workshop in order to write a history of their seaside town. Morganshack has no intention of becoming a "professional pioneer" writing endlessly about the past and agrees to the assignment having been promised that if he wrote the history it would not only be printed but recorded on tape as well:

> the idea appealed: not only a little booklet with his name on the cover but a small, mysterious cassette recording of his voice, to be listened to by the illiterate grandchildren of his semi-literate students. (p. 34)

Although the brochure for the writers' workshop "promised Morganshack he'd soon be turning local events into sparkling prose" (p. 34), he remains skeptical.

Morganshack's acquaintances were generally "classroom refugees like himself, and after forty years he was just plain tired of being around other teachers" (p. 34). To his dismay he discovers his classmates at the workshop to be teachers all--"retired or substituting or

even still working in the schools" (p. 36):

> The instructor, too, was a retired teacher from somewhere up north, a timid creature who seemed to be in love with the discussion-group technique without having any real talent for running it. In her hands the class became a mutual exchange of ignorance. Faced with a convent library full of fellow teachers, she simply asked each person to read out his or her own piece, then sat back while the crowd leapt on it, grammatical jargon flying. (p. 37)

To make matters worse Morganshack is the only man in the group. Deciding that if he was forced to rub elbows with teachers for the week duration of the course he would not "consent to be one of them" (p. 37), Morganshack reveals his reluctance to reveal that he had "wasted" his life "in a classroom teaching archaic skills" (p. 34).

In an attempt to enliven the proceedings and to exasperate, Morganshack cultivates the role of dunce among his peers:

> He rewrote the opening pages of his history clumsily so they could have the fun of ripping it all to shreds. Then he allowed them the satisfaction of trying to cover their joyful viciousness with patronizing sympathy. (p. 37)

He gives free reign to "his habit of speaking as if he belonged in a comic book" (p. 32) in order to disrupt the class:

> "Hoo! Whee!" He thought nothing of saying "Kapowee!" if that was the only word to express what he wanted to say. . . . "Whee . . . Whoop! . . . " (p. 32)

He comes late consistently to readings and reads his own work with such enthusiasm "he could see that everyone was embarrassed for him" (p. 38). Although the women are satirized for being unaware that he is playing with them and although they laugh at him the way they had always wanted to laugh at a befuddled student, tolerance and Christian charity aside, Hodgins does not fall into misogynistic satire. The exceptional Elma Green surprises Morganshack by taking him home. As she exposes his fraud, "all those years of bawling out students came

to her aid" (p. 41). After she lectures him on the importance of respecting "the creative impulse," it is fitting that Morganshack invites Elma to share his life: like Maggie and Wade of Invention, Angela and Larry of Resurrection, and Gladys and Carl of "More Than Conquerors" they are freed through love to "rearrange all the pieces of the world" (p. 43), to make a "Change of Scenery."

Hodgins effectively satirizes narrow social and cultural attitudes that restrict the human spirit. He defines "family" broadly as a collection of people who share a sustaining vision. He condemns exploitive political and economic systems. At the same time he exposes insensitive media services and manipulators of public opinion. But Hodgins reserves his harshest satire for educators and educational institutions, in the process satirizing himself and his chosen profession.

Conclusion

> A talent of great scope and great promise is endowed with the most significant artistic quality, the gift of growth.
>
> William Walsh
> A Manifold Voice

Through Menippean satire Jack Hodgins explores what Gerald A. Larue calls "identity myths," those attitudes and beliefs by which we choose to live and define ourselves individually and collectively.[64] The Menippean form enables Hodgins to take a broad yet revealing look at Canadian culture and human experience so that ignorance, injustice and infamy are exposed in a palatable--even attractive--way. However, unlike many satirists, Hodgins offers much more than gentle raillery or calculated censure.

Hodgins' Menippea demonstrate how freeing latent aspects of human nature to spontaneous expression gives rise to fresh beginnings. In Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics "Carnivalization" is the term Mikhail Bakhtin uses to describe this life-giving exhilaration and extraordinary transforming power of Menippea. According to Bakhtin, carnivalization is a ritualistic festivity in which the participants live while the laws, prohibitions, and restrictions of ordinary life are suspended. Everyone communes in the carnival act and people who in non-carnival life are separated by impenetrable hierarchical barriers (rank, age, property) enter into free familiar contact on the carnival square. Carnival, Bakhtin, says, is the place for working out, in a concretely sensuous, half-real and half-play-acted form, a new mode of interrelationships. A free and familiar attitude invests all values,

thoughts, phenomena and things so that things that were once self-enclosed, disunified, distanced from one another by a non-carnivalistic world view are drawn into carnivalistic "mesalliances." The effect is to show the joyful relativity of all structure and order, of all authority and (hierarchical) position. Undoubtedly a writer capable of conceiving the riotous banquet scene of The Invention of the World and the celebratory dance scene of The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne has "a carnival sense of the world."[65] Through the inside-out world of Menippea, the violation of the usual and the generally accepted, Hodgins shifts authorities and truths to give a whole new perspective. It is not within the parameters of this study to consider how extensively Hodgins displays carnivalization structurally and/or thematically in his work but the idea may prove interesting for further investigation.

Whereas most forms of literature presuppose (or impose) an integrated and stable universe and thus enclose, serio-comic genres like the Menippea "open up" possibility.[66] Thus fundamental beliefs may be called into question. In Invention it is ironic that Strabo Becker, while helping Maggie Kyle validate her raison d'etre, discovers that his own philosophy of life based on History is unsound. Similarly in The Barclay Family Theatre most major characters learn in one way or another about the false assumptions "underlying" Art. Hodgins must find it amusing that inherent in Menippean satire is a challenge to the validity of the satirist himself. The satirist who judges Jacob Weins to be a social evil in The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne, for example, reveals that character's humanity and continued faith while appearing grounded in no more workable a world view than that of the

mayor. It is an irony in Hodgins that the one who judges may be grounded in no better philosophical position than the one who is judged.[67]

There is in Canadian literature a tone of seriousness which may reflect the dominant feature of Canadians. How refreshing--and necessary to a comprehensive world view--to have a writer like Jack Hodgins living and working among us. Let us hope that he will continue to provide a vital, life-enhancing alternative in our literature to what is traditionally a "grave" view.

Endnotes

[1] "'Magic Realism' refers to a fictional mode in which the impossible may be described with realistic detail, and the real may co-exist with the unreal. Nothing is questioned in a narrative which posits nothing as exclusively real, since the logically possible is as valid as the impossible." Amaryll Beatirce Chanady, Magical Realism and the Fantastic: Resolved Versus Unresolved Antinomy (New York: Garland Publ. Inc., 1985), p. 118.

[2] David L. Jeffrey, "Jack Hodgins and the Island Mind," Book Forum, IV (1978), 70-78.

[3] Today Magazine, "Biography" (Toronto: December 5, 1981), p. 2.

[4] Jack Hodgins, The Frontier Experience (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1975), p. 1.

[5] Jack Hodgins, The Invention of the World (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1975), xii. All further references will be to this edition and will be cited in the text using the format (Invention, p. xii).

[6] John Moss, A Reader's Guide to the Canadian Novel (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1981), p. 128.

[7] George Woodcock, "Novels From Near and Far," Canadian Literature, No. 73 (Summer 1977), 90.

[8] Jack Hodgins. Personal Interview. November 10, 1980.

[9] Jack Hodgins, "Interview," Books in Canada, May 5, 1985, p. 5.

[10] Jack Hodgins, Transitions II: Short Fiction, Turnstone Press, October, 1981, no page.

[11] Heather MacDonald, "Jack Hodgins," Saskatoon Star Phoenix, March 26, 1980, p. 32.

[12] Dennis Kucherawy, "Fictional Creations Mingle with Reality in Author's World," Winnipeg Free Press, October 20, 1981, p. 36.

[13] Jack Hodgins. Personal Interview. November 10, 1980.

[14] Today Magazine, "Biography," February 28, 1981, no page.

[15] Jack Hodgins, The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), p. 205. All further references will be to this edition and will be cited in the text using the format (Resurrection, p. 205).

[16] Jack Hodgins. Personal Interview. November 10, 1980.

[17] James Irby, "Introduction" to Jorges Luis Borges, Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings, eds. Donald A. Yates and James Irby (New York: New Directions, 1964), xi.

[18] Jack Hodgins. Personal Interview. November 10, 1980.

[19] Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 309-312.

[20] M. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 114.

[21] Robert Lecker, "Haunted by a Glut of Ghosts: Jack Hodgins' The Invention of the World," Essays on Canadian Writing, 20 (Winter 1981), 104.

[22] Susan Beckman, "Canadian Burlesque: Jack Hodgins' The Invention of the World," Essays on Canadian Writing, 20 (Winter 1981), 120.

[23] Jack Hodgins. Personal Interview. November 10, 1980.

[24] Jack Hodgins, The Barclay Family Theatre (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1981), p. 298. All further references will be to this edition and will be cited in the text using the format (Barclay, p. 298).

[25] Bakhtin, p. 114.

[26] Bakhtin, p. 118.

[27] W. H. New, "Canada," Annual Biography of Commonwealth Literature, ed. A. Ravenscourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), xii.

[28] Bakhtin, p. 114.

[29] John Walker, The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne, Canadian Fiction Magazine, 34/35 (Spring 1980), no page.

[30] David Jeffrey, "Jack Hodgins and the Island Mind," p. 78.

[31] Jack Hodgins, Spit Delaney's Island (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1976), p. 17. All further references will be to this edition and will be cited in the text using the format (Spit, p. 17).

[32] Bakhtin, p. 115.

[33] Bakhtin, p. 114.

[34] Bakhtin, p. 115.

[35] D. L. Jeffrey, "A Crust for the Critics," Canadian Literature, No. 84 (Spring 1980), 75.

[36] Bakhtin, p. 118.

[37] Bakhtin, p. 117.

[38] F. Anne Payne, Chaucer and Menippean Satire (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), p. 7.

[39] Payne, p. 9.

[40] Payne, p. 9.

[41] Bakhtin, p. 116.

[42] Jeffrey, "A Crust for the Critics," 75.

[43] Payne, p. 10.

[44] Payne, p. 10.

[45] Bakhtin, p. 118.

[46] Jeffrey, "A Crust for the Critics," 74.

[47] Jeffrey, "A Crust for the Critics," 75.

[48] K. Burke, Language As Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature and Method (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 55.

[49] Jeffrey, "A Crust for the Critics," 76.

[50] Lecker, p. 90.

[51] Lecker, pp. 95-96.

[52] Jeffrey, "A Crust for the Critics," 76.

[53] Lecker, p. 92.

[54] Strabo, The Geography of Strabo, trans. H. L. Jones (London: Wm. Heinemann Ltd., 1917-1933), 8 vols.

[55] R. P. Bilan, University of Toronto Quarterly, "Canadian Literature," ed. W. J. Keith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), Summer 1980.

[56] Jeffries, "A Crust for the Critics," 78.

[57] Jonathon Swift, "A Description of a City Shower," The Norton Anthology of English Literature.

[58] Tim Struthers, "The Mind of the Artist: The Soul of the Place," Essays on Canadian Writing, 11 (Fall 1976), 93.

[59] George Woodcock, "Fantasy Island," Saturday Night, October 1981, p. 60.

[60] Woodcock, p. 60.

[61] Jack Hodgins, "Change of Scenery," Small Wonders: New Stories by Twelve Distinguished Canadian Authors, ed. Robert Weaver (Toronto: CBC Enterprises, 1982), p. 33. All further references will be to this edition and will be cited in the text using the format ("CS," 33).

[62] Jack Hodgins, "In the Museum of Evil," Journal of Canadian Fiction 3 (Winter 1974), 6. All further references will be to this edition and will be cited in the text using the format ("IME," 6).

[63] Jeffrey, "Jack Hodgins and the Island Mind," 75.

[64] Gerald A. Larue, Ancient Myth and Modern Man (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975), p. 112.

[65] Bakhtin, pp. 122-126.

[66] Bakhtin, p. 107.

[67] Prof. D. Arnason, St. John's College, University of Manitoba, November 3, 1984.

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