

A STUDY OF THE SATIRIC ATTITUDE

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Carolyn E. Prescott

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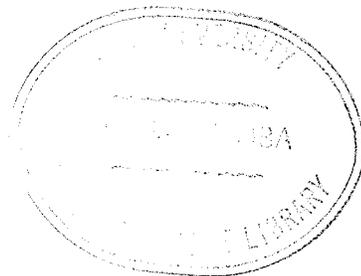


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INTRODUCTION

This thesis constitutes an attempt to present a description of satire, not as a literary mode, but as an attitude. It is in no way intended to be a history of the development of English satire, nor yet an examination of the techniques and devices involved in satiric composition. To present an exhaustive account of the various devices, such as irony, distortion, exaggeration, or to study the development of the different genres which have proven themselves adaptable to satiric purposes, such as the comedy, mock-epic, travel book, or diary, would, I think, be superfluous. Most critics are agreed as to the different marks of satire, and would admit that The Alchemist, Gulliver's Travels, and Don Juan are all satiric, in spite of the fact that each is in a different form. The quarrel arises concerning the motivating attitude of the satirist. In other words, there is agreement that these works are satires, but disagreement as to why they are.

The history of English literary criticism has been marked by a tendency to look upon the satirist with suspicion, and by a hesitancy to admit him into the ranks of the true artist. His work is denied both ethical and aesthetic justification, and is rather regarded as the results of either personal spite or psychological malfunction, or both. While this attitude was particularly prevalent during the ascendancy of nineteenth century romanticism,¹ it was not by any means an innovation, nor is it wholly extinguished today, as Gilbert Highet's Anatomy of Satire indicates:

...the satirist always asserts that he would be happy if he heard his victim had, in tears and self-abasement, permanently reformed; but he would in fact be rather better pleased if the fellow were pelted with garbage and ridden out of town on a rail. Satire is the literary equivalent of a bucket of tar and a sack of feathers.²

Indeed, the advent of Freudian psychology served, if anything to fortify this position, and the vindictiveness which Hight sees as the basic motivation of the satirist is explained in terms of neurotic or psychotic tendencies.³ This kind of criticism is in many ways an outgrowth of the nineteenth century habit of viewing literary creations (and, by implication, their creators) as though they were living in the nineteenth century. The difference is that whereas the Victorians tended to look upon these creations and the author in terms of family, education, and "breeding", the psychoanalytic school of criticism regards the creations as manifestations of the artist's mental health, judged solely according to twentieth century norms. Both schools run the obvious risk of misinterpretation through ignorance of the social and literary codes and conventions which inform the work in question, but of the two, the modern one holds the more danger for the twentieth century student. It has become fashionable to ridicule the nineteenth century in general, to scoff at Victorian "prudery" and "puritanism" and to dismiss as "quaint" and "old-fashioned" many of its most sacred precepts. Thus it becomes easy to chuckle condescendingly when Bradley asks "How many children had Lady MacBeth?" However, in an era that has a fixation about fixations and a neurosis about neurotics, it is more difficult to separate sound psychological commentary from pseudo-scientific case histories. The psychologists-cum-literary critics have the advantage of language over their predecessors: a difficult

and highly technical terminology with which to cloak particular dislikes in seeming scientific objectivity. It is not difficult, when reading nineteenth century criticism, to distinguish the wounded sense of propriety which gives rise to the castigation of satire as vulgar, coarse, filthy, and generally ill-bred, but when the reader has come to expect every field, even literary criticism, to have its own terminology, as it does today, it is no problem to disguise personal animosity in high-flown latinisms and jargon, and pass it off as sound, scientifically detached scholarship. This is, I think, particularly true concerning Swift, a favourite target of the psychoanalysts, who have seized upon the myths of his "excremental vision" and "incipient madness"⁴ and embellished them with all the trimmings of modern psychological theory (and it is only theory). This may be illustrated by comparing a nineteenth century criticism of Book IV of Gulliver's Travels with a more modern appraisal. On the one hand, there is Thackeray's condemnation:

It is Yahoo language; a monster gibbering shrieks and gnashing imprecations against mankind, - tearing down all shreds of modesty, past all sense of manliness and shame; filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene..... A frightful self-consciousness it must have been, which looked on mankind so darkly through those eyes of Swift.⁵

Set against this the detached analysis of a modern psychologist:

[Gulliver's Travels] may be viewed as a neurotic phantasy with coprophilia as its main content. [The book shows] abundant evidence of the neurotic make-up of the author, and discloses in him a number of perverse trends indicative of fixation at the anal-sadistic stage of libidinal development. Most conspicuous among these perverse trends is that of coprophilia, although the work furnishes evidence of numerous other

related characteristics accompanying the general picture of psychosexual infantilism and emotional immaturity.⁶

In the first example, the righteously indignant anger and sense of outraged decency are easily discernible, but in the second, it is hidden in psychoanalytical jargon, and the passage reads like an excerpt from a case history. But whether Swift is seen as "furious, raging, obscene", or as having "a fixation at the anal-sadistic stage of libidinal development", the underlying sentiment is the same: both commentators think he is a dirty old man. He wounds their sense of what is proper and normal, and rather than seek for explanation in the light of eighteenth century literary conventions and popular taste, they take their own more delicate sensibilities to be the universal standard, which Swift has perverted. The second passage has a saving grace denied to the first, however; it is precisely the sort of thing a modern Swift would write if he chose to satirize modern scientific jargon.

In all fairness, it must be said immediately that an impressive volume of modern criticism has rejected all the outlooks described above. Recent studies have once again begun to take seriously the perennial plea of the satirist that his purpose in writing is "to correct the vices and follies of his age, and to give rules of happy and virtuous life,"⁷ and his art is being interpreted as basically moral, responsible, and reforming. It is this position which this thesis seeks to defend and explore, by means of an examination of four satirical works, The Alchemist, Gulliver's Travels, Don Juan, and Erewhon.

The choice of works may at first glance appear entirely random and arbitrary, and in one sense it is. The only characteristic which all share in common is that they are generally conceded to be satirical. However, in order to arrive at any true understanding of the satiric attitude, it is necessary, I believe, to cover as wide as possible a range in time, mode, intellectual climate, social milieu, and personal belief, in order to avoid falling into the trap of mistaking accidental similarities in these areas for defining features of the satiric attitude. In this respect I think the selection is justified. It includes dramatic and non-dramatic, and verse and prose satire, and covers a period of almost three hundred years, from 1610 to 1870. Furthermore, the variations in environment, situation, and personal belief are undeniable. Jonson, for example, lived at a time when the Copernican system had not yet been fully accepted, while Butler lived in an era which was still reeling from the shocks dealt it by Darwinian and Lamarkian evolutionary theory. Swift was a product of the Renaissance and neo-classicism, and imbued with the ideals of high Anglicanism and Toryism, while Byron was strongly influenced by the Romantics, and was himself a radical liberal with no orthodox faith. In Jonson and Swift on the one hand, we have men devoted to the maintenance of the Establishment, while both Byron and Butler appeared, at least to many of their contemporaries, to be bent upon the destruction of all social order. The differences which exist among the four could be examined at some length, but I think I have said enough to justify my choice. The selection, as I have tried to indicate, samples as completely as possible in the space allowed me the main-streams of English thought, society, and literary convention.

A few final remarks must be made before the body of this thesis is begun. I must repeat, first of all, that it is not to be taken in any sense as a history of English satire. The arrangement of the works into chronological order is done merely for the sake of convenience, while the fact that each is dealt with separately is in the interests of clarity. Secondly, I must make clear from the outset that my discussion will involve a minimum of biographical detail. This is not done from any lack of awareness of the importance of biographical study to literary criticism - I do not believe that any literary creation can be fully understood and appreciated in isolation from a knowledge of the life and times of the creator. The absurdities which result from the neglect of this area have already been illustrated by the comments on Swift quoted above. There is, however, the opposite danger of allowing interest in biography to distort and obscure the true meaning and value of the work in question. Thus, an unhealthy, almost prurient interest in the irregularities and eccentricities of Lord Byron led, for a century after his death, into a widespread disregard for his greatest poem which, if it was considered at all, was seen only as an autobiographical record of the poet's own misdeeds⁸. Recent studies, it is true, have tended to clear away much of this literary deadwood, and careful and objective research has placed the man in the proper perspective so that attention may be focused on the work, the results of which studies I have taken for granted in my discussion.

There is a second reason why I have avoided detailed biographical

study. As Aubrey Williams points out, there exists in dealing with satire, more than with any other area of literature, a tendency to confuse moral judgement with aesthetic appreciation:

In any satiric work, art stands in close and peculiar relationship with morality from the beginning. Such works appear to spring from a blend of the artistic faculties and of the moral attitudes, either real or assumed, within the satirist. The satirist, either in terms of biographical reality or in terms of a fictive personality, takes a moral position from which he lashes out at what appears to be, in the light of his own or his assumed standards, the vices and follies of mankind.⁹

This is not to say that we are not expected to be moved to some sort of moral judgement by a satirical work; if we were not so moved, the satire would be invalid, for it is, as I hope to show, the very nature of satire to ~~so~~ move. But we must be careful to make this judgement solely in terms of the work. Too often, the reader complains that it is impossible for him to take seriously what has been said about virtue and vice because the facts of the artist's life show that he did not practice what he preached.¹⁰ Thus it is argued, "Byron cannot have been serious when he demanded that Don Juan be read as a 'moral tale',¹¹ for he himself was a licentious profligate. And Jonson's apology that his pen 'did never aim to grieve, but better men',¹² can be nothing more than a feeble attempt to justify his attacks on individuals, for he was not a 'good' man, but a drunkard, brawler, and adulterer." But to say that a poet cannot write an aesthetically successful poem which is basically moral (and with satire, aesthetic success depends upon how forceful the moral is) because he himself was not morally perfect is on a par with saying that a painter cannot paint a picture of an

ideally beautiful garden because there are weeds in his back-yard. It is to avoid just such false judgements that I have dealt as nearly as possible with each work in isolation from the life of its creator, except insofar as such a knowledge is necessary to interpretation of the work. Finally, in order to keep the discussion within reasonable limits, no detailed inquiry has been made into strictly contemporary allusion, historical allegory, or personal attack, all of which, however interesting in themselves, are outside the scope of the present topic.

CHAPTER I

The Alchemist is generally acclaimed as one of the great comic masterpieces of English literature. Coleridge, as is well known, classed it as one of the three most perfect plots; Herford calls it "the most signal triumph of Jonson's difficult and original dramatic art";¹ C. G. Thayer, one of the more intelligent of Jonson's critics, declares that it is "unquestionably...one of the great triumphs of comic art".² But these opinions are not enough to justify the play's inclusion in a paper devoted to a study of the satiric attitude: to say that a play is comic is by no means to imply that it is necessarily satiric: and there are those, T. S. Eliot among them, who would argue that Jonson is not, in fact, a satirist:

Jonson's drama is only incidentally satire, because it is only incidentally a criticism upon the actual world. It is not satire in the way that the work of Swift or Moliere may be called satire: that is, it does not find its source in any precise emotional attitude or any precise intellectual criticism of the actual world.³

Insofar as Eliot believes satire to involve "precise intellectual criticism of the actual world", it is impossible for me to agree with his judgement. In the first place, Jonson himself certainly intended this play, at least, as a criticism of the actual world, else why, in the Prologue, would he state that he wrote not "to grieve, but better men"?⁴ Why would he speak of plays such as this as the cure for the vices of the age (ll. 13-14), as "wholesome remedies" (l.15) and "fair correctives" (l.18)? It is possible, of course, that the Prologue was thrown in only to appease the vociferous enemies of the stage who saw it as the root of all evil, but I do not

think that close examination of the play bears out this opinion. Along with more recent critics, I believe The Alchemist to be a conscious and brilliantly conceived exposure of the evils which plagued Jacobean London, written with an eye to their reform. I make no apology or defence here for this opinion; the discussion which follows is my defence.

The first and most obvious element satirized in The Alchemist is, as it is in Volpone, that of greed. But whereas in the earlier play the device around which the anatomy of this vice is constructed is the relatively restricted and aristocratic one of legacy-hunting, in this later comedy Jonson has chosen as the symbol of greed the more universal one of alchemy. The advantages of using alchemy for the subject, both for seventeenth and twentieth century audiences, are many. In the first place, as Herford points out, it was "perhaps the fittest subject then to be found in Europe for such a comedy...":

No other vulgar roguery of the day crowned its impudent brows with so imposing a number of superhuman pretensions, or gathered about it a robe so marvellously wrought with the subtle erudition, the daring experiment, the mystic speculation of the past. The alchemist stood with one foot in the region of the prodigious, which allured Jonson's burly, vehement imagination, while the other was planted firmly on that ground of human nature and everyday experience, which satisfied his humanist taste.⁵

By using alchemy as the subject, Jonson gains the further advantage of being able to show the universality of greed. In Volpone, the range of characters is necessarily limited by the device of legacy-hunting, for "only a more or less limited circle of private friends or privileged strangers could speculate with much likelihood on the testamentary favours

of a Volpone",⁶ and the central figure must himself be a man of wealth. The dangers of coming to believe that greed is a vice peculiar to the upper classes is mitigated only by the presence of Mosca. In The Alchemist however, Jonson is able to give a panoramic picture of London society, and in that way arrive at a satire of universal range. The gulls who come trooping to Lovewit's house in Blackfriars are from every walk of life, ranging from fishwives (V.iv.13) and a lowly tobacconist to a knight of the realm, and including one of the nouveaux-riches, a lawyer's clerk, a gamester, and the hypocritical Anabaptists. The protagonists themselves represent the lowest strata of society; Face is really Jeremy, a butler, Dol Common is a whore, and Subtle, the alchemist-warlock-astrologer, had been reduced to beggary before falling in with Face.

There is one final value arising from the choice of alchemy as the symbol of greed. In the alchemist and his assistant, Jonson has drawn the portraits of the archetypal confidence men, and by virtue of this, the point of the satire is as sharp today as it was for the audience of 1610. There is an immediacy about the play which is not sensed in Volpone, for while few of us have much chance of falling heir to some rich old man's fortune, we are all of us liable to be swindled out of our life's savings by some smooth talking "con-man" who ensnares us with promises of easy money, even though today he would be more likely to be selling shares in a uranium mine than familiars or a philosopher's stone.

The common vice of greed, then, as aroused by the specious promises

of easy wealth made by Subtle and company, is the universal folly examined in the play. It is by means of its universality, exhibited as it is in all manner of men, that the characters are linked to one another, so that all the figures can be viewed on common ground. Indeed, I think it may be safely said that, on one level, each of the characters is but an aspect of greed, cloaked in a different manner in order to show the various ways in which the sin may be manifested.

Until the relatively recent Jonsonian revival, it was a common-place of criticism to charge that Jonson's characters were so completely types that they were divorced from human life, or that, on the contrary, they were "so frantically individual, so rampantly eccentric, that they ceased to be human altogether".⁷ In actual fact, the characters of The Alchemist lie somewhere in between these two extremes. Although each of the characters is definitely a type, he is so richly drawn and brilliantly individualized that he comes vividly alive for us.

The characters of The Alchemist can be conveniently gathered into two groups - the swindlers and the swindled - the first having the function of active agents for bringing about the destruction of the latter through their own greed. All the characters are static, and there is no development, only revelation; but this does not mean that the characters are therefore only stiff, paste-board cutouts; rather, it is an almost universal feature of satire.⁸ The purpose of satire is to make us laugh at and desire to correct (although not necessarily in the persons of the work), universal

human sins and weaknesses. The interest lying as it does in the vice or folly, rather than in the figure, that figure must represent a type, and be individualized, rather than be an individual who exhibits the type. The reasons for this should not be difficult to perceive. If the satirist's concern is with the representation of vice and virtue (as I hope to show it is), then the characters he creates are only vehicles, or devices, for that representation. Behind their creation, no matter how entertainingly they are drawn, lies a more serious aim. The characters are intrinsically unimportant; it is only extrinsically, by virtue of this more serious aim, that they become valuable. The satirist must therefore guard against drawing his characters too realistically, against making them too perfect copies of nature. If he does not, then their individuality will supersede the moral flaw which they are meant to represent; the reader's interest will be drawn only secondarily to that flaw, and only as it relates to the personality of the persona as a whole. Perhaps this point may be illustrated by our looking at a literary character who is not intended as a vehicle of satire, George Eliot's Dorothea Brooke. The artist's prime concern here is with the character per se, and Dorothea's aesthetic value arises solely from the portrait of her character. Thus, although she is satirized gently for her moral myopia, that flaw is not the chief or only interest. The reader desires its correction, but for Dorothea's sake and in Dorothea's person, and he is so caught up with her story and the effects of her weaknesses upon her own life, that any wider application of that weakness to be the mass of mankind comes almost as an afterthought, if at all. However, as I have indicated, what is artistic virtuosity for a novelist like George Eliot is a failure of craftsmanship for a satirist. Jonson himself fell prey to this failure

earlier in his career. I think Thayer is correct in suggesting that one reason why the sentences imposed upon the rogues in Volpone have posed such a problem is that the Fox is too realistically drawn:

...unlike most of Jonson's comic characters, Volpone almost becomes a human being. He is vicious enough, to be sure, but his surface is so clever, witty, and engaging that his harsh sentence seems to be inflicted on a person rather than a comic character.⁹

Jonson does not make this error in The Alchemist. As I have said, all the characters (except, perhaps, Dame Pliant) are individualized to the extent that they are superbly comic and hold our attention throughout, but none passes from the realm of the comic type into that of the realistically individual.

Such individualization as there is is accomplished by two methods. In the case of the rogues, who are the types of confidence men, greed is always in the forefront and is the only motivation. The gulls are a different matter. Again, each exhibits avarice in some form or other, but each is also taken to represent yet another vice or folly, and in some cases, the lust serves only as a means to the end of satisfying these other lusts.

Subtle, the alchemist of the piece, is, like his compeers, the leech who works harder at fleecing his victims than most men would at making an honest living. He is indeed an alchemist, although not in the sense that his "clients" wish to think. His science consists of taking the base metal of other men's irrational desires and alchemizing it into gold for

himself. And, like the true scientist of the Renaissance, he is not content to restrict himself to one field of research. His raw material is all mankind, and his experiments take the forms of astrology and witch-craft as well as alchemy. He is, in fact, the arch-charlatan, who can play almost infinite variations on the single theme of the dedicated man of science. It is a tribute to Jonson's genius that he has been able to present Subtle in so many disguises without once allowing us to forget what he really is - a swindler, whose poses have as their common end his own gain. Subtle is a master of masquerade and dissembling, being able at one moment to convince Sir Epicure Mammon that he is the "homo frugi":

A pious, holy and religious man,
One free from mortal sin, a very virgin.
(II.ii.98-99)

who, as Surly points out, is the only one who can find the philosopher's stone. In Mammon's eyes, Subtle is:

A notable, superstitious, good soul,
[Who] has worn his knees bare, and his slippers bald,
With prayer, and fasting....
(II.ii.101-103)

and as long as Mammon is present, the alchemist takes care to live up to this ideal. But at the next moment, he is able to "deal like a rough nurse" (II.iii.89) with Ananias, bridling with indignation and contempt at the Puritan's doubt and ignorance of alchemy. Again, with the greedy but timorous Able Drugger, he takes the air of the masterful, all-knowing warlock, completely overawing the ignorant and superstitious tradesman, while Kastril he greets in the guise of the impatient and slightly contemptuous schoolmaster:

SUB: Come near, my worshipful Boy, my terrae Fili,
That is, my Boy of land;....
Begin,
Charge me from thence, or thence, or in this line;
Here is my centre. Ground thy quarrel.

KAS: You lie.

SUB: How, child of wrath and anger! the loud lie?
For what, my sudden Boy?...
O, this is no true grammar,
And as ill logic!

(IV.ii.13-22)

In all his disguises, however, we never lose sight of the true Subtle. He is presented to us in the initial scene quarrelling with Face, and is immediately revealed to us as a man of words, who tries to drown his opponent under a flood of verbiage and who draws back into pretended deafness when he feels that he is losing ground:

FAC: Why, I pray you, have I
Been countenanc'd by you? or you, by me?
Do but collect, sir, where I met you first.

SUB: I do not hear well.

(I.i.21-24)

His use of formal rhetoric as a weapon is illustrated again both when he tries to convert the heretic Surly by means of a torrent of alchemical jargon (II.iii.125-176), and when he seeks to make the Anabaptists agree to his illicit scheme of coining money by sketching the advantages the brethren will gain from it (III.ii.18-101).

Subtle is further characterized by his overwhelming sense of his own importance. Again in I.i., we learn that he believes his share of the work to be unfairly heavy (lines 141-143), and his exalted opinion of his own stature

is brought clearly before us by the huge conceit which he flings at Face when the latter urges him to lower his voice:

No, you scarab,
I'll thunder you in pieces. I will teach you
How to beware, to tempt a fury again,
That carries tempest in his hand, and voice.
(I.i.59-62)

This "fury" is soon revealed to be about as furious as a bag of wind, and is deflated with as little difficulty, and by a mere woman. Since his only weapon is words, he is rendered helpless by the threat of physical harm, and he collapses into complete submission before Dol Common's threat of strangulation (I.i.149).

I have attempted to indicate some of the ways in which Jonson endows his character with individuality so that our attention is held from first to last. But in order for The Alchemist to qualify as a satire, it is not enough that the characters be hugely entertaining. As I said earlier, the character is but a vehicle, or device, behind which is to be found a serious criticism of some facet of human existence. There is, of course, the obvious warning against the swindler, and the indictment of the greed of his victims, and of all potential victims, that they are to be fooled by anyone as patently false as he is. If Subtle were able to deceive all the characters of the play, this point would not be clear, but it must not be forgotten that Pertinax Surly is alive to the fraud from first to last, even though his attempts at exposing it spring from something less than ideal motives.

There is more to *Subtle* than this, however. It is necessary to recall at this time Jonson's much discussed classicism, his adherence to the so-called plain style. This is not the place for a discussion of this aspect, but I believe it is now generally agreed that Jonson's classicism is neither the manifestation of anal-eroticism, as E. P. Wilson would have it,¹⁰ nor yet a mere matter of literary taste. Wesley Trimpi's examination of the development of the plain style makes it clear that the proponents of the style were seriously convinced that the true function of poetry was to teach by means of appealing to the reason, rather than to persuade by means of playing upon the emotions,¹¹ and they accordingly waged war against the Ciceronians, or adherents of the florid Asiatic style, who, they believed, were guilty of allowing form to supersede matter and of appealing to emotion rather than to reason. *Subtle*, then, may be seen as part of Jonson's general condemnation of the rhetoricians. It is by words and words alone that the alchemist ensnares his victims, and it is obviously not to their reason that he appeals, but to their appetites; in this case, their greed for money. C. G. Thayer comes close to this interpretation when he suggests that *Subtle* is the type of bad poet¹², and explores what he calls the "alchemy-as-art theme"¹³. This is true as far as it goes, but the criticism implicit in *Subtle* goes far beyond a single poet's distaste for what he considers inferior art. *Subtle* is, I believe, the warning against voluntarism and emotionalism. He represents by implication Jonson's plea for the rule of reason over will and appetite. He is the Sophist, whom Plato, almost two thousand years earlier, sought to unmask as the prime source of inversion and perversion in individual and social life. That the warning still holds good in the twentieth century is amply

illustrated by the career of Hitler.

There is one final criticism behind Subtle's characterization, which arises out of the one discussed above. Not only does Subtle contrive to deceive others by rhetoric, but he himself, as Partridge so well points out,¹⁴ manages to convince himself of his own powers. This is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in his ragings at Face in Act I. He maintains that it is he who is responsible for bringing about the partnership, and reminds Face in no uncertain terms that the latter was nothing but a common servant before Subtle took him up:

Thou vermin, have I ta'en thee, out of dung,
 So poor, so wretched, when no living thing
 Would keep thee company, but a spider, or worse?
 Rais'd thee from brooms, and dust, and wat'ring pots?
Sublim'd thee, and exalted thee, and fix'd thee
In the third region, call'd our state of grace?
 Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence, with pains
 Would twice have won me the philosopher's work?

...

And have I this for thank?

(I.i.64-78)

In his rage, Subtle has fallen back automatically into alchemical cant, and appears to see himself, if not as an alchemizer of metal, then as an alchemizer of men. His art is as false as he himself, however, for Face does not remain alchemized, but betrays him with no qualms when Lovewit unexpectedly returns. Subtle is caught completely off-guard, and falls the victim of his own lies. Had he less confidence in his power over men, he would, perhaps, have been more sparing of his trust in Face, and less easily betrayed. Because he is self-deceived, however, he loses everything he had gained, and is turned back out into the streets in

little better condition than he was when Face found him:

at a pie-corner,

Taking your meal of steam in, from cooks' stalls,
 Where, like the father of hunger, you did walk
 Piteously costive, with your pinch'd horn-nose,
 And your complexion, of the roman wash,
 Stuck full of black, and melancholic worms
 Like powder-corns, shot, at th' artillery yard,
 ...
 When you went penn'd up, in the several rags
 Yo' had raked, and pick'd from the dung-hill, before day,
 Your feet in mouldy slippers, for your kibes,
 A felt of rug, and a thin threaden cloak,
 That would scarce cover your no-buttocks -
 (I.i.25-37)

The suggestion would seem to be that those who live off the appetites of others, who attempt to satisfy their own greed by means of false rhetoric, are as deluded as their victims. They are as much at the mercy of their irrational whims as those they cheat, and because these appetites are by nature insatiable, they are ultimately reduced to spiritual beggary.

That this is, at any rate, Jonson's attitude towards those whose god is money is made explicit by the following passage from Discoveries:

Money never made any man rich, but his mind.
 He that can order himself to the Law of
 Nature, is not only without the sense, but
 the fear of poverty. O! but to strike blind
 the people with our wealth, and pomp, is the
 thing! what wretchedness is this, to
 thrust all our riches outward, and be beggars
 within: to contemplate nothing, but the
 little, vile, and sordid things of the
 world; not the great, noble, and precious?¹⁵

Thus, Jonson has shown through Subtle's characterization the effects of irrationalism and intellectual irresponsibility on two sides, both upon those who are led into it, and those who do the leading.

The second member of the "venture tripartite" is the chimerical Face.

Like Subtle, he is the conscious schemer and despoiler of men, and is also part of the bait in their trap. He is the "satisfied customer" whose testimonials to the alchemist's powers lure on the willing victims. Insofar as he is a confidence man, he serves the same function as Subtle in acting as a warning against greed and as an exposure of the wiles of the cheaters. But he is, if anything, even more of a dissembler than Subtle. Whereas the alchemist plays only variations on a single theme - that of the dedicated scientist - Face can and does play a multitude of disparate parts. He is Captain Face, the hearty, good-natured fellow who is only too ready to help a lawyer's clerk to a fortune or a tobacconist to a rich widow. He is Lungs, Zephyrus, Ulen Spiegel, the humble assistant to the great doctor who is not above playing the bawd for Sir Epicure. He is the master-mind who plans most of the strategy for the rogues, the opportunist who will substitute Dame Pliant for Dol Common if it means an immediate profit. And finally, he is the crafty servant who betrays his comrades and dupes his master in order to save his own skin. Face's disguises are essential to the action of the play, and in this respect, he is a conventional figure. However, underneath his dramatic function lurks a more sinister aspect. Face never sheds his disguise to reveal his true character, for he has none belonging to himself, and is completely whatever person he happens to be playing. He is, as his name implies, nothing more than a face, a mask, through which we are unable to see. He is completely without honour and conscience. Even Subtle, when he and Dol decide to run out on Face, tries to justify himself with a rationalization:

To deceive him
Is no deceit, but justice, that would break
Such an inextricable tie as ours was.
(V.lv.102-104)

Face makes no such excuses for himself. He admits both to his former colleagues and to himself that his betrayal of them is completely self-ish, and even goes so far as to pretend that it was premeditated:

The right is, my master
Knows all, has pardon'd me, and he will keep 'hem.
Doctor, 'tis true (you look) for all your figures:
I sent for him, indeed.
(V.iv.106-109)

The only thing that mitigates our contempt for this final act is our knowledge that Subtle and Dol were planning similar treachery. Even Face's helping the other two to escape is suspect, for we are inclined to believe that this deed is not so much grounded on any real concern for them as it is by the fear that their arrest would lead to his own exposure.

It is possible to believe that, because Face manages to save himself in the end, Jonson is "on his side". Thayer, at any rate, seems to be of this opinion when he equates Face with the comic spirit and awards to him the final victory.¹⁶ I believe that this position is untenable, however, for if Face really triumphs, it appears to me that Jonson's exposure and criticism of the rogues is largely invalidated. Partridge comes much nearer the truth when he says that, although in one sense Face remains "the 'king' of the commonwealth of fools", whose subjects include even his master, in another sense the butler "has blown himself out of existence":

He too has come down from a Captain
to a butler, and is aware that his
part fell a little in the final
scene (V.v.158)¹⁷

The implications of Face's degradation become clear if it is related to Jonson's humanism. As has already been pointed out, Jonson's classicism is not merely a literary style, but involves an ethical code. For him, as for the ancients, true virtue resides in wisdom, or in the knowledge of the truth:

Truth is man's proper good, and the only
immortal thing was given to our mortality
to use...For without truth all actions
of mankind are craft, malice, or what you
will, rather than wisdom.¹⁸

Face, motivated as he is by greed, is ruled by his passions, and is therefore basically irrational. Because he has denied the supremacy to his intellect, using it only as a tool to feed his lust for gold, he obviously cannot be wise, or in any possession of the truth. In denying reason, he has denied his humanity, and is no longer a man. But because he has the power of reason, neither is he an animal. He is precisely what is behind his masks - nothing. This fact is emphasized by the wealth of animal imagery throughout the play:

The imposters are compared to mongrels, scarabs, vermin, curs. These, in their several ways, suggest animals which live on a lower plane than man, or insects which prey on other beings. The dog imagery occurs most often. Dol is a bitch, and Face and Subtle are mastiffs. In short, we are among the snarling animals that live on other beings, or on each other. We are in that world which Jonson creates so authoritatively - that ambiguous world which is between the human

and animal.¹⁹

The third member of the trio, Dol Common, is of more importance to the action than to the actual satire. The fact that she is a prostitute has more bearing upon the characters of the other personae than upon her own, for she serves as a focus for the lust of both her cohorts and Sir Epicure Mammon, and the fact that both Subtle and Face are in some awe of her is a nice comment upon their characters: "Dol shall hear of it" is a threat which both use to keep each other in line. The really important thing to notice about Dol is, I think, the utter lack of sentimentality and romanticizing with which she is drawn. She is anything but "the tart with the heart of gold". The lewd connotations of her name are obvious, and they are punned upon for all they are worth. After she has broken up the argument between Face and Subtle and restored at least a temporary measure of peace, she is praised for her good sense:

For which, at supper, thou shalt sit in triumph,
And not be styled Dol Common, but Dol Proper,
Dol Singular: the longest cut at night
Shall draw thee for his Dol Particular.

(I.i.176-179)

Her role in the confederacy is made clear without the slightest reticence; it is, in fact described with great gusto and relish, as, for example, when Face instructs her in her behavior towards Surly, whom they believe to be a Spanish count.

He shall be brought here fettered
With thy fair looks, before he shall see thee; and thrown
In a down bed as dark as any dungeon;
Where thou shalt keep him waking with thy drum,
...
You must go tune your virginal, no loosing

O' the least time. And do you hear? good action.
 Firk, like a flounder; kiss, like a scallop, close;
 And tickle him with your mother tongue.

(III.iii.41-70)

For all the obscenity of this and similar speeches, however, and in spite of the fact that the characters themselves are shown to be licentious, Jonson himself is never guilty of lasciviousness:

Such obscenity is very far from being aphrodisiac, because the ludicrousness and lack of taste both within the image themselves and in the relationship of the images to each other neutralizes any possible pornography. That Dol should 'Firke, like a flounder' and 'kisse, like a scallop' does not make her particularly seductive....Seen through the eyes of Mammon or Dapper, Dol is a heroine, and, like the prostitutes in Plautus's plays, can seem a heroine - of a sort - even to us. But she is not romanticized. The exaggerated absurdity of Dol as a Dover pier makes her whoredom ludicrous, not erotically attractive, nor even pitiful.²⁰

The merciless deflation of Dol's stature by means of indecorous and ludicrous imagery shows us clearly the light in which she is to be seen, and the nature of her relationship to the other characters. The fact that Mammon can see her as a great lady, or that Dapper is capable of believing that she is the Queen of Fairy indicates the extent to which each has been blinded by his vice. She also serves the function of ensuring that it is the greed of the rogues which remains uppermost in our minds. It is made obvious that Face and Subtle share her favours in common, and there is no hint of jealousy on either part, either of each other or of the various gulls for whom she is the bait. Indeed, it is her value as bait that is most important to them, and they are more than willing to subordinate their sexual desires to the more important one of making money. That this is so is also indicated by the ease with which

both agree to substitute the widow Pliant, whom both had desired, for Dol Common in their efforts to "milk" the Spanish count.

Dol's role as communal concubine has one final purpose, which is hinted at by her description of herself as the rogues' republic (I.i.110). This refers not only to the absence of jealousy, which indicates that Subtle and Face regard their somewhat irregular sexual relations as "the natural order of things",²¹ but in its wider connotations (for the Jacobean audience) of chaos and anarchy, to the unnaturalness and perversion of order which underlie the society of swindlers. This point is further enforced by the rogues' taking a like attitude towards their greed. Neither their lust nor their greed is thought of by themselves as being immoral. Dol is there to be used and the sheep are there to be fleeced. Both are facts, and no consideration of the inherent good or evil of the situation is ever made. The amorality of Subtle and Face is yet another statement by Jonson regarding the disorder brought about by the inversion of the hierarchy of the soul, i.e., by allowing the passions to tyrannize the will and reason, rather than directing the will and governing the passions with reason.

Although the imposters are apparently blind to the implications of their own greed and lust, however, they are quick to recognize both sins in their victims, and to use them to their own ends. But in keeping with their moral blindness, they never sit in judgement on their victims. Mammon's lust, the Puritans' hypocrisy, Drugger's greed, interest them only insofar

as these vices are useful to themselves. The singlemindedness of their inordinate desire for ill-gotten gain is never allowed to be obscured. It is otherwise with their victims. In almost every case, although it is greed which initially brings them into the alchemist's clutches, it is greed which is not an end in itself, but a means to another end.

The minor characters, and the weaknesses which they exhibit, constitute Jonson's criticism of Jacobean London society in particular. The satire has less universality, and can therefore be dealt with quickly. In *Kastril*, first of all, is satirized the nouveau riche, the landed gentry who capitalized on the dissolution of the monasteries, and who, "newly warm" in their land, sought to ennoble the family line by marrying into the aristocracy: *Kastril* has vowed that his sister shall "never marry/ Under a knight" (II.vi.50-51).²² *Kastril* is also the object of satire upon the countrified crudeness of members of this class, which they attempted to lose by flocking to London to learn the fashions. As far as he is concerned, "fashion" consists solely of disagreeing with everything that is said merely for the sake of disagreement. He comes to the learned doctor for instruction in the fine art of quarreling, and his greed becomes apparent only in his reaction to Face's glowing promises of the fortune to be made in living by gaming (III.iv.51-53), and his assurance that the doctor will see to it that Dame Pliant marries not only well, but wealthily (III.iv.100-104).

Jonson's attitude towards the trading classes, as represented by Abel

Drugger, is, if anything, more contemptuous than it is regarding the country boys. He dislikes them not only for their pretensions, which manifest themselves in Drugger by his desire to rise in the world by means of a successful business and marriage into the landed gentry, but also for their ignorance and superstition:

In the admirable character of Drugger...
Jonson has exemplified the side of alchemy which commended it to the plain, prosaic philistine who wanted to ensure his business, or to steal a march upon his trade-rivals by more 'scientific' methods than theirs. And the scholar's ridicule for pseudo-science is here compounded with the ridicule of the man of shrewd sense for the dabblers in science who try to make learning do the work of mother-wit and book-knowledge take the place of practice.²³

A good part of the ridicule which Jonson heaps upon Drugger is accounted for by the fact that it was from the middle-classes that the Puritans drew their greatest support. That David Garrick saw fit to play Drugger as the hero in the mid-eighteenth century, and that the satire today has lost much of its point, is no doubt due to the changing status of the merchant class. By 1750, the tradesman had become respectable (although there continued for many years a reluctance on the part of the aristocracy to admit that their money might have been made in trade), and Drugger's modern counterpart would, instead of going to the alchemist, hire a management consultant and be lauded for his sound business sense.

The third minor figure who is the object of particular rather than general satire is the lawyer's clerk, Dapper. Like Drugger, his greed is really secondary to the end of social advancement. Whereas Drugger aspires to be considered a successful merchant "of the clothing of his company" and

to be "call'd to the scarlet" (I.iii.36-37), to establish himself as a "solid citizen", Dapper longs to be accepted into the exclusive society of the young men of fashion, the so-called wits and effeminate dandies who waste their lives and fortunes gambling, whoring, and drinking. He comes to Subtle in search of "a great familiar" which will guarantee his luck at the gaming tables, but we are left with the impression that it is not so much the fortune he will thus gain which fills his dreams as it is the reputation of it, and the honours and delights that will be his. That this is Face's understanding of the clerk's character is evinced by the glowing future which he paints for him:

They will set him
 Upmost, at the Groom-porters, all the Christmas!
 And for the whole year through, at every place,
 Where there is play, present him with the chair,
 The best attendance, the best drink, sometimes
 Two glasses of canary, and pay nothing;
 The purest linen, and the sharpest knife;
 The partridge next his trencher; and somewhere,
 The dainty bed, in private, with the dainty.
 You shall ha! your ordinaries bid for him,
 As play-houses for a poet; and the master
 Pray him aloud, to name what dish he affects,
 Which must be butter'd shrimp: and those that drink
 To no mouth else, will drink to his, as being
 The goodly, president mouth of all the board.

(III.iv.60-74)

Jonson's attitude toward such a life, and toward those foolish enough to aspire to it, is amply indicated by the treatment which Dapper receives at the hands of the rogues. With incredible naivety, he is gulled into believing that the Queen of Fairy (as played by Dol) is his aunt, and he allows himself to be pinched, robbed, gagged, and thrust into a privy without even suspecting that he is being cheated. Of all the gulls, he is the only one who is not disabused of his belief in the powers of the alchemist in the end. He

leaves Lovewit's house in a frenzy of anticipation of the fortune he is about to win, promising to sign over his small fortune to his "aunt".

The most important of the gulls, from the point of view of both Subtle and the audience, are Sir Epicure Mammon and the Anabaptists, Tribulation Wholesome and Ananias. They are important to Subtle and company because it is from them that the dissemblers can hope to make the biggest profit, and important to the audience because in them is found general criticism of two vicious moral flaws.

Sir Epicure Mammon is like Dapper and Druggier in that his greed is not an end in itself, but rather is aroused by another need. His burning desire for the philosopher's stone is prompted not so much by the gold it will bring him as by the opportunities that gold will provide to feed his monumental sensualism:

Mammon is a Faustus of the sense, captivated by the dreams of exploring the utmost possibilities of recondite and exquisite sensation, as Faustus by the dream of boundless knowledge and power.²⁴

And just as Faustus worships the false god of knowledge, so Mammon idolizes gold, and is willing to sell his soul for it.

To the modern audience, perhaps, Mammon's fantastic sensualism does not mean much. He will be seen, of course, as a hugely comic figure, drawn with such brilliance that he almost seems the original upon which all such lusty sensualists are based. It will also be recognized that there is an implied criticism of the many commoners who, under James's rule, were

able to buy their way into the aristocracy, the knightly ideals of virtue, learning, and good breeding having been sacrificed in the interests of financial expediency. There is, however, a more serious aspect to his characterization which is again directly connected to Jonson's Christian humanism. Because Mammon has given in completely to his appetites, and will go to any extremes to cater to them, he is guilty of two sins. He has denied the supremacy of reason, and from the humanist point of view occupies the same realm of debased humanity as Subtle and Face; he has also lost sight of any other purpose to life beyond immediate sensual gratification. He is a materialist, pure and simple, who is so far from believing, as the Christians do, that this life is only a preparation for a future heavenly existence, that he tries to create for himself a heaven on earth. And that heaven, it will be noted, is one of complete depravity and perversion. It is one in which money is the Supreme Power and the ultimate source of all delight:

...my flatterers
 Shall be the pure, and the gravest of Divines
 That I can get for money.

(II.ii.59-60)

and one in which husbands and parents are bawds and prostitute their own wives and daughters (II.ii.55-58). Finally, it is a one-man heaven. For all the lavishness of his tastes, Mammon, we believe, would tolerate no competition in his paradise. He would set himself up to rival and surpass not only earthly monarchs but the gods themselves: he would show Jove a miser (IV.i.27). He is, in one sense, a miser of the senses, hoarding to himself the most exotic pleasures and allowing none to enjoy them but himself. Mammon, then, embodies Jonson's condemnation not only of greed, but

also of irrationality, lust, and blasphemy, and furthermore, all these crimes are contained within his very name:

According to the OED, Mammon, the Aramaic word for 'riches', was taken by medieval writers as the proper name for the devil of covetousness....After the sixteenth century, it was current as a term of opprobrium for wealth regarded as an idol or evil influence. Loosely, 'Epicure' meant 'one who disbelieves in a future life'. More particularly, it came to mean one who gives himself up to sensual pleasure....In short, Epicure carries with it a sense of atheism and materialism, just as Mammon symbolized covetousness, riches, and worldliness. 'Epicure', which comes from the Greek, and Mammon, which is exclusively a Christian term, unite to form a name which is at once a humanistic and Christian comment on impious wealth and immorality.²⁵

Mammon therefore constitutes part of the general indictment of irrationality, and is thus relegated to the same limbo, neither human nor animal, as Face and Subtle. Unlike Subtle and Face, however, Mammon seems to be guilty of the additional sin of conscious immorality. As has been suggested, the rogues are more properly to be considered amoral than immoral;²⁶ they appear to be completely oblivious to the evil of what they are doing. Mammon, on the other hand, is not so oblivious. He seems to be uneasily aware that perhaps the life he has chosen to follow is not morally impeccable, and therefore attempts to justify it to himself and others by reciting all the good works he will perform once in possession of the legendary philosopher's stone, which, besides having the power to turn base metal into gold, is also the fabulous elixir, the universal remedy and fountain of youth:

In eight and twenty days,
I'll make an old man, of fourscore, a child.

...

Restore his years, renew him, like an eagle,
To the fifth age....
I'll undertake, withal, to fright the plague

Out o' the kingdom in three months.

...

Meantime,
I'll give away so much, unto my man,
Shall serve th' whole city, with preservative,
Weekly, each house his dose,...

(II.i.51-75)

But even these rationalizations cannot be maintained before the fury of his passions, and his pseudo-humanitarianism is soon swallowed up in the erotic and exotic fantasies which his greedy, lustful mind constructs (II.i.34-94). His awareness of his sinful lasciviousness even becomes a weapon in the hands of the alchemist and his assistant. They make his lust the excuse for the demolition of the furnace in order to gull him out of yet more money, and he believes them:

O my voluptuous mind! I am justly punished.
(IV.v.74)

Mammon damns himself by this admission, for he cannot even offer for his sins the excuse of an underdeveloped conscience, as Face and Subtle could. He has committed the worst crime of all, both in classical and Christian terms - choosing evil even while aware of the good.

The final member of the group of gulls are the Anabaptists, Tribulation and Ananias, upon whose heads fall some of the bitterest satire in the play.²⁷ The reason for this is simply that they are Puritans. As such, they are sworn enemies of Jonson's, both in matters of religion, for he was at this time a Roman Catholic, and of art, for the Puritans saw the stage as a propagator of vice and depravity, and had been agitating for the closing of the theatres for half a century. In this respect, the satire upon their

hypocrisy and the avarice which it cloaks is purely topical. Jonson was bent on revenge, and took it by portraying the representatives of Protestantism as arch-hypocrites, whose garb of dull, sober piety is a blind from behind which they indulge in illicit money-making schemes and cheat widows and orphans out of their legacies (II.v.47). But the satire goes far beyond this, and comes back to the same theme which is the basis of criticism upon all the other major figures - irrationality. This is easily satirized in the Puritans by showing how much more important to them are words than meaning, as when Face and Subtle parody the catechism and so completely overwhelm Ananias's objections that the terms of alchemy are "heathen Greek" (II.v.20-44). The alchemical catechism is rank and utter nonsense, besides being a blasphemy of a divine service, but neither of these considerations enter Ananias's head. He is impressed by the form; the content matters little, and in any case, he is incapable of understanding what is being said. This perverse insistence upon outward material form or the appearance of things runs throughout the satire on the Anabaptists, and the irrationality which it indicates is again brought forth in terms of language and rhetoric, as it is with the other characters. Ananias stubbornly refuses to allow the alchemist to stand uncorrected upon using the word "Christmas" : "Christ-tide, I pray you." (III.ii.43) : even though he runs the risk of angering the already impatient doctor beyond all limits, and is in danger of having him wash his hands of them altogether - or so the Puritans are meant to think. Subtle's attack upon Puritan practices, made in the guise of pointing out all the advantages that the brethren will gain from the stone also dwells upon this trait. No longer, he says, will

it be necessary for them to "cast before their hungry hearers":

scrupulous bones,
 As whether a Christian may hawk, or hunt;
 Or whether matrons of the holy assembly,
 May lay their hair out, or wear doublets,
 Or have that idol starch about their linen.
 (III.ii.77-82)

To all appearances, the Puritans are no more guilty in their irrationality than are the rest of the characters, and it is difficult to see any reason, other than that of personal spite, for the savagery of the treatment which they receive from Jonson. They are the only ones for whom the rogues are made to feel outright disgust and contempt (I.i.163-67), and are alone in being dismissed with real anger and indignation by Lovewit when he dispenses his "justice":

Mine earnest, vehement botcher,
 And Deacon also, I cannot dispute with you,
 But, if you get you not away the sooner,
 I shall confute you with a cudgel.
 (V.v.105-108)

But if personal spite is the only motivation for the bitterness with which the Puritans are handled, then their treatment cannot properly be said to be satirical. There is neither "precise intellectual criticism" nor any moral desire for reform behind their conception, only personal emotions of animosity. Jonson's condemnation of the Puritans, according to this interpretation, is of the nature of character assassination, even though directed at a group rather than at an individual, and however entertaining it may be, has little moral or aesthetic value. However, I do not believe this to be the true interpretation.

First of all, I believe that Jonson's ridicule of the Anabaptists is not meant to be taken as particular satire on an individual religious sect, but must rather be seen as a comment on a general tendency of thought which Jonson saw, or believed he saw, threatening human existence. There is nothing to indicate that it is the Anabaptists alone whom he is condemning. In all probability, the name was a convenient (and expedient) tag to hang upon characters who are actually to be seen as representatives of all Puritans regardless of particular sect. Nor are the historical doctrines of the Puritans, and the implications of these doctrines, of prime importance. What matters is the construction which Jonson, as a Christian humanist, would put upon them. First and most obvious is the nature of Protestant individualism. It differed from humanist individualism in that the emphasis was placed upon the individual outside of his social context. To Jonson, this emphasis would appear as gross and dangerous pretension, rooted in a pride which sought to subvert both the social hierarchy and cosmic order. This is probably another reason why he chose the Anabaptists, for they explicitly denied allegiance to civil authority, a denial which Jonson would see not only as treasonable, but unnatural:

After God, nothing is to be loved of man
like the Prince; He violates nature, that doth it
not with his whole heart. For when he hath put on
the care of the public good, and common safety; I
am a wretch, and put of man, if I do not reverence
and honour him: in whose charge all things divine
and human are placed.²⁸

A second, and even more important point about the Puritans is that they are alone among all the characters in being anti-rational, as well as

irrational. According to the Catholic humanist interpretation of the Fall, the passions and the will were infected, but reason was not. Thus, post-lapsarian man, although not possessed of perfect reason (since pure reason is the proper attribute of the immaterial Intelligences), has at least the power of reason to direct his will, and with the aid of Christian ethical doctrine and the grace of God, the chance of reaching salvation. In other words, the Fall is seen in one sense "as an allegory, demonstrating the dual nature of man who is both God and animal".²⁹ Certain of the Puritans, particularly the Calvinists (and as I have said, there is nothing to indicate that Jonson distinguished very carefully between the different sects³⁰), declared that the Fall had infected all parts of the soul, passion, will, and reason. This being so, it was no longer tenable to say that the will and passions ought to be guided by reason - what is the sense in trusting to a faculty which is essentially depraved? - and the logical step was to a denial in free will and an assertion of belief in predestination. It is easy to see why Jonson, as a Catholic and even more so as a humanist, should regard the Puritans as his arch foes. Not only are they guilty in his eyes of irrationalism, and thus of denying their humanity, but they also propound this perverse doctrine as an article of faith. Their anti-rationalism is not only an affront to Jonson's Catholicism, but to his learning and to his whole code of ethics, which is based upon knowledge of the truth and by means of reason. In them, he would see not only a threat to his art and to individual morality, but to the whole fabric of human society.

The denouement of The Alchemist has posed a persistent problem for Jonson's critics. They have complained of the lack of justice in Lovewit's handling of the rogues, and have been puzzled by the roles of Dame Pliant and Pertinax Surly. Realizing that the play is satirical, and aware that satire implies the presence of some sort of ethical norm or standard against which to balance the criticisms made by the satirist, they have sought for Jonson's spokesman in one or all of the characters mentioned above. Dame Pliant is a problem, because although obviously not guilty of any of the vices which come under Jonson's fire, she is the weakest character in the play, both in her creation and in the part she plays. It is tempting, because of this weakness, to believe that she represents Jonson's unsuccessful attempt to mitigate the destructive nature of his criticism, and to accuse him of really being, even if unconsciously, on the side of the Devil. It should be clear, however, from what has been said about virtue and reason, that the widow cannot be the type of the good person. If she is good at all, it is only because nobody has yet ordered her to do anything wrong. She represents, in fact, what Milton was later to call a "fugitive and cloistered virtue", and her function is to reinforce Jonson's statement that active virtue is impossible without wisdom. Her utter helplessness before anyone who orders her to act, the fact that she is tossed around among Face, Subtle, Kastril, and Surly, and finally commandeered by Lovewit, all completely without her consent, are Jonson's comments upon the fate of those who trust to a blind following of the rules. Virtue without understanding is defenceless, and at the mercy of every unscrupulous opportunist who comes along.³¹

Pertinax Surly proves equally unsatisfactory as the moral norm, and attempts to interpret him as such spring from a misapprehension of his character. Herford, for example, attempts to equate him with Bonario, the "inconvenient honest man in Volpone", and tries to explain his scepticism of the powers of the alchemist in terms of honour.³² But in the first place, even if Surly were intended to serve the same function as Bonario, this would not make him the moral norm, for Bonario is guilty of the same moral passivity as Dame Pliant, and therefore, by analogy, so is Surly. Secondly, and even more damning to this contention, is the point that Surly simply is not honest. His connection with Mammon should be sufficient to indicate this, but if it is not, Mammon's own words about Surly are. In a fit of generosity, Mammon offers to bestow upon all his friends, Surly included, some of the wealth he is expecting to come into:

This is the day, wherein, to all my friends,
I will pronounce the happy words, be rich.
(II.i.6-7)

and just in case Surly should fail to grasp the magnanimity of this offer, goes on to outline all that Surly will now be able to forsake, giving us, in effect, a summary of the latter's career to this point:

This day you shall be spectatissimi.
You shall no more deal with the hollow die,
Or the frail card. No more be at charge of keeping
The livery-punk, for the young heir, that must
Seal, at all hours, in his shirt, No more
If he deny, ha' him beaten to't, as he is
That brings him the commodity.
(II.i.8-14)

On the basis of this revelation, it is, as Thayer says, "palpably absurd"³³ to view Surly as the one honest man:

Surly is a gambler who uses loaded dice and marked cards; he is also involved in the commodity racket, and is apparently a pimp in his spare time.... Surly is put in the same class, although on a lower plain, with the confidence man.³⁴

The fact that he is the only one of all the characters to see the fraud of the alchemist's claims need not trouble us. In his role as the heretic, he serves to keep the audience always aware of the truth of the situation, and the fact that his attempts to convince Mammon of his folly are in vain only emphasizes how blinded the latter is by his own lust.³⁵ Nor should his attempts to unmask the swindlers be taken in any sense to be honourable, for his motives are as base as any of theirs. As a professional gambler, he is in constant need of money, and Mammon himself indicates that his friend's fortunes are at a particularly low ebb (II.i.14-22). By unmasking the fakers, he hopes to win Dame Pliant for himself, and love for her is the least of his considerations:

You are,
They say, a widow, rich: and I am a bachelor,
Worth nought: Your fortunes may make me a man,
As mine ha' preserved you a woman. Think upon it,
And whether, I have deserved you or no.

(IV.vi.11-15)

He is, in fact, playing a confidence game of his own, and his rage at being defeated in it springs from nothing more than anger at the fact that he has been beaten at his own game and cheated of a rich prize.

The final possibility for a moral norm is Face's master Lovewit, whose unexpected return explodes all the schemer's devices, and to whom go all the rewards, both goods and widow. In the first place, however, his decision to keep all the goods unless the gulls are willing to present a formal writ

swearing that they were cheated (V.v.66-69), while perhaps no more than they deserve, smacks of something less than honesty and fairness. Even more important, however, is Lovewit's reference to Face as "my brain" (V. v.7), and his enthusiastic declaration that "I will be rul'd by thee in any thing, Jeremy" (V.v.143), for both statements indicate that he, too, has been gulled by Face, who is wearing yet another disguise, that of the crafty but loyal servant. Far from being the norm by which we may measure the others, Lovewit has shown himself to be one of the gulled:

Lovewit is obviously a person of more intelligence, even of wit, than any of the other victims, and when the victims return, he takes the greatest possible pleasure in adding to their torments, because he is now firmly allied with Face. Yet the fact remains that he has donned the Spanish cloak and married Dame Pliant, both acts by now clearly associated with folly. And since he has done this directly under the influence of Face, the implication seems to be that no one, not even the nominal lover of wit, is really immune to the universal disease of folly.³⁶

It would appear, then, that there is no person to whom we can refer as an ethical standard, and this, perhaps, explains why Eliot felt justified in saying that Jonson is only incidentally satirical. There is, however, one further possibility, and that is the play itself; Jonson has no need of a spokesman character because the play is itself his spokesman.³⁷ It was said at the beginning of this chapter that on one level, each of the characters is but an aspect of the vice greed; that it is by means of this vice that we are able to view them on common ground. This common ground is provided by means of the subject, alchemy, for it promises the satisfaction

of the lust for money to both gulls and rogues, and it is this, I believe, that provides the ethical standard we are seeking. It will be recalled that, in the discussion of Subtle's character, it was shown that he himself comes to believe in his own powers, and in his tirade at Face, speaks as though he had actually alchemized the butler. Furthermore, the disparity between what each character is and what he hopes he will become by means of the alchemist's magic show that they, too, believe him to have this power. And in all cases, it is gold which will effect this change. Gold, then, becomes the Supreme Power; it is seen as being able to sublime and exalt man, to make him over:

Man himself can be alchemized, money can give a man spirit.
In short, the alchemist (gold or Subtle) becomes a parody
of the Creator.³⁸

What happens, in fact, is that alchemy is seen as a religion in itself, or at least as the rites of a religion whose idol is gold. The whole treatment of alchemy and the gold-worshippers provides a kind of obscene parody of Christianity:

It has a creator and its catechism, its prayers and devotions. There is even a body of religious writingsThis religion has its mystical Trinity, too, which Face explains at the end of the catechism
(II.v.40-44)³⁹

The orders of angels are parodied in the flies and familiars which are a kind of unholy guardian spirits, and there is even a heretic, Surly.⁴⁰ It is this parody itself which forces us to provide our own ethical standard, because it forces us to question every single value put forth in the play:

When gold, or the power of producing gold, is spoken of as one normally speaks of a deity, we are expected to question whether this has any connection with reality. Do some people make gold their God? What is the sense of saying that man's

nature can be alchemized? Is money in any sense the great healing power of the world? Does the great god gold have sexual powers? What is the relation of business to this religion of gold? Is sex to some people a business? Is religion?⁴¹

In The Alchemist, Jonson has shown us a world where all these questions must be answered in the affirmative, and insofar as we are able to make connections between this and the real world may the play be seen as constituting a criticism of that real world. The obscenity and absurdity of the world of The Alchemist are exaggerated in order that we may fully realize the obscenity and absurdity of the adoration of gold in the real world.⁴² The play, taken as a whole, is thus a conscious and clearly formulated criticism made by a Christian humanist of the blasphemy, impiety, and perversion which he sees threatening both individual life and the whole order of human society, which society must, in his eyes, be founded upon truth, wisdom, and an understanding of the dependence of all things upon the Creator. The substitution of gold for God, the denial of reason, and the inception of a world in which satisfaction of irrational appetites becomes the end of human life could only, for Jonson, promise a return to anarchy and chaos, a degradation of human life to the less-than-animal, and a universe with "all coherence gone".

CHAPTER II

In comparison to The Alchemist, Gulliver's Travels has fared poorly in the hands of its critics. If there have been quarrels regarding Jonson's merits as an artist, there has at least been general agreement regarding the major targets of his satire. In other words, most people have a reasonable understanding of what he is trying to say even if they do not happen to like the way he says it. With Swift the situation is reversed, for while Gulliver's Travels is universally acclaimed as a masterpiece of satiric literature, no one can agree upon exactly what is being satirized. The old myth of the "gloomy Dean" writing the book to express his hatred of mankind has been largely discredited,¹ and it is generally realized that Gulliver's Travels is to be regarded as something other than the case history of a psychopath. However, there has been considerable controversy regarding Swift's position in the spectrum of eighteenth century thought. The discussion has centered around Part Four, "A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms", but the matter is directly related to our understanding of Swift's life and writings as a whole.

There are almost as many opinions of Gulliver's Travels as there are critics, but in general, the discussion has resolved itself into two opposing factions. On the one hand there are those who believe Swift to be an eighteenth century Rationalist, in the sense that he advocates the absolute supremacy of human reason and abominates the passions. By the terms of this interpretation, the Houyhnhnms represent Swift's vision of an ideal society, while the despicable Yahoos constitute his warning against

irrationality. Directly contrary to this view is that which maintains that, not only is Swift not a Rationalist but that as an orthodox Anglican, he is fundamentally opposed to any system of thought which sees the unaided reason as a sufficient guide for human existence. The Houyhnhnms, far from being the expression of an ideal, are seen as objects of satire upon Swift's Rationalistic and Deistic contemporaries, and the Yahoos, while in part a comment upon man's basic irrationality, are also a part of this satire.

Of these two interpretations it is the latter which I believe to be more correct, and I must point out that in the discussion which follows, the results of the research of Ehrenpreis² and Williams³, the major proponents of the theory, are taken largely for granted. My aim in this chapter is not to prove that Swift was an anti-Rationalist Anglican, but to examine Gulliver's Travels as a work written by such a person. I hope to show that only when the work is so interpreted is it possible to apprehend the underlying coherence and consistency of thought, tone, and structure which we have a right to expect from any work which is called a masterpiece. Before I begin my examination, however, it might be well to advance some reasons for my rejection of the interpretation first mentioned. Its most important proponents are adamant in their stand, a fact evidenced by the vehemence of their replies to Ehrenpreis and Williams,⁴ and one cannot deny that the theory is the result of careful and serious study by critics whose opinions are not to be taken lightly.

My chief objection to the stand taken by people like Quintana,⁵

Sherburn,⁶ Leavis,⁷ and others like them is that it makes it exceedingly difficult to see how Gulliver's Travels ever came to be considered as pre-eminent among works of satire. In the first place, it provokes questions which reflect upon Swift's artistic capabilities and upon his intellectual integrity. I need mention only two of the most vital of these. First, if Swift is indeed a Rationalist, and the Houyhnhnms are the embodiment of his ideal, how are we to understand his relationship to Gulliver? He obviously cannot be seen as one with his creation - to make such an equation inevitably leads back to the nineteenth century portrait of the mad Dean. The critics who subscribe to the view of Swift as a Rationalist are apparently aware of this, and for the most part take the stand that Gulliver is a mouthpiece for Swift's ideas who himself is satirized for his over-bearing pride. This is an unsatisfactory solution, however, for it immediately poses the question of how we are to distinguish between Gulliver as vehicle and Gulliver as object of satire. Furthermore, it casts doubt upon Swift's control of his subject matter in the last two chapters of Part Four. One would think that, if Swift were a Rationalist, he would sympathize with Gulliver's adoration of the Houyhnhnms and attempts to emulate them, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to see even a shred of sympathy in the handling of the final chapters. Gulliver's boorish condescension towards the kindly Don Pedro is contemptible, and the picture of the once sane and reasonable Lemuel trotting around the English countryside, neighing in his speech and spending most of his time in the company of a pair of stallions causes only derisive laughter. If, indeed, the reader is intended to feel a certain sympathy for Gulliver's

ideals, for his repudiation of irrational man, then one can only think that Swift's powers have failed him, and that his sense of the ridiculous has been wrongly allowed to obscure the point he is trying to make.

The second major question which the theory raises is equally difficult to answer, and is even more damaging to our conception of Swift as a master satirist. Critic upon critic has noted the coldness with which the Houyhnhnms are drawn, and has remarked on their unattractiveness to the average reader. Quintana has tried to account for this phenomenon by saying that "ideal civilization as conceived by Swift is an emotionless thing."⁸ This would be a sufficient explanation were it not for one thing, and that is the presence in the work of at least three other characters who are outstanding for their warmth, compassion and human affection, namely Glumdalclitch, her Monarch, and Don Pedro de Mendez. It is almost inevitable that we compare these three with the coldly reasonable Houyhnhnms, and that the Houyhnhnms suffer by the comparison. Tuveson has remarked upon this comparison and related it to a known fact of Swift's life:

The friendship and benevolence of the Houyhnhnms, so rational and so cold, is very different from the pity and love which, for example, the 'little' Glumdalclitch shows for Gulliver among the Brobdingnagians. It is difficult to believe that Swift, who showed such a strong attachment to his friendships, could seriously have expected us to admire the complete lack of affection in a human sense among the Houyhnhnms.⁹

While it is true that inferences from biography are always suspect, this is one case in which the inference appears justified by the work under

discussion. Even discounting the fact of Swift's many and enduring friendships, it is difficult to believe that we are meant to admire the dispassionate Houyhnhnms. If we are, then Swift has blundered a second time in including the three human characters mentioned above. It is only natural to expect that any artist will, in presenting an ideal, attempt to make it as attractive as possible, particularly if that ideal is also a standard which we are meant to emulate. But by endowing Glumdalclitch, the King, and Don Pedro with such attractively human generosity and compassion, Swift has only drawn attention to the lack of these qualities in the Houyhnhnms. In the face of this situation it seems to me that we are left with only two alternatives. Either Swift has failed in his presentation of the Houyhnhnms, a point which leads us to suspect that there is a fatal discrepancy between his conscious intellect and unconscious inclinations, or he is not really on the side of the Houyhnhnms at all. As I hope to show, the latter alternative is the more satisfactory, for it not only vindicates Swift from the accusation that he has vitiated the whole point of his satire through artistic ineptitude, but also greatly enhances the overall meaning and quality of the work.

In view of these problems, why have the proponents of the theory which raises them been so reluctant to accept an interpretation which resolves them? Part of their stubbornness is no doubt due to a very human unwillingness to admit that they are wrong, but besides that I think that their attitude can be explained as being caused by a serious misunderstanding of both the intellectual climate of Swift's time and of

traditional Anglican thought. In the first place, these critics have apparently assumed that since it was the ideas of man's basic rationality, innate goodness, and potential perfectibility which triumphed, Swift must have subscribed to them. They forget that any new trend of thought displaces an older body of ideas, and seem unaware of the possibility that Swift could have just as easily been an adherent to the more traditional beliefs. This blindness may, in some measure, be due to the almost instinctual habit of considering the artist "ahead of his times", and it is true that in some fields, notably the education of women, religious toleration, and the whole Irish question, Swift was in advance of many of his contemporaries. But the failure to understand Swift's philosophical and theological opinions is due even more to the fact that these ideas constitute a mode of thought which is in many ways foreign to modern minds. Swift, in fact, occupied the unfortunate position of having his ideas become "obsolete" even as he was writing, and of belonging to a tradition which was largely discredited before his work had a chance to be examined in its own terms. That tradition is Anglo-Catholic Christianity. It will, of course, be objected that Anglo-Catholicism is very much alive, and in a sense this is true. It is my contention, however, that with the rise of the Rationalistic doctrines of progress and perfectibility a concept essential to the comprehension of Swiftian thought was obscured, at least in the popular mind. The orthodox doctrine of the Fall precludes the possibility of man's perfectibility in this life, and is anti-rationalistic in that it denies the possibility of redemption by the operation of the unaided intellect. Catholicism



demands that man use his reason, certainly, but it realizes that the essence of man is rational animality, and is realistic enough to understand that reason alone is insufficient to control the animality; the intellect must be bolstered by revelation and faith. The popular acceptance of Rationalistic dogma, however, aided by material progress, drove this whole outlook underground, so that even many who thought themselves sincere Christians came to live according to a basically non-Christian ethic. There was, as Tuveson says, a revival on the secular level of the Pelagian heresy which has plagued orthodox Churchmen for centuries.¹⁰ Nor has the fact that Anglicanism, in North America especially, has become the prerogative of the comfortable middle classes helped to rectify this state of affairs. This is one reason, I believe, that many people see no inconsistency in presenting Swift as both an Anglican divine and a believer in the unchallenged supremacy of human reason.

A second reason for the refusal of many critics to concede that Swift's Anglicanism has any bearing upon his non-religious writings is also to be traced to the ambiguous role which the Christian Church plays in the modern world. Whether we admit it or not, Christian morality no longer has much relevance to secular life, and the great ethical system which should be a living part of the faith has been largely lost from sight. Thus the critics see no difficulty in presenting us with a man who spent half his days as a devout and conscientious clergyman and the other half writing books and pamphlets the contents of which are utterly

divorced from the faith he practiced. Quintana's answer to Ehrenpreis's

"The Origins of Guliver's Travels" is typical of this attitude:

In Part IV, Swift was not expounding the grounds of Christian belief; he was writing a great satire, the chief theme of which is the moral dualism of man,...

This remark is objectionable first of all because it suggests that Christian belief and satire are somehow incompatible. Secondly, and more serious, it evidences an ignorance for the whole tradition of Christian ethics, a central theme of which is precisely Quintana's "moral dualism of man". Quintana and those like him seem to have forgotten that there is more to Christianity than revelation and ritual, that it also involves an ethical doctrine - the ethic of love, if you wish - by which man must live to realize the promises of revelation. The implication that "the grounds of Christian belief" and the theme of "the moral dualism of man" are antithetical is a questionable one, to say the least, and would seem to constitute a denial of Christian ethical teaching from St. Paul, through Augustine and Aquinas, to the Reformation. One need only look at the concept of man which forms the basis of this teaching to realize that there is nothing at all strange in an avowed Anglican's writing a book which examines the composite nature of man, and which advocates the necessity of faith to stabilize the precarious balance of reason and passion. Indeed, the only oddity would be if this theme were ignored.

These, then, are the chief difficulties which the interpretation of

Swift as a Rationalist raises. I hope that I may be excused for having dealt with them at such length, but I believe such a step to be necessary both to justify my rejection of the theory and to give some idea of the light in which I have chosen to understand Gulliver's Travels, that is, as a satire directed in part against Rationalistic optimism and Deism. In the discussion which follows, I have made no attempt to present a complete analysis of the work, for such an undertaking could not be accomplished in a single chapter. Rather, I have chosen to examine what I conceive to be the major problem of the work, that is, the characterization of Lemuel Gulliver. Until it is understood what Gulliver is meant to represent, and what his relationship is to Swift, it is difficult to come to terms with the allegory of Part IV, and ultimately, therefore, to understand the point which the work as a whole is intended to make.

An attempt was made in the first chapter of this thesis to delineate the nature of satiric characterization. In that attempt it was suggested that the personae of satire are almost necessarily types who are individualized, rather than individuals who exhibit a type. Although on first reading Gulliver's Travels it may appear that Gulliver is an exception to this general rule, I do not believe that it is actually so. Gulliver is probably unique in the history of English satire, but I do not think that his uniqueness can be explained by saying that he is not a type. The difference which exists between Gulliver and characters like those of The Alchemist is rather that whereas the latter are static, remaining

essentially unmodified from beginning to end, the former grows and develops in the course of his travels:

He is a fully rendered, objective, dramatic character, no more to be identified with Swift than Shylock with Shakespeare. This character acts and is acted upon; he changes, he grows in the course of his adventures. Like King Lear, he begins in simplicity, grows into sophistication, and ends in madness. Unlike King Lear he is never cured.¹²

The clue to the difference between Gulliver and someone like Subtle is to be found in the words "acted upon". Gulliver is a type as surely as Subtle, but whereas Jonson is content to contrive circumstances which degrade and ridicule his creation while leaving him essentially unchanged, Swift has undertaken the much more difficult task of placing his character in situations which act as a catalyst upon the initial personality and alter it radically. This, of course, is the technique of any novelist who deals with character, but by adapting it to satire Swift has achieved an entirely new and striking effect. The situations into which Gulliver is placed are on one level, in fact, to be taken as symbolic of the normal course of events which the average man must almost inevitably encounter, and the straits to which Gulliver is finally reduced represent the effects of these events upon a certain kind of thinking:

...Gulliver makes his greatest contribution not as a simple mouthpiece but as an example of the disaster to which man can be led through a misunderstanding of his own nature.¹³

One reason for the difficulty which readers have continually

experienced concerning Gulliver is that he is not static, and not drawn by means of the standard technique of revelation. Confronted by a dynamic, developing character, they have decided that he cannot be meant as a type, and have chosen to see him as a fictive individual. But they have also realized that, because Gulliver's Travels is a satire, that individual must have reference to some external person or idea. Perhaps it was in revenge for the discomfort and uneasiness which the work has caused them that, for years, they chose Swift as that object. Even those who understand that to apply such an equation to the final chapters opens Swift to charges of misanthropy and madness have not, for the rest of the book, made the proper discrimination between artist and character, or at least it would appear so from the fact that Swift and Gulliver are referred to interchangeably in discussion of the rest of the book.¹⁴ It is only when Gulliver is seen as a type, completely separate from his creator, that the situation is clarified. The unwillingness of readers to do so stems in part, as I have indicated, from their unfamiliarity with the doctrines to which Swift subscribed. Furthermore, the type which Gulliver represents is not a conventional one, even in satire contemporary to Swift's. The stock figures of satire are those such as we found in The Alchemist, symbols of greed, lust, hypocrisy, or any of the easily recognizable vices and follies of man, as well as representatives of different classes, creeds, or professions. Gulliver, however, represents something which few people would think of as a type, even if they deemed it a proper object of satire, that is, modern man. In Part I, Gulliver is represented to us as ignorant of tradition, but hopeful and confident

of the future of his fellow man, benevolent, reasonable, generous, curious about modern science but otherwise unreflective, in fact "a potential Shaftesburian, in harmony with the universe".¹⁵ He embraces, almost unconsciously, a philosophy which to Swift was dangerously optimistic and unrealistic, as well as being a real threat to orthodox Christianity. This philosophy, in the form it was proposed by Shaftesbury, has been outlined as follows:

...the human being is naturally adapted to live virtuously in the universe, and if he fails to do so, it is because his training and man-made environment somehow warp the instinctive operation of the sense of right and wrong.¹⁶

Along with these views very often went a belief in a natural religion, and an insistence that organized religion and traditional Christianity embodied a mass of superstition which only served to confuse and muddle the rational faculty. For this reason, the Deism in which Rationalism often resulted was feared by Churchmen because they believed it to be destructive, "aiming, behind a screen of deference to orthodoxy, at the foundation of Christianity, or even of religion altogether.":

Deism was felt as a greater practical danger than atheism - though Deists were often loosely termed atheists - because it was more insidious, and instead of shocking the public into opposition by denying a God, proposed to divest religion of superstition and enthusiasm and show it in its native simplicity.¹⁷

I do not mean to imply that Gulliver may be taken as a full-fledged Deist, or that his position is nearly so well thought out as that of a man like Shaftesbury. Although Swift is concerned with exposing the fundamental inconsistencies and absurdities of systematic Rationalism and Deism, which

he does in Part IV, he is even more concerned with examining the whole intellectual and emotional climate in which the systems were conceived, a climate of optimism, pride in the achievements of modern man, supreme assurance in his future, and wilful blindness to the nastiness which even the most virtuous human beings at times exhibit. It is this body of ideas, almost instinctively embraced rather than consciously adopted, which Gulliver represents.

The basic features of Gulliver's character are established within the first few paragraphs of Part I, "A Voyage to Lilliput", by means of the brief biography with which he introduces himself. He is presented to us as honest, unpretentious, and good natured, the kind of person whom we instinctively trust. He is ashamed neither of his family, which is respectable but not wealthy, nor of the fact that he has had to take up a trade, and in his account of his decision to give up his practice rather than "imitate the bad practices of too many among my brethren",¹⁸ we detect a certain note of smug satisfaction in his own integrity. The biographical introduction has, of course, the function of showing that Gulliver is eminently suited to the occupation he has chosen : he has a useful trade, a facility for languages and some seafaring experience. Beyond this, however, it has a double purpose. It serves first of all to present Gulliver as honest, plain spoken, and trustworthy, an impression vital to the fictional element of the work. Secondly, it characterizes him as an eminently average man, of middle class background, a certain degree of education, although nothing exceptional, hard working,

affectionate, and generally appealing. This latter impression is important for the reason that if Gulliver was presented to us as being in any way out of the ordinary, or as foolish or vicious, much of the force of the final chapter would be lost. The tragedy which Swift sees as inherent in Rationalistic optimism is not only that it is unrealistic and impractical, but even more that it attracts and destroys basically good and worthwhile men, and causes a pitiable waste of human potential.

Because of the need to establish Gulliver firmly as an attractive and essentially virtuous personality, Swift has had to restrict the scope of the satire in Part I. The voyage has rightly been called "a merry one" in which "corrosive satire is largely outweighed by incidental comedy,... comic satire, and... sheerly narrative detail",¹⁹ but the reasons for the disparity in tone between this and the later voyages, particularly the second and fourth, has not been adequately explained. The tone of the sojourn in Lilliput is, I believe, intimately connected with Gulliver's personality. Given his initial character, it would not do to expose him to a situation which was strikingly in contradiction with his beliefs, for in all likelihood, he would not be affected by it. To confront the Gulliver of Part I with a Yahoo would be futile, for his genuine, although naive love of man, combined with his confidence in his own goodness, would blind him to the obvious resemblances of the Yahoos to his own race. In all probability he would react as did so many of his self-satisfied compatriots when confronted with some of the less endearing habits of primitive races, seeing the practitioners as interesting

from a zoological point of view, but scarcely to be considered as human, and certainly having no relevance to European culture. Thus the satire in Part I, mostly at the expense of the Lilliputians, is conventional in kind, dealing with abuses which even the most optimistic could scarcely fail to recognize.

The main thing to be noted about the satire in Part I is that the bulk of it is directed against social and political, rather than specifically individual evil:

The Lilliputians in their fragility perfectly display the temptations of man as a political animal, efficiently but ruthlessly organized for his own defense,²⁰ and too ready to see morality in terms of the state.

Thus, for example, the Emperor and Empress, as heads of state, consider themselves beyond any consideration of private virtues like honour or gratitude, and the affairs of the kingdom are conducted only in terms of expediency, with no reference to any standards of justice or basic humanitarianism. The air of amoral expediency is primarily presented by the two councils called to determine the fate of "Quinbus Flestrin", in which the only aspects considered are economic and political. Of the first debate Gulliver tells us:

They apprehended my breaking loose, that my diet would be very expensive, and might cause a famine. Sometimes they determined to shoot me in the face and hands with poisoned arrows, which would soon dispatch me: but again they considered that the stench of so large a carcass might produce a plague in the metropolis, and probably spread through the whole kingdom.²¹

Gulliver's laconic and emotionless reporting of the debate beautifully

captures the complete absence of human feeling and wider morality which Swift believed characteristic of most political manoeuvring. Nowhere in either of the debates is there any indication that the councillors are aware of Gulliver as a human being. Even the arguments against the sentence of execution presented by Reldresal, Gulliver's "true friend", have an air of cold-bloodedness. In pleading that the punishment for Gulliver's "crimes" be only blindness, he points out that such a sentence will bring honour to both monarch and council - bolster their public image, so to speak - and that, since the loss of sight would leave undamaged Gulliver's strength, the giant would "still be useful to his majesty".

Swift exposes, as well as the amorality of man the political animal, his pettiness and ludicrous lack of dignity. It is this theme, rather than the former, which constitutes the foundations of Part I, and it is in connection with the theme that the satire on Gulliver is really begun. Our suspicions about Gulliver are first aroused by his description of the court games and his report of Reldresal's account of the party rivalry of the Tramecksan and Slamecksan and of the religious warfare of the Big and Little Endians. The initial reaction to these episodes is one of mixed horror and mirth, horror at the thought of the welfare of a nation being entrusted to a bunch of acrobats, mirth at the spectacle of such pomposity, conniving, pride, and pettiness being exhibited in creatures who are a mere six inches tall. But as the initial reaction to these episodes wears off, we gradually become aware that they have also revealed

something peculiar about Gulliver. In his narration of the court games, he evidences complete blindness to the absurdity of the whole scene, and rather relates it in all seriousness, even professing a great interest in the tradition. Again, he makes no comment whatsoever upon the Secretary of State's brief account of the history of party factions and religious sects, either to Reldresal or the reader. All this is indicative of two things. First of all, Gulliver is unaware that any of these events is either absurd or vicious; an unawareness which, we suspect, stems from a naive admiration for anyone of rank higher than his. Like most simple optimists, he is unwilling to believe that those in whom he, as a private individual, has trusted for the leadership, guidance and advancement of the nation, could be motivated by base and unworthy desires for wealth, power and reputation. He would rather believe that actions on their part which appear strange or irregular to him appear so only because he is incapable of understanding the finer points of statecraft. Thus, when Gulliver is sentenced to a viciously inhuman punishment out of all proportion to the "crimes" he has unwittingly committed, he exhibits neither anger nor shock at the injustice and immorality of the court's action, only puzzlement at the severity of the sentence:

...I must confess, having never been designed for a courtier either by my birth or education, I was so ill a judge of things, that I could not discover the lenity and favour of this sentence, but conceived it (perhaps erroneously) rather to be rigorous than gentle.²²

His sincerity in this admission of confusion is not, I think, to be

doubted, in view of the fact that he goes to some trouble to excuse himself from any imputation of ingratitude in having fled the punishment of a monarch who had so graciously made him a Nardac. If anything, his anxiety on this point only goes further in showing that, consciously or otherwise, Gulliver believes the ruling classes to be above the laws of morality. In justifying his seeming want of gratitude, he forgets not only that the Emperor owes infinitely more to him than he to the Emperor, but also that, as he himself has told us, ingratitude is reckoned by the Lilliputians to be a capital offence:

...for they reason thus, that whoever makes ill returns to his benefactor needs be a common enemy to the rest of man, and therefore such a man is not fit to live.²³

Gulliver, however, is totally incapable of seeing beyond external appearances. Because the Emperor and his courtiers exhibit all the outward signs of good breeding, that is, dress and manners, Gulliver naively assumes that they are equally as well bred intellectually and morally, and therefore sees nothing strange in their being exempt from the laws of common morality. Indeed, as Price says:

Gulliver is able to recognize immorality only when it is divorced from power and authority. The tyrant's expediency is equated with justice, his indifference with clemency.²⁴

Were Gulliver's only flaw a simple naivety regarding the aristocracy, we would have sufficient grounds for suspecting the validity of his faith in mankind, but that is not all that these incidents tell us. We come to think that, even had Gulliver suddenly realized the truth behind the facade of gentility and refinement which the Lilliputian court

presented, he would not have been unduly concerned, or in any way disillusioned about his own country, but would have marked the pettiness and corruption down to the fact that Lilliput is a foreign country, with alien standards. Because of the difference in size, dress, and language, he sees no comparison with England at all, but only the outward strangeness. This is the attitude he displays towards the original, uncorrupted institutions of Lilliput:

There are some laws and customs in this empire very peculiar, and if they were not so directly contrary to those of my own dear country, I should be tempted to say a little in their justification.²⁵

His instinctive recognition of the validity of the reasoning behind these institutions is subordinated by his feelings that they are alien, and therefore cannot be sound.

Gulliver's dependence upon appearance leads us to a second point concerning his reactions to Lilliputian manners and mores. Because the outward form of the games and the labels of the parties and sects are unfamiliar, he cannot discern the obvious parallels between these and certain English customs, parallels of which the reader is immediately aware. He makes no connection between the rewards of the games and the English orders of knighthood and practice of awarding court appointments to personal favourites, nor does he realize that the history of English parties and sects is essentially the same as that of the Tramesksan and Slamecksan and Big and Little Endians - that in both countries political ideals have been obscured by foolish rivalry

and the spirit of the faith subordinated to concern for external form. Gulliver's lack of insight is, I believe, symbolic of the failure of Swift's modern man to realize that civil corruption cannot be explained as arising from the institutions of a society. Just as Gulliver cannot see the essential sameness of Lilliputian and Englishmen because they look different, so the rationalistic optimist does not understand that the essence of man is the same at all times in all places, regardless of the form of government or degree of civilization he enjoys; that it is not the cultural environment which warps his sense of right and wrong, but the innate weaknesses of his nature which warp his institutions.

At the end of Part I, then, Gulliver has been revealed to us as the type of "modern" man. He is appealing in his frankness, simplicity, benevolence, and fairness, although unremarkable for insight or introspective, reflective powers. But opposed to these pleasant qualities are the more questionable ones of naivety, unjustified optimism, unquestioning self assurance, and total reliance upon external appearance. Gulliver in Lilliput may, I believe, be taken as symbolic of modern man at peace with his world. The blindness which on the fictive level prevents Gulliver from seeing the ludicrous spectacle which the posturing of the courtiers presents, or from apprehending vice and corruption when it is disguised as civil authority, has reference on the actual level to the stubborn refusal of the modern man to admit

that there is any discrepancy between his rosy picture of man as innately good and potentially perfectible and man as he really is, ever was, and always will be. The voyage as a whole is Swift's exposure of the real foundations of Rational optimism, that is, a wilful blindness to the obvious viciousness and folly of man and an exalted view of his good qualities, coupled with a serious misapprehension of his true nature. Gulliver's actions upon his return to England can also be related to the Rationalist's false view of man. His care in ensuring the financial well-being of his family before he leaves on his second voyage would indicate that the Lilliputian ideas regarding the responsibilities of parents for children have made some impression on him, but other than this, it is difficult to see that his experiences have made any impression. Certainly they have not altered his love of his fellow man. This would seem to refer again to the Rationalist's habit of seeing and absorbing only the good, and to the ease with which the modern optimist can turn his back on what he does not wish to see, to the enormity of the rationalizations which habit and prejudice can produce. That Gulliver has no difficulty whatever in readjusting his thinking upon returning to England seems to indicate that, as long as nothing happens to seriously disturb the artificial order which the rationalist has imposed upon his universe, he will continue along his untroubled way. As long as he has a comfortable home and a considerable faith in at least his own goodness and rationality, he will be able to dismiss the aberrations from the "norm" which intrude upon him with as little difficulty as Gulliver dismisses the diminutive Lilliputians. Had Gulliver never embarked upon his second voyage, his life would have

run serenely and pleasantly to its end.

In Part II, "A Voyage to Brobdingnag", the situation of Part I is, as everyone recognizes, completely inverted. No longer is Gulliver a "Man-Mountain" capable of capturing an enemy fleet single-handedly, but rather a clock-work toy for a little girl and an object of amusement and entertainment for a king and queen. Furthermore, the perspective of the reader is also inverted, for while we inevitably identify with the giant in Lilliput, we are loath to do so with the toy man who is referred to as an insect, weasel, or vermin, and the sympathy which we felt for him in spite of his faults changes subtly to pity and condescension. Even those qualities for which we respected him appear slightly tarnished, for it occurs to us that it is really very simple for one to be benevolent, generous, and tolerant towards creatures who are one-twelfth one's size. What happens, in fact, is that Gulliver becomes a Lilliputian, displaying the same pomposity and ridiculous pride as the latter, while the reader takes the viewpoint of a Brobdingnagian. By a paradoxical twist, as Gulliver's physical size diminishes in both his and our eyes, his moral defects become magnified, and idiosyncrasies to which we formerly paid scant attention now take on a new significance. This is nowhere so evident as in the passage in which he tries unsuccessfully to defend the honour of his homeland against the criticism of the King. In Lilliput, although he exhibited a curious blindness towards the relevance of Lilliputian customs to English politics, it was fairly easy to excuse, because the parallel was nowhere made explicit. Now, however, the attack on English and European

institutions is unveiled, and what was before understandable, if short sighted, patriotism becomes ludicrous and vociferous chauvinism. He no longer refers to England in tones of quiet pride, but trumpets forth his love of country in terms which even sound like those of the Lilliputians, as when he describes his reaction to the Brobdingnagian King's comment on the contemptibility of human grandeur "which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects" as Gulliver:

...my colour came and went several times, with indignation to hear our noble country, the mistress of arts and arms, the scourge of France, the arbitress of Europe, the pride and envy of the world, so contemptuously treated.²⁶

He sounds as though he could have written the preamble to the articles by which he received his freedom in Lilliput himself.

As I have indicated, the attack upon English and European civilization is no longer implicit in the unconscious irony of Gulliver's remarks, but open and outspoken, in the words of the Brobdingnagian King. The bulk of satire, if plain spoken criticism may be called satire, is contained in Chapters Six and Seven and is climaxed by the King's famous indictment of European man as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." Although the King's remarks are important as regard's Swift's personal views on society, what concerns us here is Gulliver's reaction to them.

By the time Gulliver comes to hear the King's remarks on European civilization, he has already suffered fearful blows to his pride and dignity.

His hilarious (to us) misadventures with the marrow bone, the cream pitcher, and the cow manure have effectively reduced him to an object of amused derision for both the reader and the Brobdingnagians, and his attempts to salvage what is left of his dignity on these occasions are indicative of how he will behave towards the assault on his beliefs. He compensates for the terrific feelings of inferiority and insecurity which his size brings him by reacting as "little" men who resent their littleness have always done, by going out of his way to prove (to himself as much as to anyone else) that in spite of his size, he is brave, bold, and strong. Thus we are presented with the curious spectacle of a man who, on his first voyage, was too prudent to offer resistance to an army of six inch soldiers risking his neck against odds of unfavourable proportion to his size and strength. It is unfortunate that the adversaries in whose defeat he so glories are rats, birds, and insects.

Gulliver's position would be difficult enough for him to accept if it were only his body that was subject to ridicule, but he is not so lucky. The beliefs, prejudices, and illusions upon which he has built his life are taken one by one, stripped of their misleading superficialities, and exposed in all their pettiness, pretentiousness, viciousness, and ugliness by the piercing eye of the King. Gulliver reacts to this attack upon his moral and intellectual stature much as he does to that upon his physical being. His first care upon the completion of his report of the King's analysis is to excuse himself for having inadvertently betrayed the honour of his country, and to declare to his readers that only "an extreme love of truth" forced him to

record this part of his story. Then, with his next breath, he confesses deceit, offering as a vindication for his part in the conversations his attempts to distort and obscure the truth of what he told the King. There is no reason to doubt that devotion to the truth is what brings him to disclose this episode, for his fairness and honesty of the past in reporting matters dealing with himself have led us to trust his word. In view of his personal integrity, however, the stubbornness of his refusal to admit the truth of the King's analysis of European society is even more damning. He bristles with all the injured indignation of a fanatic patriot whose motto seems to be "My country - right or wrong!", and attempts to discredit the King's observations by a beautiful combination of knowing condescension and hasty rationalization. What the King says, while unpleasant, need not disturb us unduly, says Gulliver:

...great allowances should be given to a king who lives wholly secluded from the rest of the world, and must therefore be altogether unacquainted with the manner and customs that must prevail in other nations; the want of which knowledge will ever produce many prejudices, and a certain narrowness of thinking from which we and the politer countries of Europe are wholly exempted. And it would be hard indeed, if so remote a prince's notions of virtue and vice should be offered as a standard for all mankind.²⁷

He then compounds his folly by exhibiting exactly the sins of which his race has just been accused, and insults the King's authority, benevolence, and humanity by offering him the secret of gun powder, thinking he is doing the monarch a favour by giving him the opportunity to be "absolute master of the lives, the liberties, and the fortunes of his people". When the King rejects this proposal with horrified indignation, Gulliver can

only exclaim "A strange effect of narrow principles and short views!" The implications of his exclamation are obvious:

Here it is Gulliver who is really in the grip of prejudice, the mere irrational "opinion" of political expediency; what he regards as prejudice is in fact the proper human feeling of a well regulated man.²⁸

Gulliver's deflation to the level of the Lilliputians is here complete; we can think no more of him than we did of the Emperor's outraged indignation at Gulliver's refusal to seize the rest of the Blefusudian fleet.

The ultimate effect of all this on Gulliver's character is to lay the groundwork for his final misanthropy. His awareness of his size, and the acuteness with which he sees the imperfection of the Brobdingnagians destroys his previous convictions regarding the grandeur of the human form, a conviction compounded of his sense of his own strength and his impressions of the general beauty of the Lilliputians. He learns that beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder, and his shocked disgust at what he can now perceive prepares the way for the acceptance of the physical identification of himself and the Yahoos in Part IV. In the same way, the ugliness and horror which the King has forced him to recognize in European man are the seeds from which flowers his final concurrence with the Houyhnhnms' condemnation of men as worse than Yahoos. These effects do not follow immediately, however. His escape from Brobdingnag into the comfortable familiarity of home and family permits him to relapse, at least superficially, into his old prejudices. He drives his upsetting experiences underground, and is able, in a short time, to "come to a right understanding of mankind". However, the

fact that Gulliver experiences some difficulty in readjusting to his native environment hints that the damage has been done. He has been forced, as must every human being who does not live in complete isolation, to become acquainted with a side of human existence which he wishes did not exist. He has been placed in situations in which neither his physical prowess nor his moral and intellectual endowments have been shown favourably. The experience of all this is profoundly disturbing, for it is not easy for one to let go of the prejudices of a life-time, nor to face the thought that perhaps one's ideas of one's self are grossly over-estimated, and if at all possible, the ordinary man will flee back to surroundings which foster, rather than destroy, these illusions. If he succeeds in isolating himself completely from the mainstream of human experience, he will perhaps be able to repair the cracks in his vision of the universe, but if he does not so protect himself, the consequences can be disastrous, as Gulliver learns.

As I have said, the experiences in Brobdingnag do not take effect immediately. The Brobdingnagian King's exposures and his own visions have shaken Gulliver, but when he sets out on his third voyage he still has three things to which to cling, his pride in man's innate rationality, his belief in the progress which man has made and faith in his ultimate perfectibility, and his conviction that, even if there is evidence of irrationality now, it is not due to any failing of man's intellect, but must somehow be caused by the intricacies and pressures of civilized society. Each of these prejudices is destroyed before the conclusion of the voyage.

The Flying Island is no longer interpreted as being merely political

allegory juxtaposed with a comment upon arid speculators and idealistic metaphysicians, but is taken as a combinative criticism upon the divorce of government from practical pursuits and considerations:

The Flying Island is not merely a trope for science, it is also a mordant image of the concentration of political power in the hands of a clique remote from human needs, motivated by pure theory, and given to experiment and improvisation. Laputa... is a symbol of such government: it is controlled by madmen who govern scientifically, not morally; it is a flying island, and hence out of touch with subject territories, which it exploits and tyrannizes over by means of what we call today air power;....²⁹

The purpose of Gulliver's visit to the Flying Island is to destroy the naive faith he puts in reason. In the discontent of the Laputan women and the poverty and chaos which reign on Balnibarbi, he is given a vision of in what complete freedom from moral restraint and the free play of "reason" would result. In Lilliput and England, the government must keep up some vestiges of morality and concern for the public good, but in Laputa, the gratification of the intellect has taken precedence over all, and the results are horrific. There is also, I believe, some suggestion of what would happen to individual life. If we take the Flying Island and Balnibarbi as, in part, a conventional metaphor for the individual, what we see is the tyranny of reason. Given free rein, the intellect would, says Swift, try to divorce itself from the passions and soar to the heights of metaphysical speculation with the result that the passions, no longer governed by reason, would erupt in chaotic confusion. As an allegory of the individual, the Flying Island and Balnibarbi are a restatement of the Christian insistence on a balance between reason and passion. To destroy this balance is to produce what Plato described as an individual tyrant, a man divided against

himself, incapable of achieving even a small measure of lasting happiness.³⁰

In the visits to the Academy of Projectors in Lagado Gulliver's pride in reason as it operates in the physical sciences and humanities is also shaken to its foundations. We can imagine Gulliver as an Englishman of the time of Anne taking a great pride in the Royal Society founded for the advancement of scientific learning, but the experiments which he sees at Lagado expose him to all the corruption and futility in which excesses in scientific learning can result:

These projects leave an impression of uselessness, dirt, ephemerality, or death, . . . [conducted in] an atmosphere of aimless activity, distorted values, and a perversion of things from their purposes even to the point of removing all life and meaning from them.³¹

Taken together, Laputa and the Academy are the other side of the coin shown to Gulliver by the King of Brobdingnag. The latter attempted to make Gulliver see that man, in spite of his claims to being a rational creature, is in most cases governed by "avarice, faction, hypocrisy, perfidiousness, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition." The inhabitants of the former show him the absurdity, impracticality, wickedness, and wastefulness which result when excessive encouragement is given to the intellect.

As with his other experiences, these in Balnibarbi at first produce no visible effect upon Gulliver. His chief complaint against the rulers of Laputa is that they ignored him, and the only projects in the Academy for which he signifies disdain are those of the political projectors which,

however grisly the methods might be, at least have as their foundations reasoning more tenable than that behind most of the other experiments. But following right on the heels of these blows at his faith and pride in modern, rational, scientific man come two adventures which pull out from under him his last props, the episodes of Glubbudrib and the Struldbrugs. These two episodes mark the turning point of his attitude towards human behavior,³² and are the final steps in his preparation for the fatal acceptance of Houyhnhmn values.

The moral which Gulliver's interviews with the dead carries is that the facts of history do not lend support to the myth of progress and perfectibility, but rather give evidence to the contrary. The episode carries as well an implied criticism of the state of modern learning, which chooses to disparage the knowledge and wisdom of the past. The first instance of the lesson is given when Gulliver asks to see the Roman senate set beside a modern counterpart:

The first seemed to be an assembly of heroes and demigods; the other a knot of pedlars, pickpockets, highwaymen and bullies.³³

The lesson is repeated several times, on each new occasion more forcefully than before. The hordes of commentators on Homer and Aristotle are accused of "horribly misrepresenting the meaning of these authors to posterity"; Scotus and Ramus, the Scholastics who did the most to cause their own tradition to fall into disrepute, are refuted by Aristotle; Descartes and Gassendi are called into question. The whole body of modern learning is shown to be inadequate and mistaken. But Gulliver, a glutton for

punishment, is not content to let matters rest here. He continues his interviewing for five more days, watching his cherished illusions of the honour and nobility of the aristocracy disproven, and European history, in which he had placed his faith as a proof of the progress of man turn out to be, as the Brobdingnagian King had conjectured, "an heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, banishments." The cumulative experiences of his voyages now take their toll, and Gulliver makes his first admission of doubt and disillusionment as he tells us:

...how low an opinion I had of human wisdom and integrity, when I was truly informed of the springs and motives of great enterprises and of the contemptible accidents to which they owed their success.³⁴

All these things Gulliver could have learned from his experiences in Lilliput or by heeding the King of Brobdingnag, but his optimistic delusions and naive simplicity prevented it. He could not make the necessary connection between Lilliput and England, and his prejudices were too strong to be moved by the words of a foreigner. Now, however, he has been forced to see the essential viciousness of his own culture with his own eyes. Because he has lived all his life in the world of appearances, he is constitutionally incapable of refuting the evidence of his senses, and he can no longer hide from this aspect of human existence.

Gulliver has, however, one last refuge. Although he cannot deny what he has seen, he can blame it on the conditions imposed upon man by modern civilization, and clings stubbornly to the belief that were man freed from the threat of death and given time to ammass sufficient wealth,

learning, and historical wisdom, his reason would at last be free to develop to its fullest potential:

In each of these, given immortal life, Gulliver would wish to become supreme. By teaching and example he would prevent the 'continual degeneracy of human nature', but he has naive confidence in his own ability to achieve greatness without corruption. His conviction that man can be changed by history or example, or that with the gift of immortality man can achieve virtual perfection, is the dream of 'sublimary Happiness', as he calls it, given free range. All that Gulliver has neglected he sees in the actual Struldbrugs, who embody in their endless lives the whole range of human corruption.³⁵

Thus, by the end of Part III, the destruction of Lemuel Gulliver, modern optimist, has been accomplished. To say, as one critic does, that what he has gone through is sufficient to "shake the confidence of the stabest new man"³⁶ is to put it mildly. Gulliver's whole world has been shattered beyond repair. He has been shown the inadequacy of his philosophy, and stripped of all the illusions around which he constructed his universe. If Swift were content to show only the impracticality and inconsistency of the new philosophy, Gulliver's Travels could well have ended with Gulliver's return from his third voyage. I think it will be agreed, however, that Swift is primarily a moralist, rather than a doctrinalist, and that his main concern is not with philosophical theories per se, but with their effects upon individual men. Having shown how the normal course of human experience and a sound education would effect a typical "modern" man, Swift goes on, in the last voyage, to explore the most likely consequences of that man's new vision, and to show how the optimistic philanthropy which motivated him at the start can finally be turned into a

pessimism and misanthropy deeper and more hopeless than any a Christian could, in his most despairing moments, ever conceive.

I have attempted to show how Gulliver's personality has changed in the course of his travels; how his optimism, faith, tolerance, and benevolence have been subtly transformed into pessimism, despair, anger and misanthropy. All this is accomplished, basically, at the end of the third voyage. Two things remain to be done, and it is the purpose of the fourth voyage to accomplish them. First, Gulliver must himself realize just how radically his attitudes have altered, and secondly, he must find some new set of beliefs to replace those he has rejected, for not even the most ignorant and unthinking man can operate in an intellectual vacuum; he must have some body of ideas to which to refer his actions and experiences.

Having reached the point at which Gulliver is on his departure for Houyhnhnmland, there are to Swift's mind two possible directions in which a man might move. On the one hand, if he can recuperate from the terrible wound to his self-esteem and learn to balance the evil which he has suddenly encountered against the good he once saw, there is hope for him; he may come to learn that against the natural depravity of man may be weighed the promise of Christian revelation and the hope for virtue, perfection, and happiness in some future life. Once he has discovered the inherent weaknesses of the human intellect and its inability to maintain a proper balance with human passion, he may understand

that only by embracing Christian ethical doctrine and placing his faith in the revealed mysteries of Christianity can he hope to achieve even a semblance of real virtue and happiness. On the other hand, if the man is unable to regain his feet after the shock dealt him, he can only fall, as Gulliver does, deeper and deeper into black, relentless despair.

The reason for Gulliver's following the second path should not be hard to see. It is true that he has undergone a veritable metamorphosis, but in one fundamental respect he has not changed, nor can he. He still lives only on the surface. It was on appearances that his original prejudices were founded, through appearances that they were destroyed, and on appearances that his new ones will be based. He is intellectually incapable of realizing anything but the most obvious, and, because of his native simplicity, cannot see the shades of grey which exist between white and black. This is why he protests that he still has a great love for mankind long after it has been destroyed; for him to say that some men are basically good and others basically evil is something he cannot comprehend. He must see them either as all fundamentally capable of virtue, and shut his eyes to all the Emperors of Lilliput, or else condemn them as so depraved as to be beyond help, and ignore all the Don Pedros. This is the choice with which he is confronted in Houyhnhnmland.

What Swift is doing in Part IV is making an allegorical restatement of the point he has been making all through the book, that is, that man

is a mixture of good and bad, reason and passion. He now takes these distinct but inseparable aspects and embodies them in mythical creatures which he sets before Gulliver. The Houyhnhnms represent the pure reason which Gulliver at first believed to be within man's reach, and the Yahoos all the vice and depravity which he now realizes characterize most men. Given his propensity for seeing things in black and white, his course of action under these circumstances is inevitable. His bitterness and anger at having been so cruelly deceived by the apparent goodness of man erupts in a fury of hatred, and he pours out all his resentment and disappointment by equating the object of his former love and adoration, modern man, with the most loathsome, hateful beast of his experience, replacing them as his ideal with the dispassionate Houyhnhnms.

It is true that, for a time, Gulliver refuses to make the identification, and he resists the Houyhnhnms attempts to classify him as a "perfect Yahoo" much as he resisted the truth of the Brobdingnagian King's remarks. Gradually, however, his characteristic acceptance of appearances and, we suspect, a new version of his old admiration for the aristocracy, win out as the Houyhnhnm master insists upon both the physical similarities and certain resemblances in the habits of man and Yahoo. Gulliver, with his customary adaptability, comes to accept completely the perspective of the country, and eventually refers to the Yahoos as "my species". The final irony of Gulliver's development is that, even in his attempts to emulate the rationality which he idealizes

in the Houyhnhnms, he cannot go beyond the external manifestation, and so we are presented with Gulliver keeping company with a pair of stallions, and telling us:

By conversing with Houyhnhnms,... I fell to imitate their gait and gesture, which is now grown into a habit, and my friends often tell me, which however, I am apt to take for a great compliment, neither shall I disown, that in speaking I am apt to fall into the voice and manner of the Houyhnhnms, and hear myself ridiculed on that account, without the least mortification.³⁷

The worst thing of all about Gulliver's imitation of the Houyhnhnms is that, in his deluded belief that his knowledge of Houyhnhnm virtue brings him closer to perfection than any other human, he treats his family and fellow man with the same disdain and contempt as the Houyhnhnms treated the Yahoos. He becomes incapable of the very virtue in which Swift saw the only hope for the betterment of man's lot -

Christian compassion or charity, which is exemplified in Don Pedro:

For Swift, the best and most practical kind of goodness was not pagan virtue but Christian charity. Of course he admired the nobility of the great ancients whom he, in an age of classical education, knew so familiarly; but he has two standards of behavior, that of ancient virtue and that of Christianity, and he is in no doubt as to which is the higher.³⁸

The last question to be asked regarding the development of Gulliver's character is what the final development of his nature has to say about Swift's view of the modern man. Briefly, the answer is this. All that has really happened to Gulliver in his progress from philanthropy to misanthropy is that the pride which was once extended to all mankind has become inverted, and is concentrated solely on himself.

He is guilty of the worst form of the deadliest sin, that is, pride which manifests itself as a hatred of all other men and which is a negation of the Christian virtue, charity. He has turned from placing his faith in the material manifestations of progress to trying to escape it altogether by pandering to the immaterial principle of his humanity, his rationality. On this aspect of Gulliver's development Miss Williams makes the following comment:

Swift's fear and hatred of the mindless, the merely material, is everywhere apparent, but if surrender to matter is evil, so is the attempt to escape from it by whatever means. Both attitudes must end in deceit and death, for both deny the uniqueness of man, the 'mingled mass of Good and Bad' whose function is to wrest meaning from the chaotic matter of his own nature and of the world he lives in.³⁹

This, then, is the danger which Swift sees as inherent in Rationalism and allied systems. On the one hand it gives rise to a false optimism and a mistaken adoration of matter. On the other, it must lead eventually to a vicious pride, a loss of charity, and the denial of one's humanity:

Gulliver, once a normal, affectionate human being, concerned with the well-being of his friends, is now a solitary misanthrope, absurd and yet terrible in his self-concentration and his loathing of those he had once loved.... To this point Gulliver has been led by his pride in his unaided reason. He has become inhuman, losing the specifically human virtues in his attempt to achieve something for which humanity is not fitted. He is ruined as a human being, and the failure of his fellows to achieve his own alien standard has made him hate them.⁴⁰

By tracing the development of Gulliver's character, I have tried to show that he must be seen both as a representative type and as a dynamically

changing personality whose development in itself is of a type. To view him as such, I believe, removes all possibility of confusing him with Swift, and also facilitates our comprehension of the purpose of the book. Once it is recognized that, even before he lands in Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver is already potentially a misanthrope, much of the difficulty of Part IV is obviated. All that Swift is really doing in the last voyage, as far as Gulliver is concerned, is actuating that misanthropy, providing in the symbols of Houyhnhnm and Yahoo a catalyst to work upon elements already present in Gulliver's character. The knowledge which we have gained of the latter's mental and emotional complexion leave the outcome of the voyage in no doubt, and it also arms us against the error of believing that, because Gulliver chooses the Houyhnhnms as his ideal, Swift must also.

The satiric significance of the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos is by no means exhausted by their being allegorical figures for the two distinct but inseparable elements of the soul which Gulliver, in his ignorance, tries to separate. Of the Houyhnhnms first of all, it has already been said that they suffer in contrast to figures like Glumdalclitch, the King of Brobdingnag, and Don Pedro. This in itself serves as a warning that the horses are not to be taken seriously, but there are many other things to indicate that Swift's conception of them is satirical. It is possible to mention only a few of these, not the least of which is the fact that the Houyhnhnms, whom some people say we should see as an ideal, are really laughable.⁴¹ If nothing else, the spectacle of horses sitting on their

haunches around a table, milking cows, or threading needles must be seen as comical. I trust that it will no longer be argued that Swift, in presenting his horses, has lost his grip. There is no way to explain why a writer who shows such a keen sense of the comic and ridiculous in the earlier sections should have suddenly lost his sense of humour, only to regain it in writing the voyage to Laputa which, as it is now known, was composed after Part IV. Furthermore, there are too many other things within Part IV itself which make it entirely unlikely that Swift took the Houyhnhnms seriously. For example, there is Gulliver's remark that the Houyhnhnm tongue sounds very much like High Dutch.⁴² Knowing the attitude with which most Englishmen looked upon the Hanoverian court, I doubt that this is meant as a compliment. Again, there is the curious fact that the Houyhnhnms who, we are told, do not even have a word for pride refer to themselves as "the Perfection of Nature".

The Houyhnhnms are, of course, more than an exercise in wit, and represent the false ideal of the Rationalists and Deists. In presenting them to us, Swift has taken the opportunity to draw together the inconsistencies and absurdities which he has been hitting at all through the book.

Among the most important of the Houyhnhnms' qualities is their inability to accept anything unfamiliar to them. They refuse to believe that rationality can assume any form other than their own, and are therefore prejudiced against Gulliver from the very beginning. In this respect, we are reminded of the Brobdingnagian Scholars and their classification of

Gulliver as a lusus naturae : a freak of nature. Nor must it be forgotten that it is they, not Gulliver, who first make the dreadful equation of man and Yahoo. In fact, their lack of insight is fully as great as Gulliver's, as is their dependence upon appearances, and in them we have a reiteration of the criticism in Part I upon superficial thinking.

Of the actual doctrines which Swift attacks, the most important are those relating to civil and individual life. In Gulliver's accounts of English civil law and the Houyhnhnm's reply to it, Swift is on one level merely poking fun at a conventional butt of satire. But on a more serious level, he is showing the logical consequences of the Rationalist's "Rule of Reason". As the Houyhnhnm says, "nature and reason are sufficient guides for a reasonable animal."⁴³ The whole point, of course, is that man is not a wholly reasonable animal, and were the Rationalists to carry their doctrine into practice, abolishing all law and precedent, the result would be chaos and anarchy. Again, in saying that nature and reason should govern individual life, the Rationalists are guilty on two counts. First of all, all men are not created with equal rational faculties, and some must necessarily be told by others what to do. Even the Houyhnhnms make a tacit admission of this truth, in view of there being different classes among them. (It is notable, by the way, that the only Houyhnhnm who shows anything approaching human affection for Gulliver is a member of the servant class.) The second fault lies in the Rationalist conception of nature, for to them nature is "that which

works all things to perfection." To Swift, such a statement is tantamount to a denial of the Fall. Nature is not perfect, but fallen, and to state that the ills which plagued mankind are all because of the corruption brought by civilization is to fly in the face of the facts. It is all very well to say that disease is caused by perversity and sophistication, but how is one to account for national disasters like fire, flood, famine, and plague? These phenomena alone argue for anything but natural perfection, and cause as much human misery as any kind of disease.

One final criticism which Swift levies against the Rationalists has to do with the general solutions which they would offer for the sickness of society. The attitude which both the Houyhnhnms and Gulliver take towards the institutions of European society is basically negative, and the typical Houyhnhnm answer is that they are not necessary, and should be done away with. What the Rationalists do is equate the abuse of an institution with the institution itself; they would solve the problems of civilization by abolishing the very things upon which civilization depends. Swift's final answer to this contemporary infatuation with "natural" "unspoiled" man, the "noble savage",⁴⁴ is to be found in Gulliver's encounter with a tribe of real primitives after his exile from Houyhnhmland, who are naked, ignorant, frightened creatures who try to kill the European. Gulliver, as to be expected, has very little to say about them.

Although the Houyhnhnms are thus a restatement of Swift's views about

Rationalism, it is the Yahoos who are the real core of Part IV, and the richest symbols. They are a part of his comment upon the vision of natural man. Always the realist, Swift was keenly aware that Hobbes' version of the state of nature was much closer to the truth than that of some Rationalists. The Yahoos do not, of course, represent 'natural man', but only that aspect which the Rationalists would ignore. A second point about the Yahoos is that they make it impossible for us to escape the truth of human nature as Swift visualized it:

The most powerful single symbol in all Swift is the Yahoos. They do not represent Swift's view of man, but rather of the bestial element in man - the unenlightened, unregenerate, irrational element in human nature - the id or libido if you wish.⁴⁵

It is the Yahoos who give point to Swift's satire, for we cannot escape their implications. They are precisely that element in the human soul which make impossible the dream of the Rationalists, for that dream has not taken the Yahoo side of man into account. Swift is telling us, in his presentation of the two aspects of man, that the only way for man to ever fulfill the ideal of the Rationalist is to cut out the Yahoo in him and become another animal altogether - a Houyhnhnm if you wish, but certainly not a man. Swift's own solution to the human dilemma is neither so straightforward nor as satisfactory as that of the Rationalists, but it is far more realistic. What he seeks is a balance between the two aspects, brought about by the teachings of Christianity.⁴⁶ Any moral norm or ethical standard to be found in Gulliver's Travels will not be an ideal, but a compromise between the good and the bad. If we wish to find Swift's "ideal" man we must look for him in someone like Don Pedro, in whom compassion, not reason, is the ruling force. The reasonable thing for Don

Pedro to have done, after all, would have been to leave Gulliver to his own devices. As for the "ideal" society, the closest one can come is Brobdingnag. There are vicious people in this kingdom, and systems of law and government are necessary to maintain order, but it has a wise and benevolent monarch who refuses to separate public and private morality.⁴⁷ In Swift's opinion, this is the most we can hope for in the way of Utopias.

There is one final remark to be made about the Yahoos. In Gulliver's final delusion that man is a Yahoo who wears clothes, Swift is satirizing all those who come to believe that man's bestiality is what characterizes him. To Swift's mind, this is as foolish and as dangerous as trying to make man a purely rational creature. In fact, the Yahoos represent what the Rationalists themselves are in danger of becoming, not only if they attempt to cure the diseases of society by abolishing its institutions, but also if they should ever become disabused of their pretty notions. In all the book no human character so nearly achieves Yahoo-hood as Gulliver in his final obscene pride and hatred of man. Perhaps the best comment upon Part IV and upon Gulliver's final madness has been made by Swift himself:

...I tell you after all that I do not hate Mankind, it is vous autres who hate them because you would have them reasonable Animals, and are angry for being disappointed.⁴⁸

CHAPTER III

The problems confronting the student of Lord Byron's poetry are many and complex, and few of them admit of simple solutions. Not only must the real man be extricated from the haze of myth and legend which swirl about his name, but the poet must also be somehow separated from the man. Nowhere is this need more acutely felt than when one comes to study Byron's great comic epic, Don Juan. The spectrum of critical thought and personal feeling regarding both the content and form of the poem ranges from violent opposition through varying shades of indifference to outspoken admiration, and within these general areas themselves there is wide difference of opinion. For example, there are those who praise the poem as a paean of liberty and freedom, while others believe its greatness to lie in its comic satire. Furthermore, often the very thing which leads some to condemn the work is that for which others applaud it. Thus, while the attack on English manners and mores caused many of Byron's contemporaries to accuse him of gross immorality, even Satanism, it is this same feature which most modern readers see as the foundation of the poem's greatness. Again, the prevailing tone of colloquial loquaciousness has been dismissed by some as lacking in poetic imagination and beauty, and Byron's verse has been said to be to great poetry "what melodrama is to tragedy"¹ More recently, however, Byron's use of ottava rima has been seen as perfectly suited to his purpose, and that to which the poem chiefly owes its success.

Most of the areas of disagreement mentioned above can be settled to the reader's own satisfaction by reference to changes in social codes and literary tastes. There are two problems, however, which are not so easily settled, and over which there is still much discussion. I believe that it is necessary for me to make some mention of these, and of my opinions concerning them, because they are intimately connected with the satiric value of Don Juan.

The first of these questions concerns the autobiographical content of the poem and the best approach to an understanding of the work as a whole. Byron's life is such that there is an almost overwhelming temptation to concern one's self with sorting out the various tales of his marriage, love affairs, and political activities for the sake of the interest which these things hold in themselves, and because the poet is so obviously only a single aspect of a complex personality, interest in his life as a whole has tended to cause a neglect of the intrinsic worth of his poetry, or a desire to interpret it as purely autobiographical, and to study it only for the light which it sheds upon the man. In addition, the force of Byron's personality seems to have been such that it inspired either antipathy or great affection, but seldom indifference, so that such reports as we do have of his life are usually biased in one or the other direction. Thus, to the danger of reading the poetry only as autobiography is added the further one of doing so on the basis of information which may or may not be objectively true. Peter Quennell, for example, has decided from his research² that Byron was a moody, amoral sensualist,

and thus feels justified in dismissing Don Juan as follows:

To credit the poem with a moral or 'message' would be, of course absurd. Few works are more amoral in intention or attitude.³

It is equally dangerous, of course, to go to the opposite extreme and deny that Don Juan tells us anything about the man, or that the poem does not contain biographical detail. Byron draws heavily upon details and incidents of his life for material, and refers to them quite openly, or with only the thinnest veneer of fiction, as in the description of the character and married life of Donna Inez, "Morality's prim personification". But every poet draws upon his own experience, and what matters in all cases is not the source of the material, but the use to which it is put. It adds little to our appreciation of the figure of Inez to know that she was patterned upon Byron's wife; what is important is that the fictional character comes to be a representation of hypocrisy. Again, when Byron chooses to attack certain of his contemporaries he seldom allows personal vindictiveness to get the better of him, but shapes his attack so that it has general import. When, for example, he ridicules Southey and Wordsworth, he is moved as much by hatred for their politics and a suspicion of their integrity as he is by anything else. Similarly, his attacks on men like Wellington and Castlereagh are directed not against the private individual but against that for which the man as a public figure stands. Byron himself insists that we take the satire in this light in his Preface to Cantos VI, VII, and VIII:

In the course of these Cantos, a stanza or two will be found relative to the late Marquess of Londonderry

[Castlereigh], but written some time before his decease. Had that person's oligarchy died with him, they would have been suppressed; as it is, I am aware of nothing in the manner of his death or of his life to prevent the free expression of the opinions of all whom his whole existence was consumed in endeavouring to enslave. That he was an amiable man in private life may or may not be true; but with this the public have nothing to do:....As a minister, I, for one, looked upon him as the most despotic in intention, and the weakest in intellect, that ever tyrannised over a country.⁴

There is a second sense in which Byron's poem may be said to be autobiographical, for through it, we learn a great deal about his beliefs and opinions. Furthermore, his ideas are unashamedly offered in the first person; as Fuess puts it, "everywhere we read we meet the inevitable 'I'."⁵ However, I do not think that either of these factors makes Don Juan much more autobiographical than any other satire, nor do I believe that both taken together are sufficient to justify dismissing the poem as "a colossal monument of egotism."⁶ Any satire embodies the beliefs and ideas of its author, whether implicitly or explicitly. That, indeed, is the chief purpose for his writing. Those things which he satirizes offend in some way against his sense of truth and justice, and he hopes that by exposing them and ridiculing them he will in some measure contribute to their correction or eradication. Swift, as I attempted to show, writes Gulliver's Travels upon the foundation of his Anglicanism, and also includes in the work many of his ideas on politics, education, and society in general. From The Alchemist we learn what Jonson's attitudes are towards irrationalism, Puritanism, and different social classes. It seems to me that if we wish to call Don Juan autobiographical,

we must apply the same label to these other works. The only real difference between Byron and his predecessors on this count is that he is more vocal about his opinions, often choosing to present them openly rather than by means of irony, understatement, or exaggeration.

As for the matter of first person narration, I believe it to be more a question of technique than one of egotism. It is true that the narrator of Don Juan is not a fully developed persona, like Gulliver,⁷ but neither is he completely Byron. The talkative, witty, skeptical man of the world represents only one side of Byron's personality, that side which is suited to being the narrator of a comic epic. To see him as the whole Byron is to presuppose a radical change in the man who, not many years earlier, wrote Childe Harold. It would be nearer the truth, I think, to say that this other side of the poet's nature does not manifest itself in Don Juan because he was working in a medium that was not adapted to romantic self-searching or prolonged seriousness of tone.

The second difficulty which has plagued the study of Byron is a direct consequence of the biographical approach, and the effect of it is that it obscures or negates the satire. I have already mentioned Quennell's conclusions regarding the poem, and two further examples should serve to indicate the general nature of this approach.

Gilbert Highet, in his Anatomy of Satire, is among those who see a direct relationship between the poem and his life, or rather, who see the

poem as a written expression of his life:

By nature, Byron was a satirist:.... But he was also a romancer, with a soft and ardent heart; and something of a hero, with a taste for bold adventure. The result was that, averse as always to planning, he wrote a poem which was as disorderly as his life, a poem which was intended to be a satire, but which for long periods veered off into other tones and other emotions, and must therefore be pronounced an artistic failure.⁸

Because Byron's life was chaotic, Hight assumes that his work is also, and the critic makes no attempt to discover whether the surface disorder of the poem has any underlying organization or unity, or whether those "other tones and other emotions" might not be a part of the satire.

The deduction made by a second critic, Paul West, is somewhat different than Hight's, and arrived at from another angle, but the results are similar. The poem, as an expression of Byron's ideas, has several inconsistencies and vacillations between contradictory concepts and notions. (to be discussed later), which would seem to indicate that Byron had yet to reach final conclusions about many things. It is not, to my mind, too unusual for a man in his early thirties who had been subjected to a bewildering variety of influences not to have finally resolved all his ideas. However, West does not choose to accept these inconsistencies for what they are and try to arrive at the general meaning of the poem in spite of them. Rather, he takes them as one of the most important features of the poem for the light they shed on Byron's personality, and interprets them as evidence of schizophrenia.⁹ This may or may not be true, but I cannot accept the conclusions which West

draws from his diagnosis. His line of reasoning is a little obscure, but apparently, what he is saying is that Byron's attempts at humour are the manifestations of an obsession with power, and that therefore, all those who have been persuaded that he is writing satire are mistaken. Byron the humourist is really Byron the schizophrenic compensating for an inferiority complex. As the final argument for his case, West adds that Byron was almost completely "non-reformist".¹⁰ Since West has no personal knowledge of Byron's character, his analysis of it is necessarily only conjecture, and to base an opinion of the poem upon it seems risky. But even if there is evidence of schizophrenia, power-obsession, and inferiority complex, points I am not qualified to dispute, to say that Byron is entirely non-reformist is surely incorrect. As someone once said, if a man continually inveighs against filth, it is only reasonable to assume that he advocates cleanliness, and if a man continually inveighs against hypocrisy and self-delusion, it would seem equally reasonable to assume that he advocates honesty and self-knowledge. In any case, to say that Byron is "non-reformist" is to ignore many passages in Don Juan in which he speaks openly for reform, particularly in the areas of government, civil liberties, and personal relationships.

I believe I have said enough to indicate that I do not agree with the charges of autobiography and the non-existence of satiric purpose in Don Juan. If any lasting aesthetic value is to be derived from the poem, I believe it can only be done by reading it for what it says in and about

itself, and as a satire, with as little reference as possible to Byron's personal life.

As I have already stated, Byron's thought is not noted for its consistency, and this admittedly makes it more difficult to get at the root of his satire. Unlike Jonson or Swift, Byron does not adhere to any clearly defined set of opinions, and thus there is really no external element to serve as a standard of reference:

Byron's Don Juanism belongs to no school, it does not set itself up as adherent to any system. It is the heir of all the ages, can use or toss aside any literary reference or philosophical idea, any fact or mood that comes to hand.¹¹

There are, however, three major topics which it is possible to follow throughout the poem, and which are developed with sufficient clarity and consistency as to leave little doubt as to the poet's satiric intentions. The poem may be divided into three parts, each of which concerns itself primarily with one of these topics, although none is ever wholly absent in any of the sections. In order of their appearance in Don Juan these three topics are love, war, and society.

The early cantos of Don Juan centre around the hero's adventures with three different women, Julia, Haidee, and Gulbeyaz, and this first portion of the poem can be viewed as an anatomy of love, or more strictly speaking, sexual passion, as it operates in society. In it, Byron examines the different manifestations and guises of this kind of love, the misconceptions concerning it, and its relation to education and marriage. There is

some satire upon other topics, but it is generally light in tone and of a conventional variety, and the first six cantos, if taken by themselves, show little of the mordant wit and seriousness of the later cantos. This is, of course, due to Byron's initial conception of the work:

Byron originally conceived of Don Juan as a sportive satire upon the affectations and sophistries of society ... [He] announced the keynote of the first five cantos when, in announcing to Moore the completion of Canto I, he said "It is called Don Juan, and is meant to be a little quietly facetious about everything."¹²

"Quiet facetiousness" perfectly characterizes the greater part of this first section, although, as we shall see, the tone gradually deepens and the import of the satire becomes more general as the poem progresses. In Canto I, however, what we have is a kind of comedy of manners which, in the hilarious scene in Julia's bedroom, is on the level of bedroom farce. The protagonists in the drama are not Julia and Juan, but Julia and Juan's mother, Donna Inez. Juan, until his flight from Julia's room, is little more than an innocent bystander.

Donna Inez has a double role to play in the satire. Her marriage to Don Jose, with the bitterness and scheming cloaked under a guise of amicability, is part of Byron's indictment of the hypocrisy and unnaturalness of marriage:

Don Jose and the Donna Inez led
 For some time an unhappy sort of life,
 Wishing each other, not divorced, but dead;
 They lived respectably as man and wife,
 Their conduct was exceedingly well-bred,
 And gave no outward signs of inward strife,
 Until at length the smother'd fire broke out,
 And put the business past all kinds of doubt.¹³

Inez's second function, which is partly connected with the first, is as a personification of hypocrisy. The same deceit which leads her to pretend that her marriage is happy for the sake of social respectability causes her to act the part of the perfectly virtuous matron, and to allow all the blame for the failure of the marriage to be heaped on her poor husband, who finally dies, probably in sheer disgust. It then leads her to provide for her son a strictly "moral" education, such as is suitable for the child of one so virtuous. We soon learn that to Inez, morality equals sex. Juan is fed a diet of expurgated classics, history, and science, and to build his character is subjected to sermons, lectures, homilies, and saints' lives. That everything he studies is first submitted to Inez for her censorship and approval is a nice comment upon the prurience and pseudo-piety of Bowdlerian educators, while the effects of such an education upon Juan constitute Byron's criticism of "education" which does nothing to prepare a child for living. Juan's abysmal ignorance about women and the inevitable outcome of it are a reiteration of the old theme of the dangers of passive virtue, a theme which has been noticed in connection with both the satirists discussed previously. Inez's attempts to inculcate virtue by means of over-protectiveness and inadequate education succeed only in laying the foundations for her son's ruin. Having never been warned about the dangers of sexual passion, let alone exposed to it, Juan is utterly defenceless in the face of Julia's charms. He understands neither the nature nor the direction of the emotions which suddenly flame through him, and so capitulates immediately.

Donna Julia's role in the farce is completely different from that of Donna Inez, for while the latter is exposed as a hypocrite, the former is shown to be innocent of all crimes but the fatal one of self-deception, and even more so to be a victim of circumstances. Her significance in the commentary upon marriage, which runs as a leit-motif throughout the whole poem, is similar to Don Jose's. She is basically virtuous and honest, but is yoked to a completely unsuitable marriage partner, a man twice her age and one to whom, in all likelihood, she was wedded without her free consent. There is no outlet within her marriage for her natural warmth and ardour, but these qualities are only suppressed, not extinguished, and flare out with greater heat than ever when aroused by Juan's beauty and youth. The final contributing factor in Julia's downfall is the myth of Platonic love. The young woman is unwilling to admit to herself that she could be sexually attracted to anyone but her husband, and is at the same time reluctant to renounce the pleasure which she derives from seeing Juan. She therefore has little trouble in convincing herself that what she feels for Juan is not a sexual passion at all, but a "love divine, / Bright and immaculate, unmix'd and pure, / ... Platonic, perfect...!" Having made this rationalization, she feels perfectly free to advance her relationship with Juan. The inevitable result, of course, is that her passion completely overcomes her, although she tries to convince herself to the very last minute that her affections and intentions are above reproach: "Whispering, 'I will ne'er consent!'", Julia is plunged head-long into an adulterous affair which loses her her husband,

her station, and her lover. She is packed off to a convent while Juan is sent by his mother on a grand tour.

There can be no doubt as to where Byron lays most of the blame for Julia's downfall. She is, of course, guilty of self-deception, but this flaw only activated an already existing set of circumstances. She is, in fact, the victim of a society which divorces marriage from love, and which guards an unnatural institution with cant and hypocrisy. She, and Juan also, are the dupes of an educational system which refuses to admit the existence of a perfectly natural passion, and either ignores it or disguises it as "Platonic" love. And finally, Julia is a victim of her own sex, and of the role woman has to play in society:

'Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
 'Tis woman's whole existence; man may range
 The court, camp, church, the vessel and the mart;
 Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange
 Pride, fame, ambition, to fill his heart,
 And few there are whom these cannot estrange;
 Men have all these resources, we but one,
 To love again, and be again undone.'

(I.194)

Condemned by society and her sex to the single resource of love, and at the same time trapped by an institution in which she is unlikely to find it, woman's only recourse is to illicit affairs which she must conduct in deceitful secrecy and which, if discovered, cause her ruin and shame.

Julia's farewell letter, from which the above stanza is taken, evidences a seriousness which is unusual to the first canto, and shows us with whom Byron's sympathies rest. Although there is a note of Chaucerian mockery in the mention of the gilt-edged paper and superfine wax, the letter

itself is completely sincere, and has the effect of making us excuse both her self-deception and her shameless lies to Don Alphonso:

[The purpose of the letter] is to try to show the genuine passion which has motivated her complete surrender and ruined her life. Here Byron passes far beyond his man-of-the-world cynicism, for although he sees adulterous intrigue as comedy... he can also see the element of tragedy it may involve, and instead of treating this case merely as a joke, he shows what it had meant for its victim.¹⁴

Juan's second amatory adventure is the idyllic interlude with Haidee. The tone of this episode is highly romantic, but it, too, forms part of Byron's indictment of modern marriage, and indicates further that he believes it to be antithetical to any kind of love. The love which grows between Juan and Haidee is frankly passionate, but it is in sharp contrast to that of the youth's first affair, for it is completely free from deceit, hypocrisy and artificiality. It comes to life on an island, out of reach of the influences of European civilization, and Juan himself is cut off, by the shipwreck, from his society. Whereas Julia had been self-deceived and almost forced into adultery by a combination of her own ardour and the conventions and institutions of her society, Haidee is completely innocent, free from all restrictions, and ignorant of the petty artificialities which surround love in civilized society:

Haidee spoke not of scruples, asked no vows,
 Nor offer'd any; she had never heard
 Of plight and promises to be a spouse,
 Or perils by a loving maid incur'd;
 She was all which pure ignorance allows,
 And flew to her young mate like a young bird;
 And never having dreamt of falsehood, she
 Had not one word to say of constancy.

She loved and was beloved - she adored
 And she was worshipp'd; after nature's fashion,...

(II.191-192)

Juan and Haidee become, in fact, a new Adam and Eve, and Lambro's island a second Eden:

[They] love not like the children of nature, as in
 the feigning of the pretty romances Byron deplored.
 They are the children of nature, and their love
 is real, natural passion.¹⁵

To further emphasize that the stay on the island is not to be interpreted as a "pretty romance", Byron has taken care to draw it with accuracy and realism, and refuses to allow his natural lovers to escape any of the practical considerations of real life. Into the romantic scene of Haidee's watching over the sleeping Juan, for example, is interjected the humourous note of Zoe, yawning, shivering, and grumbling as she sets about preparing a second breakfast. And instead of the ambrosial scents which one usually expects in settings like this, the air is pervaded with the homey smells of eggs, fish, and coffee. The effect of this humourous realism is not one of mocking the love of Haidee and Juan, however. Rather, it serves to "root the situation and characters more firmly in reality" and "helps to make the episode convincing."¹⁶ We come to accept the validity of the passion, and thus are provided with a standard by which to judge all the other instances of passion, and to see how it has been perverted by civilization."¹⁷

The contrast between the Haidee episode and Juan's next adventure is, if anything, even more vivid than that which obtained between the first

and second affairs. We scarcely have time to recover from the brutality of Juan's separation from Haidee when we see him bought as a slave by Baba and taken to the palace at Constantinople. From the fresh, natural beauty of Lambro's island we are transferred to the lush, artificial splendour of the Seraglio, and instead of an innocent girl to whom Juan's love is a freely given gift, we are presented with a haughty, self-centered Sultana who demands it as her due. Juan is shown to be nothing more to Gulbeyaz than a passing whim, and the passion which in Julia had at least the saving grace of youthful ardour, is revealed to be in Gulbeyaz nothing but sheer lust. Again, there is an implied hit at marriage which in this instance is shown to be incapable even of satisfying lust, let alone providing love, and the deceit and trickery which surround such affairs are more apparent than ever.

The significance of this episode goes beyond the realm of sexual passion, and upon retrospect, we can see the beginning of the deepening of tone and seriousness which came as Byron's attitude towards the poem was altered. Gulbeyaz, as well as being a selfish sensualist, is also a tyrant, used to having her every whim satisfied:

'To hear and to obey' had been from birth
 The law of all around her, to fulfill
 All phantasies which yeilded joy or mirth,
 Had been her slaves' chief pleasure, as her will;
 (V.112)

In Juan's refusal to satisfy her passion is found the first note of the topic which becomes the central theme in Cantos VII to IX, that of personal and political liberty. "Love is for the free!" cries Juan, when Gulbeyaz

asks if he can love:

Whate'er thy power, and great it seems to be,
 Heads bow, knees bend, eyes watch around a throne,
 And hands obey - our hearts are still our own.
 (V.127)

Gulbeyaz, as well as being the type of greedy sensualist whose lusts are such that she will even buy the object of them, also becomes the type of immoral despot who, for no other reason than her birth, expects the love and admiration of her subjects. To Byron, she is representative of all the European tyrants whose lust for power and wealth has enslaved the continent. The Gulbeyaz episode passes beyond the realm of sexual passion and leads directly into the condemnation of war, tyranny, and oppression which becomes the topic of Cantos VII, VIII, and IX. That Gulbeyaz is intended as more than a figure of individual lust is further indicated by the episode of the Imperial Court of Russia. The Constantinople episode is never really finished; Juan, Johnson, and their retinue turn up on the eve of the Siege of Ismail with no explanation as to how they avoided execution and escaped Constantinople. However, it may in a sense be said to be finished in Moscow, for Catherine takes over Gulbeyaz's role completely. She buys Juan with royal favours as surely as Gulbeyaz bought him, and she is also an historic despot, notorious both for her policies of oppression and imperialist expansion and for her immorality.

The account of the Siege of Ismail constitutes one of the most effective condemnations of war in the English language, as well as one of

the most passionate pleas for liberty. That this section of the poem is so effective is in no small measure due to the fact that it is a faithful rendering into verse of a single, historical battle, rather than a denigration of war in the abstract.¹⁸ Byron has not bothered to phrase as reasoned arguments his belief that war is evil, but has rather concentrated on describing the actual scenes and incidents of a real battle, and for the most part allowing the facts to speak for themselves. He spares the reader nothing in the presentation of the heat, confusion, horror, and carnage - carnage which Wordsworth can fatuously call "God's daughter". We are forced to look upon the "bloody mire" of the battle ground, littered with corpses and mutilated casualties. We are forced to hear the shrieks and groans of the dying, and witness the slaughter of innocent women and children. In the midst of all this we are suddenly given a vision of the purity and tranquility of the life of the North American woodsman, Daniel Boone, only to be jerked back by Byron's sardonic "so much for Nature", and his celebration of the joys of "civilization":

War, pestilence, the despot's desolation,
The kingly scourge, the lust of noteriety,
The millions slain by soldiers for their ration.

(VIII.68)

If we were shocked before by the atrocities of war, we are doubly so now by the sudden contrast to the vision of peace and freedom:

Byron is not content to expose the real savagry and hideousness of armed conflict, but also sets out to destroy the illusions of martial honour and glory. The battle of Ismail is a war of aggression and oppression, and the bulk of the soldiers are hired mercenaries:

Then there were foreigners of much renown,
 Of various nations, and all volunteers;
 Not fighting for their country or its crown,
 But wishing to be one day brigadiers;
 Also to have the sacking of a town;
 A pleasant thing for young men of their years.

(VII.18)

Byron's contempt for these hirelings, who feed upon the lust for land and power of one country and the misery and weakness of another, is mitigated only by his recognition that the only honour they will receive should they lose their lives is a mention in the gazettes - and even there they will be fortunate if their names are spelled correctly.

Byron's attitude towards the commanding officers is, if anything, more contemptuous than that towards the common soldiers. He accuses them of cowardice as well as of callous disregard for the men they lead - the Prince de Ligne is wounded in the knee and removed from the battlefield "amidst some groaning thousands dying near". Furthermore, their aim is conquest and oppression of a people "that never did them harm", an objective which Byron sees as even less worthy than the mercenaries' desire for gain. This attitude is made explicit by Prince Potemkin's dispatch to Souvaroff. The expression of the message, says Byron, would have been highly commendable had the cause it concerned been an honourable one:

But as it was mere lust to oe'r-arch all
 With its proud brow, it merits slight applause.
 ...
 'Let there be light!' said God, ' and there was light!'
 'Let there be blood!' says man, and there's a sea!
 The feat of this spoil'd child of the Night
 (For day ne'er saw his merits) could decree
 More evil in an hour, than thirty bright
 Summers could renovate, though they should be

Lovely as those which ripen'd Eden's fruit;
 For war cuts up not only branch, but root.

(VII.40-41)

Byron's anger and disgust at the immorality and waste of war is nowhere more apparent than in these stanzas, and it is difficult to see how it could be maintained that he is "non-reformist" in the face of them.

Souvaroff, one of the central figures in these cantos, is also a part of Byron's general condemnation of war as well as being a good example of the realism with which the poet conveys his satire. The poet does not try to disguise the fact that the Russian Field Marshal is competent and efficient or that he inspires confidence and loyalty in his men. But these qualities do not outbalance Souvaroff's great sin: he is a man who "but saw things in the gross / Being much too gross to see them in detail",:

Who calculated life as so much dross,
 And as the wind a widow'd nation's wail,
 And cared as little for his army's loss
 (so that their efforts should at length prevail)
 As wife and friends did for the boils of Job, -
 What was 't to him to hear two women sob?

(VII.77)

Souvaroff is the perfect type of a military mentality, a fighting machine to whom towns are merely "objectives", and to whom a list of casualties means as little as a row of statistics. His lack of respect for individual life is such that he cares as little for the lives of his own soldiers as he does for those of his enemy. This cold-blooded dismissal of all human values is emphasized by the macabre humour of the dispatch to Catherine. Souvaroff has attacked a people who "never did [him] harm", to

gratify the lust for power of his empress. He has not only caused the death of thousands of fighting men but also has on his hands the blood of innocent women and children. He has reduced a wealthy town to smoking, stinking ruins. Yet he can pass it all off with a clever little couplet.¹⁹

As with the other episodes, the story of the Siege of Ismail is told with remarkable realism. I have shown that we must respect Souvaroff's skills, even if we hate the use to which he puts them, and have mentioned that one effect of Byron's restricting himself to a single battle is that the force of his attack is heightened. There is a second effect which comes from the honesty of the account:

[Byron] has the honesty to include the good as well as the bad element in human nature, and although he is attacking the cant of glory he does not fall into the easy mistake of sneering indiscriminately at soldiers and the military virtues - he recognizes that in battle men can show great courage, and he gives them credit for it.²⁰

Instead of painting the picture completely black and showing all concerned to be ravenous monsters or snivelling cowards, Byron gives us bright flashes of human virtue. There are, among other things, the real heroism of Juan and Johnson, Juan's rescue of the little Leila from the "villainous cossagues", and the magnificent courage and loyalty of the Tartar Khan and his five sons. What these incidents accomplish is to show with even greater force how loathsome and wasteful war is; for all these noble deeds are squandered in a worthless cause. Had Byron not included these episodes, but stressed only the evil, we would feel that, if mankind is this hopeless, it deserves everything it brings upon itself. But by showing that there is still courage, humanity, and love left in the world, Byron has emphasized the whole absurd tragedy of man's inhumanity to man.

In spite of the general condemnation of war, however, there is one kind which Byron sees as justified, and that is war in defence of "freedom, country, or of laws". In such cases, "every battlefield is a holy ground / which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone," and it is in praise of the defenders of liberty that the other side of the indictment of oppression, the praise of liberty, is presented. The Cantos on the Siege of Ismail are as much an expression of Byron's republicanism as of his hatred for oppressive war, and become the statement of his hope and desire for revolution and overthrow of the reactionary European establishment:

'God save the King!' and kings!.

For if he don't, I doubt if men will longer -
 I think I hear a little bird who sings
 The people will be by and by the stronger:
 The veriest jade will wince whose harness wings
 So much into the raw as quite to wrong her
 Beyond the rules of posting, - and the mob
 At last fall sick of imitating Job.

At first it grumbles, then it swears and then,
 Like David flings smooth pebbles 'gainst a giant;
 At last it takes to weapons such as men
 Snatch when despair makes human hearts less pliant.
 Then comes the 'tug of war'; - 'twill come again,
 I rather doubt, and I would fain say 'fie on 't;
 If I had not perceived that revolution
 Alone can save the earth from hell's pollution.

(VIII.50-51)

Byron's hatred for oppression and tyranny is nowhere more bitter than when he reflects upon the part Britain played, as opposed to the part she could have played, in the era following the French Revolution. England, itself the seat of European democracy and constitutional monarchy, ought Byron believes, to have supported at all costs the bid for freedom by the

enslaved peoples of the continent. Instead, she chose to side with legitimacy, and "butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t'other." Wellington, or "Villainton," had the opportunity to be in fact, not just in name, the "Saviour of Nations" and "Europe's Liberator," but chose rather to repair "Legitimacy's crutch". Byron recognizes that Wellington was a great soldier, but is bitter and disillusioned at the fact that such talents should have been misdirected:

Never had mortal man such an opportunity
 Except Napoléon, or abused it more:
 You might have freed fallen Europe from the unity
 Of tyrants, and been blest from shore to shore:
 And now - what is your fame? Shall the Muse tune it ye?
Now - that the rabble's first vainglories are o'er
 Go! hear it in your famish'd country's cries!
 Behold the world! and curse your victories!

...
 You did great things: but not being great in mind,
 Have left undone the greatest - and mankind.

(IX.9-10)

On the literal level the attack upon Wellington leads directly into Juan's adventures in the Russian court. In this episode, as I have said, the character and amorous escapades of the Empress Catherine form a direct link back to Gulbeyaz, and the two together become Byron's comment upon the inconsiderate selfishness both of sexual lust and of political despotism. Besides that, the episode is an exposure of the immorality and sordid intrigue which takes place behind the mask of royal pomp and ceremony, not only in Russia, but in all Europe, including England.²¹ It is possible, therefore, to see the attack on England's high society as beginning with the stanzas on Wellington, these stanzas and those on Russian

dealing with political intrigue and corruption,²² those on England (from Canto X to where the poem is broken off) dealing more generally with society.

More than one critic has noticed the shift in tone from the preceding cantos to that of the final section of the poem. There is little of the bitterness and grim humour which marks the description of the Siege of Ismail, and at times it almost seems as if Byron has returned to the "quiet facetiousness" of the early cantos. Fuess characterizes the tone of these final passages as 'humourous and ironic but seldom vehement,"²³ and indeed, the stanzas dealing with Juan's average day in London, with the scheming of the matchmakers, with the hall, or with the glorious Duchess Fitz-Fulke remind one of the lighter farces of Congreve or Wycherley. Opposed to scenes such as these, however, are those dealing with Lady Adeline and Lord Henry, and the famous "ubi sunt" passages in which the poet ponders the fleetingness and futility of the life of the haut monde. Rutherford explains the vacillation in attitude as arising out of the conflict between Byron's aristocratic temperament and his republican leanings. The instability of the satire is, he says, due to the fact that, unlike the condemnation of war, or the exposure of "love" and marriage, it is not based on any firm belief or principle but "on Byron's fluctuating feelings, partly critical and hostile, partly tolerant and sympathetic, towards English aristocratic life."²⁴ On the one hand there is the genial mockery of the pretense and artificiality of high society found in lines like these:

For good society is but a game,
 'The Royal Game of Goose', as I may say,
 Where everybody has some separate aim,
 An end to answer, or a plan to lay -
 The single ladies wishing to be double,
 The married ones to save the virgins trouble.

(XII.68)

In sharp contrast to this playfulness is the bitterness and indignation in the condemnation of a society so riddled with vice and hypocrisy that it must see an innocent friendship as immoral and which delights in scandal:

For 'tis a low, newspaper, humdrum, lawsuit
 Country, where a young couple of the same ages
 Can't form a friendship, but the world o'erawes it.
 Then there's the vulgar trick of those d-d damages!
 A verdict - grievous foe to those who cause it -
 Forms a sad climax to romantic homages;
 Besides those soothing speeches of the pleaders,
 And evidences which regale the readers.

(XII.65)

Further inconsistency is to be found in Byron's attitude toward British government. In relating Juan's tour of London, Byron seems to have lost some of the republican ardour which burned through the earlier cantos, and while still concerned with the decay of British statesmanship and parliamentarianism, evidences a sincere admiration for and pride in English constitutional monarchy:

He saw, however, at the closing session,
 That noble sight, when really free the nation.
 A king in constitutional possession
 Of such a throne as is the proudest station
 Though despots know it not - till the progression
 Of freedom shall complete their education

'Tis not mere splendour makes the show august
To eye or heart - it is the people's trust.

(XII.83)

It must be remembered, however, that Byron's chief interest as far as the continent was concerned was to see France, Italy, Greece and other countries freed from the foreign tyranny of Austria, Russia, and Turkey, so that the situation on the continent, and Byron's proposed solution, cannot be compared without reservation to the English scene. The ruling classes of England were of Byron's own kind; he had friends among them, and had lived their life, and he also saw many of the English revolutionaries as little more than rabble-rousing conspirators.²⁵

The whole question of revolution in England produced a conflict between his professed love of liberty... on the one hand, and his essentially aristocratic sympathies on the other.²⁶

This is, I think, a sufficient explanation for these inconsistencies, and I do not think they need trouble us further. They do damage to some extent the texture of the last third of the poem, but not to the degree that we no longer enjoy reading it. And in spite of them, the final cantos contain a great deal of important and entertaining material which it is to our profit to study. The satire in the English cantos can, as a whole, be taken as directed against the sham and emptiness of aristocratic life, as Byron's advice to his hero indicates:

But 'carpe diem', Juan, 'carpe, carpe!'
Tomorrow sees another race as gay
And transient, and devour'd by the same harpy
'Life's a poor player' - then 'play out the play,
Ye villains!' and above all keep a sharp eye

Much less on what you do than what you say:
 Be hypocritical, be cautious, be
 Not what you seem, but always what you see.

(XI.86)

The likeness of their life to a play underlies the whole of the section on the Amundevilles' house party. The aristocracy are shown following their normal pursuits, of hunting, gaming, gossiping, dining, dancing, and intriguing, and as we watch them, we are left with the distinct impression that they get as little pleasure out of their activities as actors going through the same motions on the stage, and that they engage in them partly in a vain attempt to escape a deadening boredom and partly as a mere matter of form:

Sometimes, indeed, like soldiers off parade,
 They break their ranks and gladly leave the drill;
 But then the roll-call draws them back afraid,
 And they must be or seem what they were: still
 Doubtless it is a brilliant masquerade;
 But when of the first sight you have had your fill,
 It palls - at least it did so upon me,
 This paradise of pleasure and ennui.

(XIV.17)

Of the members of the house party, three in particular seem to embody Byron's attitude towards the aristocracy, Lady Adeline, Lord Henry, and the Duchess Fitz-Fulke. In Adeline we are given the personification of the young society matron, well-bred, a model wife and mother, a perfect hostess, and of untarnished reputation, but not above indulging in a little genteel back-biting concerning her husband's constituents whom she has just so graciously entertained. Lord Henry, her husband is shown to be a vain,

handsome man, whose polished manners and professed patriotism mask a lack of principles and a cold, unloving spirit. The Duchess Fitz-Fulke, in her flagrant disrespect for social convention, embodies Byron's comment on the immorality of the aristocracy, both in her own affairs and in the reaction of her friends towards them. When she begins to cast an eye on Juan, it is not her husband for whom the other guests feel sympathy, but for her latest lover, "Poor Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet." There is in the portrait of the Duchess, however, a certain affection, and she would seem to be a good example of the ambiguity of Byron's feelings regarding her class. She is drawn with great humour, warmth, and gusto, and we get the impression that Byron much prefers her open, hearty flouting of morality to the cold, hypocritical viciousness of Lord Henry.

The cantos on the house party are interesting for another reason, for in them, Byron would seem to be drawing together many of the subjects with which he has already dealt. Lady Adeline, for example, in her cool perfection and decorous hypocrisy almost seems a more subtle version of Donna Inez, while her hidden passionate nature and self-deception remind us very much of Donna Julia. She exhibits the same wilful ignorance about her feelings for Juan, and for much the same reasons. Like the Spanish noble-woman, she is married to a partner completely incapable of understanding her, who treats her "Less like a young wife than an aged sister". The Amundevilles' marriage is another example of an unnatural relationship which, although judged ideal by society, is maintained only by the stifling of the true personalities of one or both of the partners:

Their union was a model to behold,
Serene and noble, - conjugal but cold.

(XIV.86)

Because she receives none of the love and affection which she naturally craves, she is immediately drawn to the young emissary, although like her Spanish counterpart, she tries to convince herself that her attraction for Juan is above reproach, and when the poem is broken off, is at the stage of feeling what she calls "friendly concern". The true nature of her feelings are revealed, however, by the uncalled-for jealousy which she feels for Aurora Raby.

The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke, as I have indicated, provides yet a further comment upon the falsity of marriage, and in her predatory scheming and shameless pursuit of Don Juan there is a hint, albeit in a lighter vein, of the lust of Gulbeyaz and Catherine. She may also be taken, perhaps, as the representation of what Julia might have become had her first infidelity gone undiscovered, and is thus part of Byron's condemnation of the position into which society has forced married women. In one respect, however, the Duchess is more fortunate than many of her sisters, for although she is restricted to a life of illicit affairs, at least she is allowed to pursue her hobbies with no interference from her husband:

Theirs was the best of unions, past all doubt,
Which never meets, and therefore can't fall out.

(XIV.45)

Perhaps it is not too much to say that if all the marriages in the poem, that of the Fitz-Fulkes comes closest to being what Byron would consider "ideal," if there must be marriage at all.

Finally, the figure of Lord Henry can be seen, I believe, as carrying on the earlier satire on politics. He is an astute politician and able parliamentarian, "the very model of a chamberlain", but his cold affectation shows that he lacks what, for Byron, is the first qualification for any man in public office--humanity. Not only that, but he is shown to be unshaken in his prejudices, cautious, and proudly reserved, characteristics which reveal him as a bigoted reactionary, one who would uphold the Establishment no matter how wrong it was. Finally, in his scornful description of Lord Henry "Burrowing for boroughs like a cat or rabbit," and in the ease with which the nobleman is able to rationalize away his holding of sinecures, Byron reveals the utter lack of any kind of ethical principles which characterizes politics, and the divorce of public from private morality. The person of Lord Henry, in fact, takes us into the council chambers of the despots who cause wars like the Siege of Ismail.

Throughout the whole of the cantos devoted to the house party runs a feeling of coldness and death:

But all was gentle and aristocratic
 In this our party; polish'd, smooth and cold,
 As Phidian forms cut out of marble Attic,
 There now are no Squire Westerns as of old;
 And our Sophias are not so emphatic,
 But fair as then, or fairer to behold.
 We have no accomplish'd blackguards like Tom Jones,
 But gentlemen in stays, as stiff as stones.

(XIII.110)

The texture of English society is revealed to be as smooth and as brittle as an egg-shell. Not only is there little which could be called active

virtue, but even vice has become^{so} polished and refined that there is not even enjoyment left in vice. The adulterers, slanderers, and schemers, with the possible exception of the Duchess, take no pleasure in their crimes, but follow them with the same cold decorum and lack of personal involvement as they would show in observing the lesser rules of etiquette. And behind the glitter and forced gaiety with which they mask their hollowness runs the sombre note of the futility and fleetingness of it all:

'Where is the world?' cries Young at eighty 'Where
The world in which man was born?' Alas!
Where is the world of eight years past? 'Twas there -
I look for it - 'tis gone, a globe of glass!
Crack'd, shiver'd, vanish'd, scarcely gazed on, ere
A silent change dissolves the glittering mass.
Statesmen, chiefs, orators, queens, patriots, kings,
And dandies, all are gone on the wind's wings.

(XI.76)

Love, war, and society, then, are the three great subjects of Don Juan, and their presence gives a kind of unity to the poem, for while only one at a time is really in the foreground, the other two are always hovering near the surface. There is a more fundamental kind of unity to Don Juan, however, and that is unity of theme. Byron's satire on the abuses of love and the insincerity and selfishness of what passes for love in civilized society, upon tyranny, oppression, and reactionism, and upon the artificiality and selfcentredness of aristocratic society, all have at their core a passionate hatred for the deluded self-interest which he saw as characteristic of almost all aspects of modern society:

The great theme of Don Juan is the power of illusion. Byron said that the reason his mistress Theresa disapproved of it was because of the wish of all women 'to exalt the sentiment

of the passions and to keep up the illusion which is their empire. Now Don Juan strips off this illusion and laughs at that and most other things.' The root of Byron's attack on the heartless frivolity and cynicism of the ruling classes, and on the idol Legitimacy which they made the shield for their self-interest, is his skepticism. Like the child in the story of the Emperor's new clothes, he continues to reiterate that the Emperor is naked. His defense of Don Juan as a moral poem was grounded on the salutariness of being undeceived.²⁷

Donna Inez is deceived in her belief that an outward adherence to moral conventions signifies true virtue. Julia and Adeline are deceived in their vain attempts to disguise sexual passion as "Platonic" love and in their refusal to admit that only sexual passion is the root of their emotion. Gulbeyaz and Catherine mistake fearful obedience for loyalty and gratification of their lusts by gigolos for expressions of love. The upholders of Legitimacy operate under the illusion that pursuit of their own selfish ways is in their true interest, and refuse to concede that tyranny can only bring about its own destruction. The London aristocrats, who literally think of themselves as the centre of the universe, have fallen into the trap of believing that their idle indulgence will be able to continue forever. For all that, everyone of these people in some way or another denies freedom to his fellow man, either through hypocrisy, selfishness, coercion, or economic or social sanction, they themselves are no more free, but are trapped within themselves by their own selfish blindness. What Byron has done in Don Juan is not only to present us with "a Satire on abuses of the present states of society",²⁸ but also to indicate the basic causes of those abuses. In the final analysis, these causes amount to the same thing as the fundamental themes of both The Alchemist

and Gulliver's Travels - wilful pride and lack of self-knowledge.

In the face of all this, it does not seem feasible to deny that Byron was writing, as he insists time and time again, a moral poem. In fact, as Hellen Gardner bluntly puts it, it is "preposterous to call Don Juan an amoral work:"

Apart from the obvious moral passion in many passages, we are in no doubt as we read that Byron admires courage, generosity, compassion, and honesty, and that he dislikes brutality, meanness, and above all self-importance, hypocrisy, and priggery. If he does not denounce, he displays with great force the satiety which dogs, as its appropriate nemesis, the life of sensation.²⁹

Miss Gardner goes on to add that Byron does not attempt to offer any panaceas, and perhaps it is true that he had "no clear notions of what he was fighting for".³⁰ Since Don Juan is a fragment, it is impossible to say whether or not Byron would ever have offered any kind of general solution to the problems which he has shown to plague human kind. But it is interesting, and perhaps profitable, to speculate, on the strength of what exists of the poem, upon what kind of answer Byron might have offered.

Some critics seem to feel that had Byron lived to complete his epic, he would have shown us in some form or other a kind of Utopia such as is present in the Haidee episode or in the praise of the Boones in Kentucky. Elizabeth Boyd suggests that she holds this attitude when she speaks of the basic theme of the poem as being an examination of conflict between nature and civilization.³¹ However, I believe that the Haidee episode itself is sufficient evidence that, in spite of a strong attraction for

such an ideal, Byron was too much the realist to seriously consider it. As I said in my earlier consideration of this episode, the love of Haidee and Juan has a kind of prelapsarian innocence about it, and the fact that it is so utterly destroyed indicates Byron's awareness that such innocence cannot be maintained in the world of experience. The consequences of the affair are more disastrous than those of any other episode; Haidee is the only heroine who loses her life as a result of her love, and Juan's being sold into slavery is a much harsher punishment than any other which befalls him.

On one point I do agree with Miss Boyd, and that is her contention that love is the most important theme in the poem.³¹ If Byron were to provide any solution for the ills which plague human society it would, I believe, be some form of love. But not sexual love. The Haidee episode may provide a standard against which we may measure all the other love affairs, but the fact that even this love perishes shows that it is ultimately inadequate. It would necessarily have to be a kind of love which ensures personal freedom, as purely sexual passion cannot, and which engenders the kind of respect for the lives and liberties of all individuals which Byron so earnestly desired. Of all the characters in the poem, there are only two, I believe, with whom Juan could possibly attain this kind of relationship, and they are the Moslem orphan Leila and the Catholic orphan Aurora Raby. Aurora is to my mind the less satisfactory possibility of the two (although my opinion is based on mere conjecture), because Juan shows signs of becoming infatuated with her, and it is not inconceivable that any

affair the two might have would be yet another example of futile passion. However, there are at least two things that differentiate her from all the other women in the poem, and which make it just as conceivable that she would come to represent a kind of standard. In the first place, from the little we learn of her, she seems really virtuous and unaffected, and hers is a virtue that has been maintained in the face of the vice of the world of experience. Secondly, Juan shows signs of taking the initiative in the relationship, as he does not in any other except the rescue of Leila.

That it is Juan who is the agent in the rescue is one very important reason for my belief that Leila is the likeliest candidate for a personification of human love, for it is the one and only time in the poem as we have it, that he ever, of his own free will, enters into any kind of relationship. The rest of the time he is a more or less innocent bystander who is caught up by circumstances which he is powerless to control. Julia, whether she would admit it or not, plays upon his youthful inexperience; Gulbayaz buys him as a slave; he is ordered to go to the court of Catherine and can do little else but fulfill her commands. He is sent as a royal emissary to England and drawn into the Amundeville circle because Lord Henry believes he will be a useful friend. Adeline shows signs of repeating Julia's role, and the fantastic Duchess of Fitz-Fulke is the archetype of predatory femininity. Even Juan's arrival on Haidee's island is not of his own accord, but brought about by the shipwreck. With Leila, however, the situation is entirely reversed. Not only does he save the

child from death at the hands of the murderous Russians, he refuses to return to battle until he is assured of her safety, and he then takes it upon himself to adopt her as his ward, and to raise her.

My second reason for suggesting Leila arises out of the nature of the love which she and Juan share. They love as "Nor brother, father, sister, daughter, love", nor is there any hint of sexual passion. Of Juan, Byron says:

He lov'd the infant orphan he had saved
As patriots (now and then) may love a nation;
His pride, too, felt that she was not enslaved
Owing to him;

(X.55)

It is a love marked by none of the conditions which normally foster love; there is no sense of family duty behind it, nor of attraction for the opposite sex, nor yet of that kind of affection which we often feel for those whom we consider are our inferiors, or indebted to us. In the comparison of it to a patriot's love of country comes the suggestion of unselfish devotion, free of the encroachment on the liberties of the other person. It is also significant, I believe, that Juan makes no personal effort to convert Leila from Islam to Christianity, but is willing to tolerate and respect a different faith. The love of Juan for Leila would, in fact, seem to be founded on nothing more than recognition and respect for a common humanity. Byron is too much the sceptic and realist ever to believe that there is any ultimate cure for the ailment of human existence. However, I do not think that it is too far-fetched to suppose that, had he any hope of an alleviation or betterment of man's lot, it would be in a love such as this. Only through such mutual respect would man ever achieve

any kind of personal liberty and equality or any degree of freedom in personal relationships. The letters, journals, and conversations of this last period of Byron's life show an increasing interest in and attraction to Roman Catholicism, and perhaps it is not too much to say that the love of Juan and Leila is a further indication that he would ultimately have sought the answer both to his personal problems and to those which he saw plaguing his fellow man in Christianity. It is, although I almost hesitate to say it, a very Christian kind of love.

CHAPTER IV

Samuel Butler's Erewhon is in many ways reminiscent of Gulliver's Travels and Candide, but as E. P. Wilson points out, it is really comparable to neither, and is best viewed as the work of a very talented amateur:

It is not the definite expression of a satiric point of view based on mature experience... [and] does not pretend to either the logic of Swift or the singleness of intention of Voltaire.¹

As well as maturity of thought, Erewhon also lacks the skilled craftsmanship of its great predecessors. For example, although some attempt is made to characterize the narrator, that attempt is neither consistent nor complete, and unlike Gulliver or Candide, Higgs (to use the name given him in Erewhon Revisited) is neither fully developed as a character nor completely separate from his creator. At times he is presented to us as the type of Philistine Englishman who accepts without question the conventions of his country, while at others he is a simple mouthpiece for Butler's own views. Again, the fictional element of the story is not handled with any great care, Swift, for example, makes Gulliver's voyages an integral part of the satire, using them, as I have tried to show, as representative of the progress of a typical eighteenth century "natural" man. The story in Erewhon, however, is very obviously only a convenient means by which Butler can present his views, and very little effort is made to work the fiction into the satire beyond the initial situation of Erewhon as an inverted England.² The plot is extremely simple, involving

only Higgs' arrival in Erewhon, his imprisonment, and his acquaintance with Yram, his journey to the capital, and his growing love for and final escape with Arowhena; and within this skeletal framework, his visits to the law courts, the Musical Banks, and the Colleges of Unreason, and his narration of Erewhonian customs, mythology, and history could be arranged in almost any order. Erewhon could never, as Gulliver's Travels and Candide can, be read simply as an entertaining tale, for the fiction is too transparently only a device which provides opportunity for satirical reflections upon Victorian England, and no serious attempt is made to exploit the humour inherent in the given situation of a traveller in an alien land.

Butler's satire is different in tone from that of Swift or Voltaire, or indeed from that of Jonson and Byron. Unlike the two eighteenth century satirists, he is not concerned with exposing a single system of thought and offering an equally rigid system. Nor is he interested, like Jonson and Byron, with presenting an exhaustive examination of society; on the contrary, he is for the most part content to accept the basic features of his society. Because he lacks a single serious purpose, Butler's satire has justly been characterized as having "the clear headedness and the high spirits of freedom of a youth a long way from home and on his own".³ Although many of the themes of Erewhon were to become central issues of his later writing, he was not at this time as serious about them, nor had he fully developed them.

Erewhon cannot, then, be said to be a great book, but this is one of the reasons that I have chosen to study it. It goes without saying, of course, that the better the satirist, the better the satire, but Butler's work helps to illustrate that the attitude which informs satiric writing is essentially the same no matter what the merits of the particular artist.

As I have said, Butler had no single purpose in writing Erewhon, and as a result, the work lacks even that kind of thematic unity which I suggested underlies Don Juan, let alone the tightly knit construction of The Alchemist or Gulliver's Travels. The book was composed to draw together several pieces which he had already written, and which did not necessarily have a common theme. Because of this, it is difficult to present an ordered discussion of the work as a whole. However, there are several major themes in Erewhon which can be discussed separately. Of these themes, perhaps the most striking is that of Victorian morality.

The title of the book, Erewhon, is an anagram for "nowhere", indicating, of course, that Butler did not have to travel to find objects of ridicule. All he has done is to present certain Victorian customs and beliefs in reverse, or as Mumford says, in "a looking glass, in which we can read from right to left the curious, reversed forms of English manners and beliefs."⁴ Mumford likens Butler's technique to that of an art student holding his painting up to a mirror "to see more clearly the faults of construction or composition,"⁵ a technique which is at its most

effective in the examination of the informing ideals of Victorian morality. In Erewhon, the situation of English ethics is completely inverted. Actions which we would normally consider as criminal, or at least morally reprehensible, are treated as manifestations of illness, while people suffering from physical ailments are liable to ostracism, if not prosecution - the worst crime of which an Erewhonian can be accused is typhoid fever. Similarly, people whom we would pity as victims of bad luck are liable to prosecution:

Ill luck of any kind, or even ill treatment at the hands of others, is considered an offense against society, inasmuch as it makes people uncomfortable to hear of it.⁶

Butler's inversion of the English state of affairs is complete, and it provides him with opportunities to ridicule several things. For one thing, Erewhon has its equivalent to the hypochondriac, people who are convinced of their own wickedness although they are no worse than anyone else. These "spiritual valetudinarians" are also, incidentally, part of Butler's satire of the Christian emphasis upon the depravity of man, the "miserable sinner". Again, the inversion also gives him the chance to satirize the medical profession. The Erewhonians trust to "straighteners", the equivalents of modern psychiatrists, for their mental health, and Butler is gently mocking at the absolute faith which Englishmen place in their doctors, and in the propensity of these same doctors for hiding behind unpronounceable and incomprehensible Latin names:

... the straighteners have gone so far as to give names from the hypothetical language... to all known

forms of mental indisposition, and to classify them according to a system of their own, which, although I could not understand it, seemed to work well in practice; for they are always able to tell a man what is the matter with him as soon as they have heard his story, and their familiarity with the long names assures him that they thoroughly understand his case.⁷

Because of the detail with which Butler draws this inversion, we are prepared to accept Higgs' description of the Erewhonian trials, by means of which Butler presents his more serious criticisms of English morality and law. He is of the opinion that environment and heredity have as much influence upon an individual's mental composition as upon his bodily constitution, and that in both cases the individual's characteristics are largely a matter of luck. This being so, it is as absurd to hold a man completely responsible for his moral behavior as to hold him accountable for his physical health. The trial of the man accused of having lost a beloved wife illustrates Butler's contention that what society admires in a virtuous man is not his goodness but his good fortune, and that, therefore, it ought to be recognized that, as far as society is concerned, "luck is the only fit object of human veneration."⁸

The second trial which Higgs witnesses is that of a youth charged with having been cheated by his guardian. Here, Butler criticizes not only the refusal of British law to recognize the element of luck, but also its absolutism, its denial that there can ever be mitigating circumstances. The boy's pleas of youth and inexperience are contemptuously dismissed by the justice:

'People have no right to be young, inexperienced, greatly in awe of their guardians, and without independent professional advice. If by such indiscretions they outrage the moral sense of their friends, they must expect to suffer accordingly!'⁹

Butler points out that a system of justice which pays no heed to circumstances says, in effect, that people have no right to be poor, ignorant, or mentally unbalanced, and must be punished for it. The judge's statement that the boy has outraged the moral sense of his friends indicates that very often the only crime of which a person is really guilty is that of offending against social convention and prejudice.

The final trial, in which the prisoner on the dock is a young man suffering from pulmonary consumption, is a parody of the typical trial of a man who has been driven to crime by poverty, and presents some of the bitterest satire in the book. In the judge's concluding remarks, Butler returns to the themes of environment, heredity, and luck, and also ridicules the notion that punishment is either a deterrent or a corrective for crime. The Erewhonian judge ignores completely the wrong-headedness of sending an invalid to an institution which is a breeding-ground for disease, and his assumption that imprisonment is sufficient treatment for illness is as fallacious as the reasoning behind the British belief that imprisoning criminals in nesting-grounds of crime will improve their characters. Butler is also contemptuous of the idea that such punishment is necessary to serve as an example to others. He points out that most criminals, as victims of environment and heredity, are as helpless to resist committing crimes as persons of frail constitutions are to resist contracting disease.

Finally, he ridicules the nominal attempts made at rehabilitation, which are, he says, about as effective as dosing a victim of tuberculosis with castor oil.

Butler's attitudes towards penal reform are given in the opinions of the Malcontents, and are remarkable for their enlightenment. He realizes that for the safety of society those convicted of breaking the law must be committed to some kind of institution, but he advocates what are now called psychiatric and occupational rehabilitation, measures which are yet to be taken in many modern penitentiaries. But however interesting his views are, they constitute a relatively restricted and topical theme, and cannot be presently discussed. Our immediate concern is with the relation of Butler's satire on the courts to the wider question of English moral philosophy.

The thinking which underlies the English code of ethics, and which is Butler's real target, is given voice by Higgs when he despairs of ever convincing the Erewhonians of the error of their ways:

Was there nothing which I could say to make them feel that the constitution of a person's body was a thing over which he or she had at any rate no initial control whatever, while the mind was a perfectly different thing, capable of being created anew and directed according to the pleasure of its possessor? Could I never bring them to see that while habits of mind and character were entirely independent of initial mental force and early education, the body was so much a creature of parentage and circumstances, that no punishment for ill-health should ever be tolerated, save as a protection from contagion...?¹⁰

Butler holds a mirror up to this idea, and shows that in spite of Higgs' ~~shock~~ed arguments to the contrary, it is every bit as logical to punish people for physical ailments as for moral aberrations, for in neither case is the individual a completely free agent. But besides this major criticism, Butler has another point to make:

The arraignment of a young man for the crime of harbouring an incurable disease is a commentary upon our futile method of punishing disorders of conduct instead of attempting to cure them; [but] it is equally a criticism of our too-easy complaisance with ill-health, and our failure to see the essential bad manners of catching a cold, the baseness of contracting measles, and the profound turpitude of having a weak heart.¹¹

After all, colds and measles are as contagious as any crime, and society has as much right to be protected against them as against fraud or theft or murder. Not only that, but the person of average health has as much control - perhaps even more - over his body as over his mind, and habits of good health and prevention of disease are as much a duty as habits of virtue and avoidance of vice.

Although Butler is thus acutely aware of the importance in our lives of factors beyond our control, he is no determinist, for, as he says, "to deny free-will is to deny moral responsibility, and we are landed in absurdity at once...."¹² He believes that although the individual is not entirely to blame for his shortcomings, he is still to be held responsible for them:

Surely to be responsible means to be liable to have to give an answer should it be demanded, and all things which live are responsible for their lives and actions should society see fit to question them....¹³

Nor is he troubled by the seeming contradiction of admitting the necessity of the factors of environment, and so forth, on the one hand, and of demanding responsibility on the other. Although the individual cannot be called to account for the circumstances which brought about conditions conducive to crime, he is responsible for the final choice, even if that choice is made in ignorance of his real good:

Remember... that if you go into the world you will have free will; that you will be obliged to have it; that there is no escaping from it; that you will be fettered to it during your whole life, and must on every occasion do that which on the whole seems best to you at any given time, no matter whether you are right.¹⁴

The implication seems to be that in all human action, no matter how great the force of factors beyond our control, there is an element of freedom: "though bound by necessity, we are in part free"¹⁵; and that therefore man is responsible. Butler does not develop the paradox of our being free by necessity, either in Erewhon or in his Notebooks, but dismisses it with the statement that "contradiction in terms is the bedrock on which our thoughts and deeds are founded."¹⁶ His criterion for public and private morality is thus not as one critic would have it, "simply and without reserve a biological standard."¹⁷ Rather, he makes a plea for a recognition of the enormous influence biological factors have in human life, and for a code which takes them into account, but which is grounded upon the assumption that man is in some measure free, and therefore to be held accountable for his actions.

Butler has one final criticism to make of the attitude of the English

towards morality, and that is of the hypocrisy it breeds. He refers several times to the deceit with which the Erewhonians disguise any suggestion of ill-health:

In their eagerness to stamp out disease, these people overshot their mark; for people had become so clever at dissembling - they painted their faces with such consummate skill - that it was really impossible to say whether any one was well or ill till after an intimate acquaintance of months or years. Even then, the shrewdest were constantly mistaken in their judgements, and marriages were often contracted with most deplorable results, owing to the art with which infirmity had been concealed.¹⁸

The reasons for this deception are obvious; no one is going to admit to ill health if he will receive only condemnation, even from those to whom he trusts his mental health. Similarly, no one is going to admit to mental disturbances if he knows he will be "scouted" for it. Understanding that moral shortcomings are really mental disturbances caused for a large part by circumstances beyond the individual's control, Butler has only contempt and anger for a code which prevents the individual from admitting his illness and attempting to have it cured. It is interesting, by the way, to note that Butler makes a connection between mental and physical illness, and realizes that in some cases the physical symptoms are but manifestations of a deep-seated psychological disturbance.

Butler exposes the results of the hypocrisy and deceit on both the social and individual level. There are, first of all, the marriages "contracted with most deplorable results". Because of the rigidity of the English code, people suffering from mental disturbances are not allowed to seek a cure, but are forced to disguise them, and thus pass on to their

children their own quirks, multiplying the disease.¹⁹ The effects of this absurdity on individuals is illustrated in the case of the pathetic Mahaina, who is forced to pretend that she is a dipsomaniac in order to disguise her natural frailty. Custom forbids her to seek help for her condition, and she is the object of regular character assassinations and malicious, hypocritical gossip among her more knowing acquaintances.

Butler's hatred of hypocrisy and his sensitive awareness of its effects on both society and the individual are not only present in his reflections upon English morality but also form the basis of the second major topic of Erewhon, the Christian, and in particular, the Anglican Church. He attacks Anglicanism from two directions, both as a social institution and as it is manifested in the individual; furthermore it is as an Anglican that Higgs is chiefly satirized.

In the early chapters of the book Higgs relates his efforts to save the soul of the heathen Chowbuk, and in the narration of the baptism and its results, we get the impression that Butler is gleefully delighted with his own irreverence. We are presented, first of all, with the amusing sight of a pompous young Englishman trying to explain the mysteries of the Trinity to an ignorant savage, who, so far from being able to comprehend these more esoteric points of Christian metaphysics, can scarcely understand the language. There is a puckish humour behind Higgs' bewilderment at the immediate results of Chowbuk's baptism:

... on the evening of the same day that I baptized him he tried for the twentieth time to steal the brandy, which

made me rather unhappy as to whether I could have baptized him rightly.²⁰

and the description of the ultimate effects of the aboriginal's conversion are hilarious:

... the only thing... which had taken any living hold upon him was the title of Adelaide the Queen Dowager, which he would repeat when strongly moved or touched, and which did really seem to have some deep spiritual significance to him, though he could never completely separate her individuality from that of Mary Magdalene, whose name also fascinated him, though in a lesser degree.²¹

Were Higgs' only fault in this situation a failure to recognize the impossibility of explaining the sophisticated doctrine of Christianity to one completely foreign to the tradition, we might have forgiven him, even though we deride his stupidity. But it is made perfectly clear that Higgs' concern for Chowbuk's spiritual welfare is motivated by anything but a spirit of altruism, and that Chowbuk's soul is of secondary importance - a means to an end. Besides a misplaced confidence in his teaching ability, Higgs exhibits a self-centredness which Christianity supposedly disallows:

[I] was the more inclined to [convert Chowbuk] over and above my real desire to save the unhappy creature from an eternity of torture by recollecting the promise of St. James that if anyone converted a sinner... he should hide a multitude of sins. I reflected, therefore, that the conversion of Chowbuk might in some degree compensate for irregularities and shortcomings in my own previous life, the remembrance of which had been more than once unpleasant to me in my recent experiences.²²

The value of Chowbuk as a passport to heaven is soon forgotten when Higgs reaches Erewhon, for he spies bigger game which promises not only greater spiritual profit but perhaps material gain as well. He convinces

himself that the Erewhonians are the ten lost tribes of Israel,²³ and his excitement at the possibility of converting them can only be described as a frenzy of greedy anticipation:

To restore the lost ten tribes of Israel to a knowledge of the only truth: here would be indeed an immortal crown of glory! My heart beat fast and furious as I entertained the thought. What a position would it not ensure me in the next world; or perhaps even in this! What folly it would be to throw such a chance away! I should rank next to the Apostles, if not as high as they - certainly above the minor prophets and possibly above any Old Testament writer except Moses and Isaiah.²⁴

Higgs is not long in the country before he intimates that, should he discover that the Erewhonians are not the lost tribes, he intends to exploit them for money, and by the end of the book, the twin motives of spiritual and material reward have been inextricably combined. He proposes that a company be formed for the mass conversion of Erewhon, and states that he plans to return to that country with a gunboat, and persuade some of the inhabitants, either by fraud or force, to emigrate to Queensland where they will be sold as slaves. To disguise the crass materialism of the scheme, he adds that it is imperative to see that the Erewhonians be lodged only with "religious sugar growers", who will instruct them in Christianity:

This must be insisted upon, both in order to put a stop to any uneasy feeling which might show itself either in Queensland or in the Mother-country as to the means whereby the Erewhonians had been obtained, and also because it would give our own shareholders the comfort of reflecting that they were saving souls and filling their own pockets at one and the same moment.²⁵

There is one final aspect to Higgs' evangelizing, and that is the extreme caution with which he undertakes it. For all his greed, we are assured that he will never attempt to carry out his scheme if it means the slightest personal danger or inconvenience. A good part of his excitement at the prospect of converting Erewhon arises from the fact that, if successful, he will have achieved it without having had to undergo the usual dangers of travel and acceptance by the natives - these he had accomplished in any case. But even the fact that he has received a reasonably warm welcome in Erewhon is not enough for him, and the only person whom he makes any active effort to convert is Arowhena, who is in love with him, and therefore not likely to betray his "blasphemy". He is presented with several opportunities to expound his views to cultured, intelligent gentlemen, the most likely of all to give him a sympathetic hearing, but he holds back, his desires for their salvation and his own benefit being checked by the fear that speaking his mind might endanger his position:

I always liked and admired these men, and although I could not help deeply regretting their certain ultimate perdition..., I never dared to take so great a liberty with them as to attempt to put them in possession of my own religious convictions, in spite of my knowing that they were the only ones which could make them really good and happy, either here or hereafter. I did try sometimes, being compelled to do so by a strong sense of duty, and by my deep regret that so much that was admirable should be doomed to ages if not eternity of torture; but the words stuck in my thought as soon as I began.²⁶

It must not be thought, however, that Butler is satirizing Higgs' motives concerning Erewhon. As far as the grand scheme outlined at the end

is concerned, what Butler is really getting at is that lack of respect for fellow humans which underlies it, and the fact that so much of the so-called evangelizing of the nineteenth century was a thin disguise for profiteering and imperialism. It is the hypocrisy of capitalism and allied mercantile theory, rather than the theory itself, which he attacks:

The irony is directed rather against those who pretend to disregard wealth than against those who regard it highly.... Butler would have been distressed if he had thought that it might lead readers to question the system of private property. What he was arguing for, quite frankly, was a candid recognition of the importance of money.²⁷

As far as Butler can see, man is a basically acquisitive animal, and it is his considered opinion that money is "the most valuable thing in life."²⁸ It is necessary in order that man be able to follow that instinct which Butler's readings in evolution taught him was the primary instinct in all animals, self-preservation. Thus, he sees the Christian ideals of selflessness and material sacrifice not only as unnatural, but as impossible to attain. It is all very well to "love thy neighbour", but first and foremost in every man's mind, whether he admits it or not, is concern for his own welfare: "The true laws of God are the laws of our own well-being."²⁹ This is why we have the apparently contradictory pictures of Higgs risking his neck to get into Erewhon but refusing to speak his mind once there. His desire to find a passage through the mountains is motivated by a desire for money, the only means by which he can ensure his well-being, but in Erewhon, as a virtual prisoner, his survival instincts prevent him from endangering an already precarious position. The point of the satire upon Higgs-the-evangelist is not that man is really self-seeking and self-regarding, but that he refuses to admit it; that the Christians try to

pretend that their love is for God and their brothers, when it is really for themselves. Even those who sincerely believe in an afterlife are not unselfish, for as Butler shows with Higgs, it is merely a matter of substituting the greater rewards of heaven for the more immediate ones of the world. Butler is firmly convinced that the motives of self-preservation and acquisitiveness are perfectly natural, and therefore right; to him, love of God does not consist in selfless asceticism, but in having "good looks, good sense, experience, a kindly nature, and a fair balance of cash in hand."³⁰ The only quality which is directed outward is that of kindness, by means of which the two basic instincts are controlled, so as not to encroach upon the rights of others to follow these same instincts.

The Musical Banks serve to show that the hypocrisy which we have seen on the individual level in Higgs also operates on a national scale. The Musical Banks are representative of the Anglican Church as a social institution, and present Butler's opinion that Christianity in England is at best nominal. The currency of the Musical Banks is worthless, having "no direct commercial value in the outside world," and although everyone purports to believe that the money actually in circulation in Erewhon is gross compared to that of the Musical Banks, the actions of the Erewhonians constantly belie their words. And although most people keep a smaller or larger amount on account at the Musical Banks, it is clear that this is only a concession to respectability. Here again Butler exposes the hypocrisy of those who pretend to undervalue the things of this life when in actuality

they are keenly interested in them. To the majority of Englishmen, Butler feels, church is a place they visit at Christmas and Easter, and what they hear there has no meaning to them, and no relevance to the rest of their lives. Just as Zulora and Mrs. Nosnibor receive a handful of toy money for a piece of paper, so the Englishman receives a collection of irrelevant sayings and services for his token observance of Christian duty. And like Zulora and Mrs. Nosnibor, he leaves most of what he has received behind him, carrying with him only a few phrases or ideas to display his piety to the world.

Butler is no theologian, and his reflections upon Christianity are not primarily concerned with doctrinal issues. He does not do much beyond attacking the rigidity of Christian ethics which he, as a relativist, found abhorrent and absurd. He also ridicules the idea that there is any such thing as absolute virtue or absolute vice. His sympathies on this point are completely with the Erewhonians, who hold that "unalloyed virtue is not a thing to be immoderately indulged in."³¹ As we have already seen, he is also angered by any system which refuses to have regard for particular circumstances, but which sees right and wrong in terms of black and white. He refutes this whole idea in the illustration of a man entering the water to save a child, as against falling in accidentally, pointing out the absurdity of judging the two acts on the same basis. His Notebooks give ample evidence that he believes morality to be relative, and show him as being fundamentally opposed to Christian absolutism:

Morality is the custom of one's country and the current feelings of one's peers. Cannibalism is moral in a cannibal country.³²

One further aspect of Christianity which Butler attacks is its anthropomorphism, a point which is raised by Higgs' attempts to convince Arowhena that the Erewhonian deities are only idealized personifications of man's highest conceptions of love, justice, hope, and so forth, and have no real objective existence. Arowhena refuses to be moved, and gives the stock Christian reply to arguments that it should be admitted that a personal God is only a subjective conception:

... with man's belief in the personality all incentive to the reverence of the thing itself, as justice or hope, would cease; men from that hour would never be either just or hopeful again.³³

The satire is heightened and re-enforced when Arowhena turns around and applies the same reasoning to Higgs' own God. He is shaken only for a moment, and quickly bounces back with the reply that such could not be the case because tradition says otherwise:

... I recovered myself immediately, and pointed out to her that we had books whose genuineness was beyond all possibility of doubt, as they were certainly none of them less than 1800 years old; that in these there were the most authentic accounts of men who had been spoken to by the deity Himself, and of one prophet who had been allowed to see the back parts of God through the hand that was laid over his face.³⁴

Butler's attack on the actual rites of the church is limited to satire on baptism, probably because it was doubt in the efficacy of it which first led him to question his faith. I have already mentioned

the humourous handling of Higgs' baptizing Chowbuk, and the former's naive wonder that the outward and visible signs produce no inward and spiritual grace, but Butler's criticism cuts much deeper than this. Higgs describes to us the Erewhonian tradition of the birth-formulae, which is based upon a belief in a pre-existent state which the human soul leaves only of its own accord. As well as being a nice comment upon parents who treat their offspring as though it is his own fault he was ever born, this also has reference to the doctrine of original sin, and is tied in with the whole question of moral responsibility. To Butler, the idea that an infant stands in need of spiritual regeneration by the mere fact of his being born is as hateful as the idea that the individual is to be held accountable for the conditions in which he was raised and the qualities which he inherited from his parents. One of Higgs's remarks upon Erewhonian law tells us that in that country, ignorance and lack of opportunity for knowledge of the law are not considered valid reasons for escaping punishments, and while this refers immediately to the same tradition in British law, one cannot help but feel that there is also a reference to the doctrine of the Fall. Butler would be of the opinion that a doctrine which consigns to perdition even those who have had no conceivable opportunity to be baptized stems from exactly the same kind of thinking which allows people to be punished for no other reason than that they are unlucky, a kind of thinking which can state:

You may say that it is your misfortune to be criminal;
I answer that it is your crime to be unfortunate.³⁵

As he was in the matter of morality, so in the matter of the church Butler is concerned to expose the effects of hypocrisy upon the individual, in this case, the clergyman. There is a strongly personal note and an unusual bitterness behind Higgs' description of the cashiers of the Musical Banks, a bitterness probably directly related to the fact that Butler himself narrowly escaped being ordained into a faith which he later came to reject. The cashiers are described by Higgs as lacking the frankness, health, and happiness of most of their fellow Erewhonians, a lack which he attributes to the fact that a large number of them have been committed to their profession before they have had a chance to examine either the system or their own feelings about it. Butler believes that too often the methods of inducing young men to enter the church are tainted with fraud or coercion, and he is especially critical of the English habit of buying livings with the express purpose of forcing sons to fill them merely in order to give evidence of devoutness. He is also deeply sympathetic towards the plight of the clergy once they are ordained, for they are no longer treated as other men, but with a false piety and stiff decorum. Finally, he is aware of the dangers to which they are subject should they ever come to doubt what they profess:

Some few were opponents of the whole system; but these were liable to be dismissed from their employment at any moment, and this rendered them very careful, for a man who had once been cashier at a Musical Bank was out of the field for other employment, and was generally unfitted for it by reason of that course of treatment which was commonly called his education. In fact it was a career from which retreat was virtually impossible, and into which young men were generally induced to enter before they could be reasonably expected, considering their training, to have formed any opinions of their own. ³⁶

Butler's attitude towards the position of the church in the modern world is ambiguous. On the one hand, he is convinced, as I have indicated, that the majority of those who profess the faith are hypocrites, and do so only as a concession to respectability. He believes that Christian teaching contradicts man's basic and natural instincts, and is seldom, if ever, followed. Furthermore, he is of the opinion that most of the fundamentals of Christianity, including the concept of a personal deity, are grounded in superstitions. Finally, he apparently thinks that England is on the eve of some kind of religious revolution:

So far as I could see, fully ninety percent of the population of the metropolis looked upon these banks with something not far removed from contempt. If this is so, any such startling event as is sure to arise sooner or later, may serve as a nucleus to a new order of things that will be more in harmony with both the heads and the hearts of the people.³⁷

On the other hand, however, Butler recognizes that the church does have some part, however small, to play in the world; if nothing else, it bears witness to the unseen world and reminds men that "though the world looms so large when we are in it, it may seem a little thing when we are away from it."³⁸ Although he devotes considerable effort in Erewhon to exposing the church to ridicule, he nowhere suggests that the institution be abolished, and seems to be of the opinion that it, or some similar edifice, is necessary for the stability of society. Indeed, one is almost tempted to think that Butler would heartily endorse the sentiments of Swift's persona in "The Abolishing of Christianity".

Any answer which Butler does offer to the problems he has raised is to be found in the chapter on Ydgrunism. As his critics and biographers never tire of pointing out, Butler was a good bit of an Ydgrunite himself in his personal life.³⁹ His attitude toward Mrs. Grundy, as is amply illustrated by Erewhon, is that not only in matters of religion, but in most other aspects of life, she ought to be observed to ensure the stability of the society. Remembering Butler's relativism, we can easily understand this, for in the absence of any absolute system of law and morality, the best man can do is to follow the collective wisdom of the ages. He does not deny that convention is a deity who is at times both cruel and absurd - these are the very qualities against which most of his satire is directed - and recognizes that there are times when she ought to be disobeyed, but for the most part he is content to observe her ritual:

Take her all in all, however, she was a beneficent and useful deity, who did not care how much she was denied so long as she was obeyed and feared, and who kept hundreds of thousands in those paths which make life tolerably happy, who would never have been kept there otherwise, and over whom a higher and more spiritual ideal would have had no power.⁴⁰

This is also the attitude of the high Ydgrunites, who would seem to represent Butler's ideal. Of them, Higgs says that "in the matters of human conduct and affairs of life, [they] appeared to me to have got about as far as it is in the right nature of man to go."⁴¹ They are models of good breeding (in all senses of the word) which is for Butler the summum bonum of human existence,⁴² and as well as being wealthy, are

possessed of all the qualities which Butler admired in men:

He respected not only money, but also the leisure, the prestige, and the graces that money can help to provide.⁴³

Besides all this, the High Ydgrunites are essentially conservative, and "would never run counter to [Ydgrun's] dictates without ample reason for doing so." They are, in fact, representative of the finest of English nobility, and embody everything that Butler either was or would have liked to have been. Thus, the High Ydgrunites, although they no longer believe in the traditional deities of their country, do not openly attack them, out of respect for those who still do believe. Furthermore, in other matters in which they disagree with the dictates of convention, they do not blatantly flout it, but merely go their own way with dignified firmness and gentlemanly resolve. The highest compliment Butler can pay them, in fact, is that they are gentlemen, through and through, and in his presentation of the Ydgrunites, he reveals himself to us as an eminently respectable, conservative, Victorian kind of critic. There is some doubt in my mind as to whether he is best called "an un-Victorian Victorian"⁴⁴ or a conservative radical.

The examination of English morality, religion, and convention occupies a good half of Erewhon, which half may be said to have as its underlying theme the condemnation of hypocrisy. The satire of the remainder of the book is of a more personal and topical nature, and lacks any such thematic unity. Indeed, perhaps the chief interest of these

later chapters lies in the fact that in them are to be found the embryos of themes which were to become central issues of Butler's subsequent writing. This is not to say that they are not interesting and entertaining in their own right, however, and in spite of the fact that much of the satire is directly linked to Butler's personal life, there emerge at least two topics which are of general application, family relations and education.

I have already mentioned that in giving us the Erewhonian tradition of the Unborn, Butler provides a convenient, although totally absurd, fiction for those parents who blame the child for his birth. For the Erewhonians, in fact, the myth of the Unborn is a means by which they can justify marriage and child-bearing. They argue that unless it is true that children are born of their own free will; no man has any right to have children:

...it would be a monstrous freedom for one man to take with another, to say that he should undergo the chances and changes of this mortal life without any option in the matter. No man would have any right to get married at all, inasmuch as he can never tell what frightful misery his doing so may entail forcibly upon a being who cannot be unhappy as long as he does not exist. [The Erewhonians] feel this so strongly that they are resolved to shift the blame on to other shoulders....45

The ceremony of the birth-formulae can thus be seen as something more than a parody of baptism; it is also directed against those parents who disclaim responsibility not only for the child's birth, but also for

his upbringing and the shape which his adult character assumes. By insisting that the child is responsible for his own moral life (which is what the baptismal service implies) these parents can ignore the factors of environment and heredity - factors over which they have more control than the child - and thus avoid taking any blame upon themselves should he grow up to be anything less than a model of virtue. Furthermore, Butler points out that because it is the parents, and not the child, who are responsible for his birth, they have a moral obligation to provide him with the best upbringing and education within their power. His condemnation of Victorian parenthood, contained in the lecture to the Unborn, is bitter, and has many echoes of his own miserable childhood:

Consider the infinite risk; to be born of wicked parents and trained in vice! to be born of silly parents and to be trained in unrealities! of parents who regard you as a sort of chattel or property, belonging more to them than to yourself! Again, you may draw utterly unsympathetic parents who will never be able to understand you, and will do their best to thwart you... and then call you ungrateful because you do not love them; or, again, you may draw parents who look upon you as a thing to be cowed while it is still young, lest it should give them trouble hereafter by having wishes and feelings of its own.⁴⁶

Butler has enumerated almost every crime of which a parent can be guilty, and every one can be traced to the initial crime of refusing to recognize a parent's natural duty towards the being to whom he has given life. The whole section on the sins of parents can, in fact, be seen as a restatement of the eternal cry of misunderstood youth: "I didn't ask to be born."

Butler is honest enough, however, to admit that not all the blame for uncongenial family relations can be laid at the door of the parents. While it is true that no child asks to be born, it is equally true that the majority of parents did not ask to give birth. He shows that although parents have a duty to give their child the best upbringing within their power, children also have a duty to be grateful. It is made abundantly clear, however, that gratitude is to be forthcoming only if the parents' duty is fulfilled:

There is no talisman in the word 'parent' which can generate miracles of affection.⁴⁷

The most important aspect of the parents' duty to their child is that of educating him to earn his own living, for - and this is typical of Butler - the main obstacle to natural affection among families is money. He criticizes Victorian parents not only for failing to accomplish this, but also for perpetuating, through a perverse desire to conform and be thought respectable, the very system which makes it impossible to do so. In Butler's opinion, the classical education is useless and utterly impractical, and accomplishes little more than fitting the student for the rather dubious pastime of translating his country's own good poetry into Latin. In place of the classical curriculum, Butler desires to see one which teaches a child how to care for himself. He would have compulsory, state-aided education continue only until the child has learned to read, write, and do simple arithmetic, after which he is set as an apprentice to whatever trade or profession he wishes to pursue. Butler's criticisms of the English classical education have at

their root the same hatred for mindless rigidity which informed his satire upon English law and morality, for the chief obstacle confronting educational reform is the refusal to admit the obvious fact that not everyone is suited to study the same subjects. Butler does not suggest that the old curriculum be thrown out entirely, but asks only that only those who desire to study the classics, and who show a facility for such study, be allowed to do so.

The satire upon classical education is continued in Higgs' visits to the Colleges of Unreason. Here, besides returning again to the exposure of the impracticality of it, Butler also exposes the kind of thinking which helps keep it alive:

The word academism includes the bulk of what Butler attacked in educational aims and practices. It signified for him not merely that remoteness from life which academics of one kind or another are usually charged, but also those faults in their training which have been exposed in recent years by experimental psychology.⁴⁸

Like most of the satire in Erewhon, however, that upon English education is not all aimed in the same direction. It is true that Butler criticizes English schools and colleges for failing to teach the students to think for themselves, but it is also true that such a practice prevents that kind of "intellectual over-indulgence" which Butler parodies so beautifully in the Book of Machines. Furthermore, in view of Butler's relativism and conservatism, it is not surprising that he should hesitate to advocate a system which would give rise to unbridled intellectualism

and a rampant individualism, both of which would lead to the overthrow of convention without regard as to whether it was good or bad. The young professor's views on progress, which such a system would encourage, are undoubtedly Butler's own:

'We like progress', he said, 'but it must commend itself to the common sense of the people. If a man gets to know more than his neighbours, he should keep his knowledge to himself till he has sounded them, and see whether they agree, or are likely to agree with him'.⁴⁹

In other words, although Butler understands that progress is both inevitable and desirable, he is of the opinion that it should be made gradually and with due respect for the conventions which are the foundations of society. There seems to be in Butler's attitude towards progress a fear of the dangers a too hasty step forward could present to the society, as well as a desire to rely for guidance upon the collective wisdom of the ages. This is why a man should seek conformation for his new ideas from his compeers - one man alone can be wrong, but if he should be right, then sooner or later other men will advance to his position. Thus, although Butler still apparently retains some notion of the Victorian belief in the inevitability of progress, it is a belief tempered with caution and reserve.

The Book of Machines and the Rights of Animals and Vegetables are chiefly important to the satire as parodies of the results of intellectual excess, and for that reason shall not be discussed in any length. The Book of Machines is also, of course, of vital importance to the study

of Butler's feud with Darwin, but the writings on evolution are beyond the scope of this thesis. Furthermore, although the passage has frightening implications to the modern reader, it is doubtful that Butler intended it as much more than jeu d'esprit. If it has any serious undertones relating to the question of mechanization, I do not think that they are any more than a manifestation of that vague distrust which Butler apparently felt towards the idea of progress.

Although he was remarkably prescient in his views upon penology and mental health, I believe that he was too much a man of his class and of his times to have ever envisioned the disorientation of society which mechanization has brought about. If he had any opinions on the matter at all, I think they are those put forth by the "mechanics" rather than by the "anti-mechanics":

'Thus civilization and mechanical progress advanced hand in hand, each developing and being developed by the other.... In fact, machines are to be regarded as the mode of development by which human organism is now especially advancing, every past invention being an addition to the resources of the human body.'⁵⁰

The main satiric point of the Book of Machines is to illustrate the dangers inherent in logic. The anti-mechanic who wrote the Book of Machines uses perfectly consistent reasoning in his treatise, the reasoning of analogy. Unfortunately, the analogy is false, for men are not "just like machines",⁵¹ but that does not prevent his work from causing a bloody civil war and the annihilation of a great industrial civilization.

In his treatise on the Rights of Animals, Butler examines further the absurdities into which reason and logic can lead. Again, the reasoning behind the whole idea is perfectly consistent, but the results are absurd, as the second treatise on the rights of vegetables, which carries the reasoning of the first to their logical conclusions, proves. It is here that the full meaning of the Erewhonian professor's remarks on logic become clear:

Reason betrays men into the drawing of hard and fast lines, and to the defining by language - language being like the sun, which rears and then scorches. Extremes alone are logical, but they are always absurd; the mean is illogical, but an illogical mean is better than the sheer absurdity of an extreme.⁵²

Man is not, for Butler, a reasonable animal, and human life is not governed by the laws of logic. If it were not for irrationality and illogic, life would be unlivable. Unfortunately, some men refuse to be convinced of this, particularly the fence-sitting academics who can argue both sides of any question with equal logic and equal conviction, and the new devotees of science who, Butler came to fear, were bent upon setting up a new religion with science as its deity and Darwin as its chief priest.⁵³ But it is not only the scholars and scientists who are guilty of this flaw, but also the great mass of the English nation. It is logic and reason which are behind the absolutism and extremism of English morality, religion, and law, and it is the illogical mean which is presented in the Ydgrunites and in Butler's relativism. Butler is not content, however, merely to present the mean and leave it at that; he realizes that the only way to combat the trust in logic and reason is to force its statements to their logical and absurd conclusions, as the writer of the

Rights of Vegetables does. Thus Butler shows that it is just as logical to punish people for ill-health as for mental diseases, to prosecute them for misfortune as to admire and reward them for good luck, to have a double system of material currency as a double system of morality. In fact, if one were forced to characterize Erewhon in a single phrase, perhaps he could not do better than to call it a celebration of illogic:

... this merciful provision of nature, this buffer against collusions, this friction which upsets our calculations and without which existence would be intolerable, this crowning glory of human invention whereby we can be blind and see at one and the same moment, this blessed inconsistency....⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

The discussion in the preceding chapters has, I believe, provided ample evidence that satire is basically moral in intention, and that it can be classified under the general heading of didactic literature. Each of the four satirists whose work I have examined has tried to show what he believes is wrong with society, in the hopes that his readers' recognition of the vices and follies which he has exposed will lead them to try to reform. There is, however, one major difference to be found between satire and most other forms of didacticism, a difference which is analogous to that between a mirror and a painting. What the non-satiric moralist generally does is to present us with an ideal which we are intended to follow. Spenser, for example, portrays the epitome of knighthood and the perfection of womanhood, saying in effect, "this is what you should try to be." The satirist, on the other hand, holds a mirror up to man exposed in all his pettiness, foolishness, and wickedness, saying, "This is what you are."

Because the satirist's methods are those of distortion and exaggeration, it is very often charged that his mirror is warped, and that the image with which we are presented is grossly misshapen.¹ It is argued that his representations of human life are not true, and that therefore we cannot be expected to profit by them. As James Sutherland points out, however, such a criticism springs from reading satire too literally:

It exists on at least two levels, the overt and the implied; and it can only function properly when

the tact and the intelligence and the imagination of the satirist are met by a corresponding response in the reader.... The reader has to supply the positive from the satirist's negative and the desirable from the contemptible; he has to interpret the allegory, to understand the significance of the symbol, to realize the implications of what he has read.... The distortion is not in the eye of the beholder, but in the object observed.²

The satirist does not show what is not there, and his "distortion" really consists only in a shift in emphasis, which is made in order to shock the readers into a realization of what is there, but which they habitually ignore. One good example of this shift in emphasis is Byron's description of Juan's first sight of London:

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
 Dirty and dusky, but wide as eye
 Could reach,....

(X.82)

Byron does not intend to deny the majesty and beauty of the city, but he does wish to point out that besides the beauty there is smoke and dirt and dust. Both elements are there, but the one is ignored because it is inconvenient and unpleasant. Or again, there are Swift's Yahoos. Their grotesque bestiality is not intended as a repudiation of man's better qualities, but only as a reiteration of that side of human nature which the Rationalists pretend does not exist, as well as an illustration of the perversity of those who go to the opposite extreme and say that man is completely depraved. The mirror that the satirist holds up to life is not, then, distorted, but rather highly polished, and cleansed of the comforting (because inaccurate) fogs of hypocrisy and deceit.

It is no mere coincidence that two basic themes in all four of the works

we have looked at have been the allied ones of hypocrisy and self-deception, for it is these twin vices which prevent the mass of mankind from admitting to the flaws of his person and his society. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the great theme of satire is the disparity between appearance and reality. In The Alchemist, Jonson shows us the irrationality which underlies most human life, but to which most people would never admit. Gulliver's Travels gives the lie to the comfortable myths of man's goodness and potential perfectability. Don Juan exposes the selfishness and emptiness of European society which is hidden behind the thin mask of assumed honour, virtue, and love. Butler reveals the illogic and inconsistency which are the foundations of human existence and which are in direct contradiction to the common supposition that man is a reasonable animal whose life is ordered by the laws of logic.

The question to be asked, and for which this thesis has attempted to provide an answer, is "what is the attitude of the satirist which causes him to hold his mirror up to mankind?" Some idea of this attitude may be arrived at if we review for a moment certain qualities which the four satirists studied have been shown to share in common. First and foremost is that of being realistic. The concern with hypocrisy and self-deception is motivated by a desire to force us to a realization of the actual facts of human existence. Coupled with this realism is a kind of pessimism. All the works indicate that their authors are anything but idealistic. Their vision of man's depravity and irrationality is too clear ever to permit them to believe in the possibility of a utopian existence. As I have tried to

show, the solution which each proposes for the evils and follies he has revealed is a kind of compromise. Jonson does not hope that man will ever be free from greed and lust; the most he can hope for is that he will learn to control these instincts by the use of his reason. Swift is angered and frightened by those who propose that reason is man's essential characteristic, and that it is a sufficient guide for human existence. He believes that man must take into account the animality of his nature, and support his reason by faith. Byron, as I suggested, seems to be working towards some kind of love as the answer to the sickness of European society, but there is little indication that he believes this love will provide the final solution in the sense that men will ever come to perfect attainment of it. Rather, he would seem to suggest only that we must strive towards it as far as we are capable if there is to be any alleviation of the selfishness which characterizes most men. Even Butler, who is probably the least bitter of the four, demands a recognition of that "blessed inconsistency" and of the fact that the habit of being reasonable and logical about life inevitably results in absurdity.

There is a third common quality of the four artists which is closely connected to the two discussed above, and that is their essential conservatism. Just as none is naive enough to believe that a utopian existence is attainable in this life, so none is foolish enough to propose radical changes in human laws and institutions. Jonson, in his Christian humanism, is distrustful of the new philosophy, for he recognizes in it not only the possibilities of abuse and fraud, but also of the fragmentation of human

society because of the emphasis on materialism. Swift advocates a return to traditional Anglican dogma, and Butler, for all his iconoclasm, is the most Victorian of Victorians, as his insistence upon the observance of convention indicates. Even Byron, whose political opinions were considered extreme by his contemporaries, shows an unwillingness to overthrow the Establishment in England, and although his advocacy of revolution on the continent may be considered radical, one has the feeling that it stems more from a realization that desperate measures are necessary to correct desperate situations than from any illusions in the efficacy of liberalism. Throughout Don Juan there is evidence of a distrust for the masses and of a belief in the need for leadership from members of the old aristocracy.

The attitude of the satirist, then, is composed of a clear recognition of the flaws of man and society and an understanding that these flaws can never be completely eradicated. Behind this, however, one can detect an earnest desire that this was not so. Although the satirist is realistic enough to realize that no proposal he can make will ever lead men completely out of their error, he is not satisfied, and it is from his dissatisfaction that the pungent quality of the humour of satire is derived. The anger and bitterness which are often so close to the surface of satiric works come, I believe, from the satirist's frustration with his fellow man. It disturbs him that we can so complaisantly ignore the faults which to him are glaringly apparent, and there also seems to be an exasperated awareness on his part that, even though he forces us to see these faults, we are not

going to do much to correct them, for the simple reason that it is not within our nature to do so. In fact, the satiric attitude can be summed up in a single phrase: frustrated idealism. On the one hand, the satirist sees only too clearly the flaws which mar human society and individual life, and he holds strong convictions concerning the remedies for them. He knows that if man could only be brought to real self-knowledge, honesty, and a consideration for his fellows, most of the evils which plague him would be dissipated. But even as he looks longingly towards the means of perfection, he is prevented from any idealistic optimism by his bitter knowledge that they are unattainable, that man is naturally selfish and irrational, and that no amount of preaching or example will ever make him otherwise.

In the face of this description of the satiric attitude, what becomes of the common charges of hate and misanthropy? In the first place, it appears to me that to call an artist a true misanthrope is a contradiction in terms. If a man really despairs of the human race and is convinced that the situation is so hopeless that he can only wash his hands of it, why would he bother to write? It is true that if satire were completely destructive, one could argue with some justification that his sole motive was revenge, but as I have illustrated, the satirist never wantonly destroys; for every folly and vice which he exposes he offers some alternative, either explicitly or by implication. Rather than hatred, I believe it is love for mankind that is at the base of the satiric attitude, or if not love, at least a genuine concern. It is this concern which justifies his art, for even while he is aware that the bulk of mankind will pay no heed

to him, he hopes that some few will profit by his writing, and that he will have thus brought about some small measure of improvement in the human condition. As for the rest of mankind, the satirist must content himself with stripping away the pretensions upon which they ground their existence. This exposure cannot, however, be said to be purely negative and destructive, for as I have said, behind it is the hope that at least one person will learn from it. And if the satirist's laughter at the expense of most men is derisive, it is only because he is in the unfortunate position of recognizing that, in spite of man's theoretical potential, he is really a ridiculous and absurd creature. Satiric laughter is laughter in self-defense; if the satirist lost his ability to laugh, he would be able to do nothing but weep.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION.

¹An example of this distrust for satirists is found in Anna Jameson, Shakespeare's Heroines (London, 1913), p.7. This book was first published in 1832, and in the Introduction, the author tells us that the spirit of satire "seems twice accursed; - evil in those who indulge it - evil to those who are the objects of it".

²Gilbert Highet, The Anatomy of Satire (Princeton, 1962), p.156.

³cf. E.P. Wilson, "Morose Ben Jonson" in Jonas A. Barish, ed., Ben Jonson. A Collection of Critical Essays (hereafter referred to as Jonson: Essays) (Englewood Cliffs, 1963), pp.60-74, in which Jonson's satiric art and classicism are discussed in terms of anal-eroticism.

⁴Irvin Ehrenpreis, The Personality of Jonathan Swift (London, 1958), has refuted these misapprehensions.

⁵William Makepeace Thackeray, English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1853), pp.37-38.

⁶Ben Karpman, "Neurotic Traits of Jonathan Swift as Revealed by Gulliver's Travels", Psychoanalytic Review, XXIX (1942), pp.27-28.

⁷John Dryden, Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire, vol. XIII, The Works of John Dryden (Edinburgh, 1887), p.77.

⁸cf. Peter Quennell, Byron in Italy (London, 1951), p.141: "To credit the poem with a morality or 'message' would be, of course, absurd. Few works are more amoral in intention or attitude."

⁹Aubrey L. Williams, Pope's 'Dunciad'. A Study of its Meaning (London, 1955), p.4.

¹⁰Ibid., pp.2-7.

¹¹Lord Byron, Don Juan, ed. Louis I. Bredvold (New York, 1935), I.208.

¹²Ben Jonson, "Prologue", The Alchemist, vol. V, Ben Jonson (Oxford, 1925), I. 12.

CHAPTER I.

¹C.H. Herford, "Introduction to The Alchemist", The Man and His Work, vol.II, Ben Jonson (Oxford, 1925), p.88.

²C.G. Thayer, Ben Jonson. Studies in the Plays (Norman, 1963), p.84.

³T.S. Eliot, "Ben Jonson", in Jonson: Essays, p.88.

⁴Ben Jonson, "Prologue", The Alchemist, l. 12. All further references to The Alchemist are from the Herford and Simpson edition and shall be indicated in the text, e.g., (I.i.10-11). For the sake of convenience, the spelling has been modernized.

⁵Herford, op. cit., p.89.

⁶Ibid., p.103.

⁷Jonas A. Barish, "Introduction", Jonson: Essays, p.7.

⁸Swift's Gulliver is, as I shall attempt to show, an exception to this rule in that his character is developed. He is, nevertheless, still a type figure.

⁹Thayer, op. cit., p.54.

¹⁰Wilson, op. cit., pp.60-74.

¹¹Leslie Trimpi, Ben Jonson's Poems: A Study of the Plain Style (Stanford, 1962), Part I, pp.3-91.

¹²Thayer, op.cit., pp.102-111.

¹³Ibid., p.102.

¹⁴Edward B. Partridge, The Broken Compass. A Study of the Major Comedies of Ben Jonson (London, 1958), p.125.

¹⁵Jonson, Discoveries, vol. VIII, Ben Jonson, p.605.

¹⁶Thayer, op. cit., p.106.

¹⁷Partridge, op. cit., pp.118-119.

¹⁸Discoveries, p.580

¹⁹Partridge, op. cit., p.115.

20 Ibid., pp.147-148.

21 Helena Watts Baum, The Satiric and the Didactic in Ben Jonson's Plays (Chapel Hill, 1947), p.102.

22 There is also, of course, an area of political satire; Jonson is here making reference to the Crown's practice of selling lands for immediate profit at the expense of debasing the aristocracy and gentry.

23 Herford, op. cit., pp.103-104.

24 Ibid., p.105.

25 Partridge, op. cit., p.149.

26 This fact is a further indication (if any be needed) that Jonson is writing satiric comedy, and not tragedy. I believe also that Volpone shares this lack of moral sense with *Face and Subtle*, a point which perhaps lessens the problems which have been seen to exist in the earlier play.

27 Herford, op. cit., p.104.

28 Discoveries, p.594.

29 Herman A.E. van Gelder, The Two Reformations of the Sixteenth Century; A Study of the Religious Aspects and Consequences of the Renaissance and Humanism, trans. Jan F. Finlay and Alison Hanham (The Hague, 1961), p.29.

30 Jonson appears to have taken little interest in doctrinal and dogmatic disputation, the only means by which he would have been able to distinguish the different sects: "These fencers in religion I like not": Discoveries, pp.596. cf. the whole of this passage, ll. 1046-1057, pp. 595-596.

31 This interpretation also clears up the problems of Bonario and Celia in Volpone. cf. Thayer, op. cit., pp.52-53.

32 Herford, op. cit., p.97.

33 Thayer, op. cit., p.84.

34 Ibid., p.90.

35 Ibid., p.92.

36 Ibid., pp.105-106.

³⁷ Ibid., p.90.

³⁸ Partridge, op. cit., p.126. Partridge's examination of the religious imagery in The Alchemist has been invaluable to this part of my discussion.

³⁹ Ibid., p.129.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp.131-132.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.158.

⁴² Loc. cit.

CHAPTER II.

¹ One modern throwback to this outmoded attitude towards satire is Gilbert Highet's Anatomy of Satire.

² Irvin Ehrenpreis, op. cit.

³ Kathleen Williams, Jonathan Swift and the Age of Compromise (Lawrence, 1959).

⁴ cf. Ricardo Quintana, "Note on Irvin Ehrenpreis's 'The Origins of Gulliver's Travels'", Philological Quarterly, XXXVII (July, 1958), 354-355; George Sherburn, "Errors Concerning the Houyhnhnms", Modern Philology, LVI (November, 1958), 92-97.

⁵ Ricardo Quintana, The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift (London, 1953)

⁶ Sherburn, op. cit.

⁷ F.R. Leavis, "The Irony of Swift", in his The Common Pursuit (London, 1953), pp.73-87.

⁸ Quintana, Mind and Art, p.321.

⁹ Ernest Tuveson, "Swift, The Dean as Satirist", in Tuveson, ed., Jonathan Swift. A Collection of Critical Essays (hereafter referred to as Swift: Essays) (Englewood Cliffs, 1964), p.107.

¹⁰ Ibid., p.105.

¹¹ Quintana, "Note on 'The Origins of Gulliver's Travels'", p.355.

- 12 Samuel H. Monk, "The Pride of Lemuel Gulliver", The Sewanee Review, LXIII (Winter, 1955), 55.
- 13 Williams, Age of Compromise, p.196.
- 14 cf. Sherburn, op. cit.
- 15 Calhoun Winton, "Conversion on the Road to Houyhnhnmland", The Sewanee Review, LXVIII (Winter, 1960), 24.
- 16 Tuveson, op. cit., p.105.
- 17 Williams, Age of Compromise, p.196.
- 18 Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels, ed. Louis L. Landa (Boston 1960), p.16.
- 19 John F. Ross, "The Final Comedy of Lemuel Gulliver", Swift: Essays, pp.75-76.
- 20 Williams, Age of Compromise, p.212.
- 21 Gulliver's Travels, p.26.
- 22 Ibid., p.58.
- 23 Ibid., p.48.
- 24 Martin Price, Swift's Rhetorical Art. A Study in Structure and Meaning (Hamdon, 1963), p.84.
- 25 Gulliver's Travels, p.46.
- 26 Ibid., p.86.
- 27 Ibid., pp.107-108.
- 28 Williams, Age of Compromise, p.59.
- 29 Monk, op. cit., p.63.
- 30 Plato, The Republic, VIII.569A - IX.575D.
- 31 Williams, Age of Compromise, pp.172-173.
- 32 Edmund Reiss makes this point regarding only the first adventure in "The Importance of Swift's Glubbdrib Episode", JEGP, LIX (April, 1960), 223-228.

- 33 Gulliver's Travels, p.159.
- 34 Ibid., p.161.
- 35 Price, op. cit., pp.84-85.
- 36 Winton, op. cit., p.25.
- 37 Gulliver's Travels, p.225.
- 38 Williams, Age of Compromise, p.85.
- 39 Ibid., pp.215-216.
- 40 Williams, "Gulliver's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms", ELH, XVIII (December, 1951), 283.
- 41 cf. Ross, op. cit., and also Edward Stone, "Swift and the Horses: Misanthropy or Comedy?", Modern Language Quarterly, X (September, 1949), 367-376, for discussions of the comedy of the Houyhnhnms.
- 42 Gulliver's Travels, p.189.
- 43 Ibid., pp.200 ff.
- 44 Tuveson, op. cit., p.112.
- 45 Monk, op. cit., p.66.
- 46 Ehrenpreis, op. cit., p.109.
- 47 Williams, Age of Compromise, p.116.
- 48 Swift, Correspondence, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford, 1963), III, 119. (Letter to Pope, November 26, 1725.)

CHAPTER III.

- 1 George Saintsbury, cited by ~~Bred~~old in "Introduction", Don Juan, p. xiii.
- 2 G. Wilson Knight, Lord Byron, Christian Virtues (New York, 1952) gives detailed refutations of several of Quennell's conclusions.
- 3 Peter Quennell, Byron in Italy (London, 1951), p.141.

- 4 Byron, "Preface to Cantos VI, VII, and VIII," Don Juan, pp.396-397.
- 5 Claude M. Fuess, Lord Byron as a Satirist in Verse (New York, 1964), p.164.
- 6 Loc. cit.
- 7 Byron abandons any serious attempt to draw a fully individualized persona early in the first canto.
- 8 Hight, op. cit., p.201.
- 9 Paul West, "Introduction" in West, ed., Byron. A Collection of Critical Essays (hereafter referred to as Byron: Essays) (Englewood Cliffs, 1963), p.13.
- 10 Ibid., pp.12-13.
- 11 Elizabeth F. Boyd, Byron's 'Don Juan' (New York, 1958), p.33.
- 12 P.G. Trueblood, The Flowering of Byron's Genius (New York, 1962), p.3.
- 13 Byron, Don Juan, I.26. All further references are to the Bred-vold edition and will be noted in the text, e.g., (I.26).
- 14 Andrew Rutherford, Byron. A Critical Study (London, 1961), p.154.
- 15 Boyd, op. cit., p.66.
- 16 Rutherford, op. cit., p.155.
- 17 Ibid., p.158.
- 18 Ibid., p.168.
- 19 Don Juan, note to VIII.133:7-8.
- 20 Rutherford, op. cit., p.175.
- 21 Guy Steffen, "Don Juan, A Thousand Colours", Byron: Essays, p.98.
- 22 Boyd, op. cit., pp.76 ff., suggests that it was not expedient for Byron to make open reference to the English monarchy or policy, and that is why his remarks are conveyed in the Russian Cantos. She also suggests that it was artistically better for him to reserve the English Cantos for his social satire.

- 23 Fuess, op. cit., p.172.
- 24 Rutherford, op. cit., p.201.
- 25 Ibid., p.185.
- 26 Ibid., p.187.
- 27 Helen Gardner, "Don Juan", Byron: Essays, p.119.
- 28 Bredvold, "Introduction", Don Juan, p.xxvii.
- 29 Gardner, op. cit., p.119.
- 30 Ibid., p.120.
- 31 Boyd, op. cit., p.61.
- 32 Loc. cit.

CHAPTER IV.

- 1 E.P. Wilson, The Triple Thinkers. Ten Essays on Literature (New York, 1938), p.213.
- 2 G.D.H. Cole, Samuel Butler and 'The Way of All Flesh' (London, 1947), p.81.
- 3 Wilson, op. cit., p.212.
- 4 Lewis Mumford, "Introduction", Samuel Butler, Erewhon (New York, 1955), p.xxiv.
- 5 Loc. cit.
- 6 Erewhon, p.89.
- 7 Ibid., p.93.
- 8 Ibid., p.103.
- 9 Ibid., p.104.
- 10 Ibid., p.134.
- 11 Mumford, op. cit., p.xxv.

12 Samuel Butler, Samuel Butler's Notebooks, sel. and ed., H.F. Jones (London, 1930), p.317.

13 Erewhon, p.113.

14 Ibid., p.186.

15 Notebooks, p.318.

16 Ibid., p.319.

17 Herbert Davis, "Samuel Butler: Centenary", UTQ, V (October, 1935), p.30.

18 Erewhon, p.135.

19 Butler's fear of the possibilities of inherited mental disease stems, in all likelihood, from his adherence to the Lamarckian theory of inherited characteristics, but it is interesting to note that modern psychological theory also holds that the tendencies towards certain diseases, if not the condition itself, can be transmitted by the parent.

20 Erewhon, pp.36-37.

21 Ibid., p.37.

22 Ibid., pp.35-36.

23 It is quite likely that Higgs' belief that the Erewhonians are the ten lost tribes is a jibe at the British Israelites, who hold that the British race is descended from these same tribes, and who are also often fanatically imperialistic.

24 Erewhon, p.52.

25 Ibid., p.304.

26 Ibid., p.168.

27 Granville Hicks, Figures of Transition. A Study of British Literature at the End of the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1939), pp.161-162.

28 Notebooks, p.171.

29 Ibid., p.26.

30 Ibid., p.33.

31 Erewhon, p.101. cf. Notebooks, pp.27-28.

32 Notebooks, p.29.

33 Erewhon, p.160.

34 Ibid., p.162.

35 Ibid., p.110.

36 Ibid., p.149.

37 Ibid., p.152.

38 Ibid., p.150.

39 cf. R.T. Rattray, Samuel Butler: A Chronicle and as Introduction (London, 1935); P.N. Furbank, Samuel Butler (1835-1902) (Cambridge, 1948); P. Henderson, Samuel Butler: The Incarnate Bachelor (London, 1953).

40 Erewhon, p.165.

41 Ibid., p.166.

43 Notebooks, p.34.

43 Hicks, op. cit., p.163.

44 H.A. Lappin, "An Un-Victorian Victorian", Bookman (New York), LI (March, 1920), 33-37.

45 Erewhon, p.173.

46 Ibid., pp.184-185.

47 Ibid., p.193.

48 F.A. Cavanaugh, "Samuel Butler and Education". The Monist, XXXII (April, 1922), 307-313.

49 Erewhon, p.213.

50 Ibid., pp.256-257.

51 Cole, op. cit., p.84.

52 Erewhon, pp.208-209.

53 Notebooks, p.339.

54 Erewhon, pp.129-130.

CONCLUSION.

¹ For a modern example of this kind of criticism I refer the reader again to Hight's Anatomy Of Satire. cf. especially Chapter IV, "The Distorting Mirror".

² James Sutherland, English Satire (Cambridge, 1962), pp.20-21.

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