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ABSTRACT

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The first paper deals with a theory of meter published by Morris Halle and Samuel Keyser in 1966 which purports to specify the rules underlying English iambic pentameter verse. Section one lays out a framework for the study of poetic prosody; section two presents and analyses the Halle-Keyser theory and traces the developments leading up to it in linguistics and psychology as well as literary criticism. Section three evaluates the theory and suggests a number of modifications.

The second paper offers a new reading of Hard Times based on approaching the work as a moral satire. It begins with a review of the major criticism of Hard Times in the twentieth century. This is followed by a definition of "moral satire" and a discussion of Dickens' moral vision. The main objects of Dickens' satire are examined in detail. Finally, the satiric techniques of the work are analyzed.

The third paper studies the use of the mask or persona in the prose works of Jonathan Swift. Section one investigates the philosophical and literary assumptions underlying Swift's use of the mask. Section two analyzes the features of Swift's masks under three headings: public voice, non-ironic pose, and ironic persona. The paper ends with a discussion of the mask of the mad projector and its relation to Swift himself.

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NOTES TOWARD A THEORY OF PROSODY

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A DEPARTMENTAL PAPER

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In the "Polemical Introduction" to Anatomy of Criticism, Northrop Frye raises a question which, quite apart from Frye's particular method of interpreting literature, warrants the attention of critics and scholars. The question he poses is whether literary criticism is or ought be a science as well as an art. Criticism as practiced in the twentieth century, of course, already betrays the powerful and ubiquitous influence of empiricism. As Frye notes, "evidence is examined scientifically; previous authorities are used scientifically; fields are investigated scientifically; texts are edited scientifically."[1] With the rapid development of linguistics during the past few decades, however, Frye's question assumes an unexpected significance, for linguistics has insisted on applying more rigorous and more narrowly scientific methods to the study of language than those to which criticism--even the analytic criticism of the mid-twentieth century--has been accustomed. Initial hostility to linguistics was based largely on the reluctance of critics to introduce mathematical and experimental methods into the delicate art of interpreting literary texts. It is generally conceded now that linguists and critics share a mutual concern--the minute analysis of verbal structures--and that literature, as a subclass of language, is ipso facto susceptible to the tools of linguistic analysis. Whether some or all of these tools prove relevant or meaningful in the interpretation of literary texts remains to be decided,

but the very process of discovery should be telling for both linguist and critic.

One of the areas in which linguistics clearly has much to offer the critic is the study of poetic prosody. While much has been learned in other areas about the nature of metaphor and the structures of fiction and so on, this area of criticism has remained curiously opaque and intractable. Despite centuries of critical attention and despite the consistency of the English prosodic tradition stretching from Chaucer to Tennyson and beyond, O. S. Osmond could still remark in 1921 that "we have as yet no established system of prosody."[2] Osmond might have written more precisely that we have as yet no adequate theory of prosody, for it is clear that an established system of some sort underlies the prosodic features of the English tradition and that poets have in some fashion mastered its principles. Because it is systematic, prosody lends itself to the kind of analysis developed by linguistics. Furthermore, as Chatman and Levin observe:

> [Prosody] has been subject to such unclear treatment in the past, with such confusion of terms and misunderstandings about the nature of its linguistic elements, that linguists sympathetic to literary study feel it almost a duty to shed whatever light they can upon a needlessly darkened situation.[3]

A good deal of light has been shed on the system of English prosody during the past fifty years. That this is so is due largely to progress made in fields other than

literary criticism. Studies in linguistics and psychological experiments in the perception of sound and rhythm have made new approaches to stubborn critical problems possible. More generally, professional prosodists have acknowledged the need to organize their own field on a sound scientific basis. This has entailed a number of important changes. As Frye puts it:

> The presence of science in any subject changes its character from the casual to the causal, from the random and intuitive to the systematic, as well as safeguarding external invasions.[4]

The purpose of this paper is to review some of the changes which have already been made in prosodic study in this century and to outline, in part at least, the direction which further study might take in order to put the field on a sound scientific footing, in the sense suggested by Frye. The first section of the paper proposes a general theoretical framework for prosodic study; the second section focusses on a particular theory of meter, one developed by Morris Halle and Samuel Jay Keyser to account for the prosodic practice of Chaucer. The final section of the paper suggests several modifications to the Halle-Keyser theory.

1

The major concern of poetic prosody must ultimately lie in the relations between sound and meaning in poetic language. I. A. Richards is surely correct when he insists

that "the sequence of the actual sounds in verse . . . cannot be judged apart from the sense and feeling of the words."[5] What counts is the "close co-operation of the form with the meaning--modifying it and being modified by it."[6] The job of the prosodist, then, is to describe and explain in terms of a poem's meaning or intention the sound effects achieved by the poet in particular lines. Analysis of this sort requires a good ear and a subtle grasp of the possibilities arising from the nexus between sound and meaning; it is, in a sense, an art. In order to accomplish such an analysis, however, the prosodist must have at his disposal a theoretical framework which first of all defines the scope of his particular interest and secondly provides him with a vocabulary and an ordered set of principles to follow in carrying out his task. In the absence of such a framework, prosodic analysis can only remain a collection of subjective impressions, communicated in the language appropriate to art. While devices like metaphor and analogy can be useful in helping to characterize the special "music" of a passage, they are not adequate for precise description or analysis. The prosodist must be able to explicate and further validate in some systematic way his impression that a particular rhythm is "limpid," say, while another is "dark" or "ponderous."

The first task of the poetic prosodist in developing a suitable framework for his art is to define his data and to distinguish it from that of the linguistic prosodist.

In other words, he must discover what Roman Jakobson has called the differentia specifica of poetic discourse,[7] what distinguishes in this case the arrangement of sounds in poetry from the arrangement of sounds in other kinds of language. This requirement can be met because linguists have developed a clear taxonomy and a more or less consistent vocabulary to describe the sound features of language.

The data of the linguistic prosodist is the full range of non-segmental sound variables in language, including pitch, stress, juncture, duration and timbre (or the sound qualities of particular phonemes). His task is to analyze the significant variations in these features. The linguistic prosodist defines "significant" semantically, through the use of minimal contrastive pairs: any variation within an utterance which would cause an ideal native speaker to judge it different in meaning from the original is a significant variation. The word per-mit, for example, differs from the word per-mit by virtue of a significant variation in the pattern of stress. Similarly, the statement you went differs from the question you went by virtue of a significant variation in the pattern of pitch. Prosodic features are thus phonetic, but unlike the segmental phonemes, the meaning differences yielded by significant variation in their patterning may range from the purely cognitive, as illustrated in the examples above, to the purely emotive. Depending on

the intonation contour chosen, an utterance may be neutral with respect to emotion or may express any one of a dozen emotions or attitudes which shade into each other in subtle, though perfectly systematic ways.

The specific rules of prosodic grammar are not yet fully understood. Moreover, the most recent work in this area suggests that they are a good deal more numerous and complex than early studies by scholars like Pike and Traeger and Smith supposed.[8] However, for the purpose of constructing a theoretical framework for literary analysis, it is sufficient to note two facts. First, the prosodic component of language, no less than the syntactic and semantic components, is systematically determined, and the poet as a native speaker of the language must work within the rules of the system. Secondly, only a small portion of the prosodic grammar, when complete, will be relevant to the prosodist of poetry. Unlike the linguist, his concern lies exclusively with the rules which govern cognitive meaning and are tied to the syntactic portion of the overall grammar. Rules governing emotive expression, though relevant to individual oral delivery perhaps, lie outside the scope of systematic literary analysis.[9]

Within this limited area of prosodic competence relevant to both linguist and critic, the specific difference distinguishing the data of the linguist from that of the critic is that the latter uses a formal rather than a

semantic criterion of significance. In order to be of interest to the critic, an arrangement of sound must be "foregrounded." That is, it must call attention to itself as an arrangement of sound. Foregrounding is a concept introduced into literary criticism by the Prague School of linguistics to distinguish poetic from non-poetic discourse. It refers to any systematic violation of the norms of standard or non-poetic language whose function is to "push communication into the background as the objective of expression . . . in order to place in the foreground the act of expression, the act of speech itself."[10] In the prosodic component of poetic language, such foregrounding is accomplished through abnormally regular or abnormally frequent repetition of particular sound variables. The chief manifestation of abnormally regular repetition is meter, while local sound devices like consonance and alliteration are examples of abnormally frequent repetition. Rhyme is generally the result of both kinds of foregrounding and so provides a bridge between the two. Foregrounding of all three types can be verified statistically, but an actual count is not necessary for purposes of literary analysis.[11] It is sufficiently clear, even to an untutored ear, the extent to which a given passage meets or violates standard norms of phonetic repetition. We may define the data of the literary prosodist, then, as the foregrounded sound patterns of poetic language, including meter, rhyme

and the miscellaneous category of local sound devices.

The distinction among types of phonological foregrounding suggested here provides a formal basis for a hierarchal classification of the data studied by the poetic prosodist. Meter is considered the most basic category, on which rhyme and then the local devices of alliteration and the like are mounted. Meter is basic and is studied first because, unlike the other categories, it is a necessary concomitant of poetry and is always coterminous with the poem. Rhyme, insofar as it participates in a regular scheme, is like meter rule-governed and systematic, but neither regular nor irregular rhyme is necessary in a poem. Rhyme is thus considered less basic than meter. Finally, devices like alliteration and consonance are neither necessary nor regular. Though a poem wholly lacking in them might be hard to imagine, it is at least theoretically possible, and there are no rules which systematically determine their number or placement in a poem. For this reason, the local sound devices are considered the most superficial category and are studied last.

These three categories of foregrounded sound constitute the data of the poetic prosodist, while the formal differences between them provide the basis for an ordered approach to the data. The next step in developing a theoretical framework for prosodic analysis, then, is to specify the rules and principles governing each of the

phonological categories, i.e., to establish a grammar for each phonological category. The remainder of this paper will focus on the category of meter, but the evaluative criteria developed below can be applied to the others as well. In each case, because there is more than one theory which purports to specify the rules and principles of the category, it is necessary to establish criteria for evaluating and ranking them. The strongest possible criteria will be adopted here, by applying to prosodic grammars the model of adequacy developed by Chomsky for grammars of language.[12]

Chomsky's model distinguishes three levels of adequacy: observational, descriptive, and explanatory; only that theory which meets all three levels can be considered fully adequate. At the observational level, an adequate grammar is capable of generating the infinite number of grammatical sentences in a language and no ungrammatical sentences. At the descriptive level, an adequate grammar assigns explicit structural descriptions to each of the infinite number of grammatical sentences. In order to be explicit in Chomsky's sense, a structural description must not only classify the elements contained in the structure, but must also analyze their relations so that someone ignorant of the language could, by applying the rules to the description, correctly distinguish a grammatical from a non-grammatical sentence. To the extent a grammar meets the criterion of descriptive adequacy, it describes the linguistic competence of a native

speaker of the language. It does not, however, explain that competence. Therefore, a descriptively adequate grammar is said to have merely formal or weak adequacy. Its rules are accurate formalizations of the native speaker's knowledge which may or may not reflect the actual mental operations employed by him in constructing and interpreting sentences. Weakly adequate grammars are ranked according to their degree of simplicity, consistency, and economy: the more "elegant" the account, the greater the value of the grammar.

At the level of explanatory adequacy, a grammar not only describes the linguistic competence of a native speaker, but further explains how that competence was acquired by specifying the innate psychological principles underlying the grammar--what Chomsky calls linguistic universals. Together these constitute a universal grammar from which the particular grammar is selected "by a restrictive schematism"[13] during the period of language acquisition. In constructing a fully or strongly adequate grammar, then, the linguist

> at the level of particular grammar [descriptive adequacy] . . . is attempting to characterize knowledge of a language, a certain cognitive system that has been developed--unconsciously, of course--by the normal speaker-hearer. At the level of universal grammar [explanatory adequacy], he is trying to establish certain general properties of human intelligence. Linguistics, so characterized, is simply the subfield of psychology that deals with these aspects of mind.[14]

Since generative grammar deals with mental processes which operate for the most part well below the level of consciousness, the empirical data used to test the validity of particular rules are the intuitions of an ideal native speaker. Such a speaker knows the language perfectly and his linguistic performance is not distorted by extrinsic factors like memory limitations or distractions. In other words, his performance accurately reflects his underlying intrinsic competence. The ideal native speaker is merely an abstract theoretical construct, of course, and it is up to the professional linguist to approximate his judgements as nearly as he can.

With one or two adaptations, Chomsky's criteria for a fully adequate grammar of language can be applied to theories of meter. At the observational level, a metrical theory is adequate if it generates all possible metrical lines and no unmetrical lines; it is descriptively adequate if it assigns explicit structural descriptions to the lines it generates. A metrical theory meeting these first two criteria has weak adequacy and can correctly distinguish between metrical and unmetrical lines. The validity of its judgements at this level are tested against the intuitions of the poet as revealed by the lines he allows to remain in his finished poem. Here the metrist is in a better position that the linguist, for although poets may occasionally and even deliberately err in their performance, the extrinsic factors

which tend to intervene between competence and performance in concrete linguistic situations are for the most part absent from the concrete metrical situation. The poet is free to correct and revise, that is, to bring his performance in line with his competence, and therefore the metrist may assume that the lines of his poem constitute a correct metrical corpus.

To achieve explanatory adequacy, a metrical theory must specify the psychological principles underlying the metrical competence of poets and readers. Whether there are metrical universals comparable to the innate universals of language is a question which a full theory of prosody must eventually investigate. The prosodist might hypothesize, for example, that various kinds of meter (iambic accentual-syllabic, accentual-alliterative, etc.) are learned restrictions of a universal grammar.[15] The main evidence cited by Chomsky for the existence of an innate universal grammar is the manner of language acquisition. A child constructs a complete grammar of his language on the basis of a very limited and faulty linguistic corpus in a very short period of time. These constraints do not affect the poet, however, who has access to a large and correct corpus and may take as long as he wishes to internalize the rules of metrical competence.[16] In the case of meter, however, there is another sort of evidence pointing to the possibility of metrical universals. The evidence comes from psychological

studies of rhythm, of which meter and particular kinds of meter are instances. These studies indicate the existence of psychological principles of grouping which operate independently of and frequently in despite of objective fact. Such principles might be used to provide a more rigorous sort of explanation for meter than has generally been attempted.

Other intimations of metrical universals are found in the recurrence of identical patterns in meters used by different languages and based on different sound variables. The same rhythmical configurations occur in both classical and English meters, for example, although the one is based on the length of syllables while the other is based on their loudness. A similar coincidence is the widespread occurence of the iambic pentameter line, not just in the tradition of English poetry, but in the poetry of most North European languages as well. A full explanation of such peculiarities is likely to lie partly in the grammatical and phonological properties of languages, but partly in a mental disposition to certain patterns of grouping.

In any case, it is theoretically possible to construct a grammar of meter which meets Chomsky's criteria of adequacy at all three levels. It seems axiomatic that the prosodist should settle for nothing less. In the discussion which follows, several theories of meter will be examined from the point of view of Chomsky's criteria, focussing by

convention on the iambic pentameter line. First comes a look at traditional theory and at the modifications introduced by traditional prosodists to shore it up. This is followed by a brief review of some of the developments leading to new metrical theories published during the past few decades. Of these, the most important and influential is the theory of iambic pentameter published by Morris Halle and Samuel Keyser in 1966. Their account is thus studied in detail in the following section. Special reference is also made to the extensive work of Seymour Chatman.

2

The account of English meter known as "the traditional theory" was devised by Renaissance prosodists by applying the principles and vocabulary of classical meter to English. At first it was mistakenly thought that the regularly repeated sound variable on which meter is based was in English, as in Latin, the duration of syllables. By the late eighteenth century, however, prosodists recognized stress as the basis of English meter. Whereas the classical foot consists of a fixed number of syllables with a certain configuration of length, an English foot, it was explained, consists of a fixed number of syllables with a certain configuration of stress. Stress was defined as the degree of loudness with which a syllable is pronounced, and it was assumed that English words carry absolute stress values

which may be characterized as strong or weak. On this account, the foot is the primitive metrical unit, in terms of which the others are defined. Thus, a line of iambic pentameter is a sequence of five iambic feet, each with the pattern /ws/, yielding the configuration /ws/ws/ws/ws/ws/, where w = syllable with a weak stress and s = syllable with a strong stress. In mathematical notation, this rule takes the form $V \rightarrow \#F_i{}_n \#$, where V = line of verse, F_i = iambic foot, and n = 5.

While this rule generates no unmetrical lines, it significantly fails to generate all of the infinite number of possible metrical lines.[17] Therefore, it does not meet even the minimal standard of observational adequacy. One could cite dozens of lines from standard works in the English tradition which on this account must be judged unmetrical despite the poet's judgement to the contrary. As an example we may take the first line of Yeats' poem "The Second Coming" written in iambic pentameter.

(1) Turn ing/ and turn/ ing in/ the wid/ en ing gyre.
W S W S W S W S W S

According to traditional metrical theory, this line is not only unmetrical, but contains only two metrical feet: foot one violates the prescribed configuration of stress, foot three contains no stress at all, and foot five contains too many syllables.

Faced with a line such as this one, the traditional

prosodist must either question the metrical competence of Yeats--and every other great poet in the English tradition--or he must modify his theory. The first option is obviously unacceptable. Traditional prosodists have therefore incorporated a list of allowable deviations into the theory. This list includes (a) the extra-syllabic foot, (b) the monosyllabic foot, (c) the reversed first foot, (d) foot substitution, (e) the spondee, and (f) the phyrric foot. The line from Yeats above illustrates (c) in foot one, (f) in foot three, and (a) in foot five. Thus, although deviant, the line is metrical.

With this kind of modification, the traditional theory becomes capable of generating all possible metrical lines and it provides both a vocabulary and a formal measure (number of deviant feet in a line) to use in analyzing the metrical style of particular poets or poems. It achieves this stronger capability, however, only at the cost of potentially generating many non-metrical lines, for the list provides no principled way to distinguish allowable from non-allowable deviations and no rule to govern the number and placement of these deviations in the line. Thus, the modified theory equally fa'ls to meet the minimal standard of observational adequacy. As Jesperson pointed out as early as 1900:

> if we are to arrive at a real understanding of the metre in question [i.e., iambic pentameter] . . . it will be necessary to

> revise many of the current ideas which may be traced back to ancient metrists, and to look at the facts as they present themselves to the unsophisticated ears of modern poets and modern readers.[18]

Jesperson goes on to list a number of fallacies in traditional modified theory, the most important of which for the development of recent metrical theory is "the fallacy of two grades." "In reality," Jesperson writes, "there are infinite gradations of stress."[19] Rapid advances in the field of linguistic prosody in the twentieth century have provided Jesperson's early observations with scientific support. No one any longer imagines that the English language can be adequately described in terms of two absolute values of stress, a strong and a weak. Studies have shown that the prominence which the ear perceives on certain syllables in an utterance is caused by a complex of variables including the length and the loudness and still more the pitch configuration which the prominent syllable carries. Although it is important for the linguistic prosodist to analyze the psychological perception of prominence into its constituent elements and further identify the acoustic and articulatory correlatives of these elements, for the poetic prosodist a simple distinction between stress and accent is sufficient. "Stress" will be defined here as the lexically determined prominence carried by the syllables of individual words, while the term "accent" will be reserved for the prominence carried by syllables in syntactic units and

determined by the rules of linguistic prosody--whatever these turn out to be.[20] The important fact for a theory of meter is that differences in degree of prominence among syllables are relative rather than absolute and that significant contrasts in the degree of prominence among syllables number more than two and may number as many as five.

Acknowledgement of this fact by metrists has led to a recognition of the abstract nature of the metrical line. That is, the metrical line generated by the rules of meter, with its alternating values of absolute weak and absolute strong stress, is merely an abstract configuration. The concrete lines actually composed by poets for particular poems, like all English utterances, contain a wide range of subtle variations in stress. Roman Jakobson was one of the first metrists to draw attention to this distinction and his formulation of it remains one of the most perspicuous of the many that have since been offered. Jakobson actually draws two distinctions:

(a) "Meter--or in more explicit terms, verse design--underlies the structure of any single line--or, in logical terminology, any single verse instance."

(b) "A variation of verse instances within a given poem must be strictly distinguished from the variable delivery instances."[21]

According to Jakobson, the rules of meter "determine the invariant features of the verse instances and set up the limits of variations."[22] These rules thus constitute the

poet's metrical competence while the individual verse instances produced by the poet constitute his performance. Though a given verse instance may very nearly duplicate the abstract configuration of the design, the two cannot be identified, for one is an idea and the other is a thing.

Jakobson's further distinction between verse instance and delivery instance is equally important in the development of recent metrical theory. There are a number of bases on which this distinction can be drawn. Wimsatt and Beardsley suggest several:

> Not everything which is true of some particular performance [i.e., some delivery instance] will be necessarily true of the poem. There are many performances of the same poem--differing among themselves in many ways. A performance is an event, but the poem itself, if there is any poem, must be some kind of enduring object.[23]

The "enduring object"--or in Jakobson's terms, the verse instance--is determined by the rules of meter and depends entirely on the metrical competence of the poet. The delivery instance, however, depends on the reader[24] and on several kinds of competence: on his ability to interpret a poem, for example, and on his mastery of the prosodic grammar of the language. That is, the reader must understand what the poem "means" and how each line in the poem contributes to that meaning. Then he must choose the intonation patterns and voice qualifiers[25] which correctly signal the attitudes and shades of emotion appropriate for each point

in the poem. Finally, within this larger area of competence, there are many decisions which are not governed by rule of any sort, whether critical or linguistic, but depend wholly on the individual taste of the reader or the taste of his age. For this reason, there can be many different recitations of the same poem, differing in many ways. Verse deliveries, then, must be judged on a scale of acceptability, rather than a scale of metricality. The latter applies exclusively to the verse instance.[26]

To summarize: for each line of verse, one may speak of (a) the idea--the abstract design of the line, (b) the object--the concrete, enduring realization of the line, and (c) the event--the range of acceptable recitations of the line. Failure to recognize these distinctions and in particular to isolate the verse instance at its own autonomous level can only lead to confusion. Seymour Chatman, for example, whose theory of meter is comprehensive and otherwise rich in insight, collapses "realization" and "recitation" into the single category of "performance." He is thus forced to derive the "enduring object" that is the poem from the "sum . . . of all meaningful delivery instances."[27] In doing so, he sacrifices the autonomy of metrical analysis, for delivery, we have seen, depends on kinds of competence that lie outside the proper sphere of the prosodist.

This part of Chatman's theory seems to have had little

influence, however, and some version of the tri-partite model of Jakobson is incorporated into most recent discussions of English meter. John Thompson, for example, distinguishes between "the structure of sound of the metrical pattern" and "the structure of sound of the line of verse."[28] The latter is determined by the linguistic rules governing lexical stress and phrase accent and has nothing to do with recitation. Similarly, Roger Fowler writes:

> What we hear in an iambic pentameter,[sic] depends on . . . [the] relations between competing phonological structures. One is the meter: a skeleton with a few regularly proportioned and articulated parts.[29] . . . [The other is] the 'prose rhythm': a composite of phonological elements which derive from the grammatical and lexical form of the poem, and which can be readily deduced without having recourse to oral renditions.[30]

The rhythm of a poem, on all these accounts, is considered the product of the "tension" (Wimsatt and Beardsley) or "syncopation" (Fowler) or "strained mutual relations" (Thompson) between the sound structure of the verse design on the one hand and the sound structure of the verse instance on the other. This tension may be severe or mild, but some degree of strain is inevitable. Thompson notes that a mild tension may be achieved by using a verse design with few constraints, like the sprung rhythm of Hopkins or the accentual verse of modern poets like Eliot and Yeats. The verse design underlying iambic pentameter, however, is highly constrained, and a mild degree of tension can be

achieved in that meter only by using language whose patterns of linguistically determined stress and accent happen to correspond to the pattern of the meter. Such language is necessarily remote from the natural rhythms of English speech and sounds "stilted" and "stiff," in most cases more like doggerel than poetry. It is clear that the tradition of English verse from 1580 to the present has in fact been dominated by a convention of severe strain between verse design and verse instance, in which the requirements of the design are met with a language that to a large extent preserves the rhythms of colloquial speech.[31] In other words, high tension is a feature of the normal prosodic situation in English poetry, whereas a close fit between design and instance is exceptional. This circumstance, it should be noted, further undermines the value of the traditional theory of meter, which makes regularity the norm and handles points of tension in the line as exceptions and deviations. English rhythm is generally felt to be a "texture" of regularities and variations or satisfactions and disruptions in which the latter figure as importantly and essentially as the former.[32] Jakobson's tri-partite model is an advance because it provides a way to formulate and explain the fact that a tension of some sort is basic in the rhythm of English verse.

Of the several theories which assume Jakobson's model, the Halle-Keyser theory of iambic pentameter has been the

most important and influential. Halle and Keyser offer three basic rules, the first of which defines the abstract line--what Jakobson calls the "invariant features" of the line, while the second and third specify the "limits of variations." Thus, there is no need to introduce an *ad hoc* list of allowable deviations. The rules generate all possible metrical lines and no unmetrical lines. Moreover, they assign explicit structural descriptions to the lines they generate. Thus, unlike traditional theory, the Halle-Keyser theory can systematically distinguish between metrical and unmetrical lines: "Either a line is metrical by virtue of conformity to the rules, or else a line is unmetrical by virtue of non-comformity to the rules."[33]

The rules of the theory are as follows:

Principle 1.

The iambic pentameter verse consists of ten positions to which may be appended one or two extra-metrical syllables.

Principle 2.

A position is normally occupied by a single syllable, but under certain conditions it may be occupied by more than one syllable or by none.

Condition 1.
Two vowels may constitute a single position provided that they adjoin, or are separated by a liquid or nasal or by a word boundary which may be followed by h--, and provided that one of them is a weakly stressed or unstressed vowel.

Condition 2.
An unstressed or weakly stressed monosyllabic word may constitute a single metrical position with a preceding stressed or unstressed syllable.

Condition 3.
Zero occupancy may occur only in the first position.

Principle 3.

A stress maximum may only occupy even positions within a verse, but not every even position need be so occupied.

Definition.

A stress maximum is constituted by a syllable bearing linguistically determined stress that is greater than that of the two syllables adjacent to it in the same verse.34

Halle-Keyser Rule One states that the iambic pentameter line consists of ten positions to which may be appended one or two extra-metrical syllables. In mathematical notation this rule takes the form $V \rightarrow \#P_1P_2P_3...P_n\#$ (s(s)) where V = line of verse, # = verse boundary, P = position, n = 10 and s = syllable. This formulation of the line differs from traditional formulations in two important ways. First of all, since Halle and Keyser define the line in terms of positions rather than feet, the concept of the foot becomes superfluous in their theory and disappears altogether. With the elimination of the foot, the line becomes the primitive metrical unit of verse. Secondly, as a sequence of numbered, wholly abstract positions, the line may take an infinite variety of concrete forms. A position could be theoretically occupied by any number and kind of linguistic unit from phoneme to sentence and could carry any configuration of prosodic sound variables. The limits on the range of possibilities that are metrical are then stated in subsequent rules dealing with position occupancy and the distribution of the prosodic variables. In this way, a range of possible

realizations varying on a scale of metricalness is incorporated into the theory as a natural consequence of the rules.

Halle-Keyser Rule Two states that each position is normally occupied by one syllable and specifies the conditions under which it may be occupied by more than one or by none. Conditions 1 and 2 replace the deviant extra-syllabic foot of traditional theory, while Condition 3 replaces the deviant monosyllabic foot. The advance in the Halle-Keyser account lies in its greater precision and accuracy--its explicitness in Chomsky's sense. Unlike the traditional exceptions, the Halle-Keyser conditions are stated in terms explicit enough to constitute an empirical test of metricality for the syllable occupancy of all lines.

The third rule of the theory deals with ictus, which is defined as the prominence carried by a syllable bearing linguistically determined stress greater than the two syllables surrounding it. Halle and Keyser use the term "stress" for both lexical stress and phrase accent, a convenience which shall be adopted here. Like most contemporary metrists, including those who uphold traditional theory, they make ictus a matter of relative rather than absolute stress value. The advance in their approach results from the claim that ictus depends on the degree of prominence relative to <u>both</u> adjacent syllables and that the potential for ictus carried by even positions need not be

realized. In the course of their discussion, Halle and Keyser identify four conditions under which ictus is not realized:

> Condition 1.
> Because ictus requires two adjacent syllables of relatively weaker stress, ictus does not occur in either the first or the tenth position of an iambic pentameter line.
>
> Condition 2.
> Ictus does not occur in a position occupied by a weakly stressed syllable surrounded by other weakly stressed syllables. Under such circumstances, there is no contrast in stress value.
>
> Condition 3.
> Ictus does not occur in a position occupied by a strongly stressed syllable adjacent to one or more strongly stressed syllables. Under such circumstances, the potential stress contrast is "neutralized."
>
> Condition 4.
> Ictus does not occur when two strongly stressed syllables are separated by a major syntactic boundary. Under such circumstances, the potential stress contrast is neutralized.

These four conditions incorporate the remaining traditional exceptions into the theory: condition 1 replaces the reversed first foot; condition 2 replaces the phyrric foot; condition 3 replaces the spondee and foot substitution.[35] Like the rule governing syllable occupancy, the Halle-Keyser rule governing prominence provides an explicit empirical test of metricality for the distribution of ictus in all lines of verse.

Because of its ability to distinguish metrical from unmetrical lines in a way that is explicit, economical and in keeping with the intuitions of the poets who have written in iambic pentameter, the Halle-Keyser theory may be said

to possess at least a weak or formal degree of adequacy. Weak adequacy is all that Halle and Keyser claim for their theory: they are content to formulate what poets do and ignore for the most part the question of why poets do it. But the problem of strong or psychological adequacy must be raised at some point, for ultimately one wants to know why--why the rules take the form they do, what principles determine and explain them. The remainder of this essay, then, shall consider ways in which the Halle-Keyser theory may be supplemented or revised in order to meet the stronger criterion of explanatory adequacy.

3

Perhaps the least convincing proposition in the Halle-Keyser theory from the point of view of explanatory adequacy is their definition of the line as a chain of numbered positions which, as Joseph Beaver points out, "asks nothing of rhythmic or temporal considerations."[36] The poet is assumed to have internalized a sequence of ten positions and to have identified within this sequence the positions capable of carry ictus. Beaver quite properly wonders about the psychological limits on the number of events which can be grasped in a single rhythmic grouping.

> In music, for example, one does not 'count' higher than four in most cases--indeed, it can be argued that one does not have to internalize a count higher than three. . . . The stress maximum

> concept on the other hand . . . implies that we can internalize 10 positions and be satisfied--to use Jespersen's word--by an event in the 8th position (which may not have occured in 2, 4, or 6); or dissatisfied by an event in the 7th, even though we have no other occurrences anywhere in the line to use as an interval or distance estimate.37

In the light of Beaver's observation here, it is worth noting that Halle and Keyser were in fact unable to find examples of lines in Chaucer without stress maxima in (a) positions 2 and 4, (b) positions 2, 4, and 6, and (c) positions 2, 4, 6, and 8. The absence of these theoretically possible configurations suggests to Halle and Keyser the need to incorporate an additional formal constraint into their theory. From the point of view of psychological adequacy, the absence of these configurations further suggests that some principle of secondary grouping is at work in the iambic pentameter line.

In A Theory of Meter, Seymour Chatman explains the distinction between primary or cardiac and secondary or grouped rhythm.[38] Primary rhythm is the simple, regular repetition of events equal in weight or emphasis. Secondary rhythm, on the other hand, groups events into a secondary pattern to produce a sequence of structures rather than a sequence of single events. Chatman reports that psychological studies of rhythm reveal a mental disposition toward secondary grouping; moreover, this "tendency to perceive an internal structure among rhythmic events" is strong enough

to effectively block perception of primary rhythms.

> When a series of sounds precisely equal in loudness, pitch, and length, and occuring at precisely equal intervals is presented to a subject, the chances are that he will not hear the series as the cardiac rhythm it really is, but as grouped rhythm, that is, he will overestimate every other interval. . . . He may also begin to perceive a regular difference in prominence (either loudness or pitch or length) among alternating events.[39]

The subjective distortion of a primary rhythm by detecting regular contrasts in prominence where none exists is termed "highlighting." It explains why the ticking of a clock with perfectly level prominence will after a brief time be perceived as: tick tick tick tick tick tick . . . . . Chatman also reports on experiments performed to measure the limits of grouping in rhythm. Even in very rapid rhythms, the maximum number of events subjects could grasp in a single group was eight. "Greater numbers tend to break down into sub-groups: twenty events can be perceived, but only as five recurrences of four-member groups (or four recurrences of five-member groups)."[40]

Chatman's discussion of the psychological principles governing the perception of rhythm suggests that the Halle-Keyser line is not an accurate account of the line internalized by poets and listeners. In positing a primary rhythm based on the repetition of single events, Halle and Keyser violate both principles of grouping and highlighting;

in positing a sequence of ten events , they violate the acceptable limits for rhythmical grouping. Chatman's own experimentation with verse delivery offers further evidence against the Halle-Keyser line., Chatman found that an "instinct to 'understand' a beat where one does not occur" was clearly demonstrated in experiments with experienced readers who tended to promote the prominence of unstressed syllables occupying ictic positions.[41] These experiments imply that either readers have incorrectly internalized the grammar of iambic pentameter or alternativity is somehow basic in the line.

A second reason for rejecting the Halle-Keyser definition of the line is that it provides an inadequate formal basis for the concept of tension between the abstract verse design and the verse instance. Halle and Keyser offer a principle of complexity which is similar to tension. In the simplest or most "neutral" realization of the iambic pentameter line, each position is occupied by one syllable and positions 2, 4, 6, and 8 carry stress maxima. The conditions listed under Rules Two and Three, then, produce increasingly complex realizations of the line. This concept of complexity is adequate for most purposes, but without a principle of secondary grouping it cannot handle the subtler forms of syncopation--for example, a foot boundary straddled by a two-syllable word. Roger Fowler has demonstrated the important role played by minor forms of

tension in verse that is generally judged to be "melodic" or "smooth."[42]

In the light of the formal and psychological arguments presented here, the following revision of the Halle-Keyser line is proposed: $V \rightarrow \#PP_m\ PP_m\ PP_m\ PP_m\ PP_m\#$, where P = position and P_m = position marked by prominence. "Prominence" here does not refer specifically to loudness, but merely indicates that this event or position is discriminably outstanding for one reason or another. Thus, the line remains an abstract sequence whose range of concrete metrical realizations is specified only in subsequent rules. This revised line resembles the traditional formulation in certain ways, but it is arrived at differently, by applying the principles of first highlighting and then grouping to the primary rhythm of the Halle-Keyser line. Chatman points out that the two are generally correlative, but in this analysis highlighting is considered more basic. The rhythm of the line arises from the alternating occurrence and non-occurrence of prominence and the "foot" is introduced as a notational convention for analyzing the grouping tendencies of highlighted events.[43] In this way the line is preserved as the primitive metrical unit. The revision suggested here also drops the reference to extra-metrical syllables from the definition of the line, since strictly speaking such syllables are not "extra-metrical" at all, but are introduced into particular positions naturally as

a consequence of Rule Two.

Revised Rule One thus states that an iambic pentameter line consists of ten positions which form an internal pattern marked by the alternating occurrence and non-occurrence of prominence beginning with a non-prominent position. Rule Three is revised to state that ictus may occupy only marked positions, but not every marked position need be so occupied. The tension felt to be basic in iambic pentameter verse is thus accounted for in the theory. By rule the reader is to expect prominence in every marked position, but also by rule not every marked position will carry a stress maximum. Further, linguistic units which straddle foot divisions work against the grouping tendency arising from the binary rhythm and so become an additional source of tension.

As analyzed here, the basic rhythm of the iambic pentameter line is a secondary rhythm which depends, not on time, but on the equality of the events and the equality of the prominences which mark these events to form the internal structure of the line. This equality among events and prominences is psychological rather than physical. As Sonneschein points out, "What we are concerned with in all manifestations of rhythm is not so much a physical fact as a psychological fact--i.e., the impression made by the physical fact upon the mind of man through the organs of sense."[44] Halle-Keyser Rules Two and Three state the

physical facts governing events and prominences, but to achieve strong adequacy they must deal with the mental facts as well. In iambic pentameter verse, there is a striking degree of physical variation among the units which metrically fill positions and prominences. While Halle and Keyser successfully define the exact limits of allowed variation, we must look elsewhere to explain the psychological acceptance of this variation by listener and poet.

In discussing this problem, Chatman introduces a well-established psychological distinction between judgements of identity and judgements of equivalence. He points out that it is the latter which underlies the perception of rhythm.

> Absolutely identical rhythmical repetitions rarely occur in nature; the perception of rhythm is almost always based upon the mental approximations of slightly divergent recurrences. What is important is the impression of proportion or equivalence, not mathematically exact proportion or equivalence itself.[45]

As defined by Bruner, an equivalence class is created "when an individual responds to a set of discriminably different things as the same kind of thing or as amounting to the same thing."[46] For purposes of metrical analysis, a further distinction can be drawn between kinds of equivalence. I quote from Osgood and Sebeok's text in psycholinguistics:-

> When a person reacts to an object as 'the same' despite variations in illumination, in angle of regard, and so forth, he is showing constancy--each stimulus pattern

> is different, but his perceptual response is constant. When a person learns to respond to that one of two objects which is the brighter (larger, nearer, heavier, and so on) and continues to respond correctly despite wide changes in the absolute stimulus value, he is displaying transposition.[47]

An important feature of constancy and transposition is their dependence on contextual cues.

> The subject must have cues available that the context has changed (e.g., that the illumination has been lowered, that a disk is being held at something other than right angles to his line of regard, etc.) in order to show constancy of perception; in transposition one object provides the context for the other. If such contextual cues are eliminated constancy and transposition are eliminated.[48]

Although these psychological principles have been studied chiefly in connection with vision, Osgood and Sebeok point out the relevance of constancy to the perception of linguistic units and of transposition to the perception of intonation and stress.

From the point of view of metrical theory, these principles can be used to provide strong adequacy for Rules Two and Three of the Halle-Keyser theory and for most of the conditions listed under them. What is posited here is the operation of certain principles of mind on certain phonological features of language to produce a limit for what can count as equivalent in the rhythmical pattern of the line. The non-violation of this limit is the condition shared by all metrical realizations of the line.

Rule Two deals with the linguistic units which may metrically occupy the positions of a line. The relevant mental fact underlying this rule is clearly constancy, but the relevant phonological facts are more difficult to determine. There are three categories of units which occupy positions and therefore must be said to form an equivalence class: (a) syllables, (b) elided dissyllables, and (c) what Chatman calls "pseudo-elided" dissyllables.[49] Categories (a) and (b) are phonetic: (a) includes the whole class of English syllables and (b) includes the class of dissyllables formed by either loss or transformation of phonemes. Category (c), however, is non-phonetic and is therefore handled as an arbitrary poetic convention by both Chatman and Halle and Keyser.[50] Their assumption is that only the phonetic features of syllables can have metrical significance. There is no basis in fact for such an assumption, however. In the discussion which follows, the possible significance of a non-phonetic feature of syllables--namely, syllable juncture--is briefly considered.

Syllable juncture is defined here as the minimally perceptible pause occuring between syllables which enables a native speaker to perceive the boundaries of words and of syllables within words.[51] The acoustic basis of syllable juncture is not fully understood, but it seems that it is primarily the nature of the sounds surrounding juncture which establishes it. Certain adjacent sounds automatically

create a juncture by virtue of the clustering rules of English. For example, (a) "keep ticking" necessarily takes the form /kep·tiŋ/; no other form is possible because the consonantal cluster /pt/ does not occur in English. In the case of (b) "keeps ticking," however, juncture is not automatic, for /s/ and /t/ may cluster to form the combination /st/ as in (c) "keep sticking." In order to indicate the desired form, then, a phonetic pause must be introduced. This pause is termed "internal open juncture" and forms a subclass of syllable juncture. Though both are perceptible as pauses, internal open juncture is longer and is phonetically significant. It is established through particular changes in the sound qualities of adjacent phonemes: some phonemes are lengthened; others are voiced or devoiced; others undergo an increase in aspiration. The /s/ in (b), for example, is longer than the /s/ in (c), while /t/ has heavier aspiration in (c) than it does in (b). Whether an internal open juncture is required between two syllable boundaries depends on the nature of the adjacent phonemes and on the stress relations between the two syllables. Two adjoining vowels require a phonetic juncture, as do two adjoining syllables which carry strong stress. A phonetic juncture is optional, however, when a strongly stressed syllable is followed by a weakly stressed syllable, and between successive syllables with weak stress it does not occur.

The full set of rules governing juncture is extremely complex, and linguists are far from a complete and precise formulation of it. Their preliminary work, however, suggests a number of possibilities for the prosodist concerned with metrical units. It is possible, for example, that the contextual cue required for constancy in the perception of metrical units is the juncture between syllables. As noted above, this is not necessarily a phonetic feature of syllables, but it is a perceptible one and so may have metrical significance. One could argue that continuous sound between two syllable junctures is the physical feature distinguishing all metrical units and absent from all non-metrical units. Members of category (a) carry this feature as a matter of course; members of (b) and (c) carry this feature by virtue of elision and pseudo-elision, both of which are defined in this account as the elimination of syllable juncture between two syllables. The rules governing the elimination of syllable juncture are conditions 1 and 2 of Halle-Keyser Rule Two. Both conditions produce either elided or pseudo-elided dissyllables, the former when the juncture eliminated is a phonetic one and the latter when the eliminated juncture is non-phonetic. That is, elision occurs when an internal open juncture is required by rule between two syllables because of the nature of the adjacent phonemes and the stress relations between them, whereas pseudo-elision occurs when internal open juncture is not required.

In either case, according to the hypothesis offered here, the relevant physical fact on which the psychological principle of constancy operates is continuous sound between two syllable junctures.

The class of dissyllabic units which may metrically occupy a single position is extremely large. Halle-Keyser Rule One limits the poet to two such units per line, a constraint which is incorporated into the revised theory under Rule Two. Revised Rule Two thus states that each position in the line is occupied by one metrical unit. A metrical unit is defined as the string of phonemes between two syllable junctures and normally consists of one syllable, but under certain conditions up to two units per line may consist of two syllables. Halle-Keyser conditions 1 and 2 specifying these conditions are retained intact in the revised version.

In the case of Rule Two, the impression to be accounted for is equivalence between the syllables and dissyllables of a line. This impression, I have argued, is created by the principle of constancy operating on the sequence of sounds and pauses within the line. In Rule Three, the impression to be accounted for is the equivalence of ictus. According to the Halle-Keyser definition, ictus is a matter of stress contrast rather than the actual degree of stress:

> (Ictus) expresses a relationship between the syllable and its environment. It says nothing whatsoever about the

> degree of stress of the syllable, merely that, whatever it is, it is greater than that of the two neighboring syllables.52

Thus, the actual stress value of syllables bearing ictus may vary to a considerable degree and the principle of transposition is needed to explain the impression of equivalence. In transposition, we have seen, one object provides the context for the other, the difference between them being the cue which signals transposition. In the perception of ictus, the contextual object is stress and the contextual cue is contrast in the degree of stress carried by adjacent syllables. When this cue is perceived, transposition occurs and the mind registers ictus--even if the actual value of the prominent stress is quite weak. When this cue is missing, transposition is eliminated and the mind fails to register ictus--even if the actual stress value is strong.

Given the way transposition works, it is easy to explain conditions 2 and 3 under the Halle-Keyser rule for ictus: level weak stress (condition 2) and level strong stress (condition 3) provide no contrast for the ear to perceive, so transposition cannot occur. The more interesting situation, of course, is condition 3, for under this condition ictus does not register despite a strongly stressed syllable in a marked position, and the line remains metrical despite a strongly stressed syllable in an unmarked position.

Condition 3 may produce one of two patterns:[53]

(a) $\underset{1}{x}\ \underset{2}{x}\ \underset{3}{\acute{x}}\ \underset{4}{\acute{x}}\ \underset{5}{x}$ or (b) $\underset{1}{x}\ \underset{2}{\acute{x}}\ \underset{3}{\acute{x}}\ \underset{4}{x}\ \underset{5}{x}$

where x = syllable and / = primary stress in a four level analysis. In pattern (a), a discordant and unmetrical situation is subsequently resolved, whereas in (b) a harmonious and metrical situation is subsequently complicated, though in a metrical way. The two patterns differ stylistically, but in both ictus is cancelled, in effect, and one hears it happening. More precisely, ictus is cued by the stress contrasts between positions 2 and 3 of (a) and positions 1 and 2 of (b), but is subsequently cancelled out by the equal stress in position 4 following 3 in (a) and position 3 following 2 in (b).

Less easily explained are conditions 1 and 4 under the Halle-Keyser rule, those dealing with the first and last positions in the line and with "stress neutralization."[54] Halle and Keyser state that "neutralization of stress takes place when two main stresses are separated by a major syntactic boundary."[55]

> It is a fact about the rules of English stress placement that they operate within but not across major syntactic breaks. Thus stress subordination will be found within major categories but not across major syntactic breaks. For this reason, it is only at 'pauses' that one will find two equal stresses back to back, i.e., absence of stress subordination.[56]

In support of this analysis, Halle and Keyser refer the reader to Jesperson, who indeed anticipates the Halle-Keyser theory to a striking degree. Jesperson writes:

> Our ear does not really perceive stress relations with any degree of certainty except when the syllables concerned are contiguous. . . . This leads us to another important principle: the effect of a pause: If I hear a syllable after a pause it is absolutely impossible for me to know whether it is meant by the speaker as a strong or as a weak syllable: I have nothing to compare it with till I hear what follows. And it is extremely difficult to say with any degree of certainty what is the reciprocal relation between two syllables separated by a not too short pause.[57]

There are a number of objections which must be raised against Jesperson and still more against Halle and Keyser's use of Jesperson. First, contrary to their statement quoted above, an absence of stress contrast due to back to back equal stress does occur within syntactic constructions as well as across syntactic boundaries. This is what happens in condition 3. Secondly, if absence of contrast were due to the intervention of a pause, then strictly speaking the syllables in question would no longer be "back to back." A strongly stressed syllable preceding or following an internal pause would be as isolated as a strongly stressed syllable in position 1 or 10. Since stress contrast by definition requires <u>two</u> surrounding syllables, ictus cannot occur. Given this analysis, it is misleading to call condition 4 a "neutralization" of stress. More properly,

it is a failure to achieve the conditions required for stress contrast; it is, in effect, a duplication of condition 1 within the line.

What is at stake here is more than mere quibbling about terminology. As Jesperson suggests, it is important to determine the metrical status of pauses. Rule Two in its revised form already assignes a function to pause: it is the contextual cue for constancy in the perception of metrical units. This pause may vary in length, depending on whether the context requires terminal juncture, internal open juncture, or merely syllable juncture, for what counts in accentual-syllabic meter is the occurrence of events, not their length or the time intervals between them. That is, the events are marked by non-temporal prominences, not by temporal regularity. Since a varying degree of pause always occurs between positions, a longish pause may carry linguistic significance; it may become a source of syncopation; but it cannot carry metrical significance beyond that assigned to all pauses by Revised Rule Two. In any case, it is clear from even a superficial perusal that the ear regularly disregards pauses in assessing relative stress values and perceiving contrasts. If this were not so, a position like 4 in the line "Things fall apart. The center cannot hold" could not carry ictus, as clearly it does:

(2)	Things	fall	a	part.	The	cen	ter	can	not	hold,
	P	Pm	P	Pm	P	Pm	P	Pm	P	Pm
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

where / = primary stress, ^ = secondary stress, ∨ = tertiary stress, and • = quatenary stress. Finally, since stress neutralization does in fact occur in contexts where there is no syntactic pause, the introduction of this additional constraint is unnecessary. All cases of stress neutralization are fully accounted for by the terms of condition 3.

The Halle-Keyser analysis of condition 1 remains to be considered. In their discussion of the first and final positions in a line, Halle and Keyser do not introduce the concept of pause.[58] They simply point out that by definition ictus requires two adjoining syllables, while the first and final positions in a line are adjoined by only one. The introduction of this additional constraint, however, like the introduction of syntactic pause under condition 4, is not supported by the principle of transposition. The requisite cue for transposition arises from the context, which in the case of positions 2 through 8 consists of two adjoining syllables, but in the case of positions 1 and 10 obviously consists of only one. A listener can expect nothing more in the way of contrast beyond 1 contrasting with 2 and 9 with 10 due to the physical limitation of the line. Furthermore, though the Halle-Keyser analysis provides a weak explanation for inversion in position 1, it does so only by eliminating the possibility of ictus occuring in position 10. This elimination contradicts both what is expected in the line by

virtue of Revised Rule One and what is clearly heard in the majority of lines. In (2), for example, the primary stress on "hold" in position 10, following the weak stress on "not," is necessarily perceived as a contrast. Since this contrast is not cancelled out by an equal stress occuring in the next position (as happens in stress neutralization), transposition is cued and "hold" must be said to bear ictus.

Of course, if the configuration $\underset{P}{x}\ \underset{Pm}{\acute{x}}\ \#$ is accepted as an instance of stress contrast, so must the unmetrical configuration $\#\underset{P}{\acute{x}}\ \underset{Pm}{x}$. Again, this is in keeping with what one hears in lines with initial inversion. In (1), "turn" carries primary stress, while "ing" carries a weak degree of stress: a contrast is obviously perceived and nothing happens to cancel that impression.

(1)

Túrn	ˇing	and	túrn	ˇing	in	the	wíd	en ˇing	gýre.
P	Pm	P	Pm	P	Pm	P	Pm	P	Pm
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The Halle-Keyser analysis of this line allows ictus in positions 4 and 8 only. In this way, a degree of complexity is indicated, but much of the rhythm and all that is interesting about the line is lost. (1) is a good example of the way in which the meaning of a line can be carried in part by its rhythm. The repetition of the configuration ´ˇ · and its inversion at the end of the line (· ˇ ´) creates a strong sense of primitive energy harnessed to a wheel. Clear-

ly this impression--or something like it--is desired by the poet, and in order to get at it the metrist must speak of ictus in positions 1 and 10.

In order to handle the unmetrical situation of initial inversion, it is proposed here to introduce an additional principle into the Halle-Keyser theory dealing exclusively with position 1. The unique status of position 1 is acknowledged by Halle and Keyser, implicity at least, in their formulation of Rule Two, which actually consists of two rules:

(a). $XP_nY \rightarrow X \begin{Bmatrix} s \\ s_1 \\ s_2 \end{Bmatrix} Y$, where P_n = any position in the line
s = syllable
s_1 = dissyllable formed by condition 1
s_2 = dissyllable formed by condition 2

(b) $\#P_1X \rightarrow \#\emptyset X$, where P_1 = position 1
$\emptyset$ = zero occupancy

Rule (a) is a context free rule and expresses everything in Rule Two but the conditions governing zero occupancy in position 1. For this, a special context sensitive rule is needed, as in (b) above. Rule (b), being the only context sensitive rule in the Halle-Keyser theory, implies there is something unusual or distinctive about position 1. No other position is singled out for special treatment in this way. If position 1 is unique with respect to position occupancy, it seems valid to suppose it may be equally unique with respect to the occurrence of ictus as well. Assuming this

to be the case, Revised Rule Four states that position 1 of a line of iambic pentameter may be occupied by a metrical unit or by zero and may bear ictus. This is expressed mathematically in the context sensitive rule (c):

$$(c)\quad \#P_1X \rightarrow \# \begin{Bmatrix} \emptyset \\ s \\ s_i \end{Bmatrix} X, \qquad \text{where } \emptyset = \text{zero occupancy}, \; s = \text{syllable}, \; s_i = \text{syllable bearing ictus}$$

Rule Four enables the theory to retain weak adequacy, and by representing position 1 as a "free" position it gives, I believe, a more accurate explanation of initial inversion. It lacks, however, the strong adequacy of the other rules. Some psychological principle--dealing with the onset of series perhaps, or the effects of monotony on perception--is required for a strong explanation. The need to avoid monotony has long been cited by prosodists to account for the various complications allowed in meter. Monotony may produce a kind of "metrical fatigue" comparable to the fatigue which causes fragmentation and elimination in other modes of perception. Under conditions of fatigue odors, for example, quickly disappear and figures break into segments, some or all of which eventually disappear.[59] Some variation in rhythmic grouping is likely essential in order to maintain perception of the basic meter over a number of lines. Since the onset of a series of events is particularly important in establishing a rhythm, it may be that the first group or foot in a line is a particularly effective location

for variation. In any case, further investigation is needed to provide a strong explanation for the freedom of position 1; it is not accounted for by either constancy or transposition; and this is more clearly reflected by its formulation in a separate rule.

The additional stipulations (under Rules Two and Three) that an iambic pentameter line may contain only two dissyllabic units and that ictus must occur in either positions 2 or 4 must also be explained. Clearly there must be some limit on the degree to which a pattern may be complicated before it is obscured altogether. Whether these particular stipulations reflect a psychological limit for pattern recognition remains to be established through empirical test.

The revised theory of iambic pentameter proposed in this paper, then, may be summarized as follows:

Rule 1.

The iambic pentameter line consists of ten positions which form an internal pattern marked by the alternating occurrence and non-occurrence of prominence beginning with a non-prominent position.

$V \rightarrow \#PP_m\ PP_m\ PP_m\ PP_m\ PP_m\#$

Rule 2.

Each position is occupied by one metrical unit, which is defined as the string of phonemes between two pauses. A metrical unit normally consists of one syllable, but under certain conditions it may consist of two.

Condition 1.
Two vowels may constitute a single position provided that they adjoin, or are separated by a liquid or nasal or by a word boundary which may be followed by h--, and provided that one of them is

a weakly stressed or unstressed vowel.

Condition 2.

An unstressed or weakly stressed monosyllabic word may constitute a single metrical position with a preceding stressed or unstressed syllable.

$XP_nY \rightarrow XMY$

$XMY \rightarrow X \begin{Bmatrix} s \\ s_1 \\ s_2 \end{Bmatrix} Y.$

where P_n = any position
M = metrical unit
s_1 = dissyllable formed by condition 1
s_2 = dissyllable formed by condition 2

Only two dissyllables may occur in a line of verse.

Rule 3.

A position is prominent if it carries ictus, which is defined as a syllable bearing linguistically determined stress greater than the syllables adjacent to it in the same line. Ictus may occupy only marked positions, but not every marked position need be so occupied. Ictus does not occur under the following conditions.

Condition 1.

Level weak stress on an adjacent syllable prevents the realization of ictus.

Condition 2.

Level strong stress on an adjacent syllable prevents the realization of ictus.

$XP_mY \rightarrow X \begin{Bmatrix} P_i \\ P_a \\ P_b \end{Bmatrix} Y.$

where P_m = marked position
P_i = position bearing ictus
P_a = position not bearing ictus by virtue of condition 1
P_b = position not bearing ictus by virtue of condition 2

Ictus must occur in either position 2 or 4 in the line.

Rule 4.

Position 1 of a line may be occupied by a metrical unit or by zero and may carry ictus.

$$\#P_1X \rightarrow \#\begin{Bmatrix} M \\ \emptyset \\ P_i \end{Bmatrix} X,$$

where P_1 = position 1
M = metrical unit
$\emptyset$ = zero occupancy
P_1 = position bearing ictus

As in the Halle-Keyser theory, the conditions listed under Rules Two and Three represent increasingly complicated realizations of the basic line. The same may be said of the two additional options under Rule Four. $\emptyset$ is considered a more metrical realization than P_1 because of the marking function of ictus in the rhythm: whereas P_1 in position 1 disturbs the alternativity produced by highlighting, $\emptyset$ does not.

With the modifications proposed in this paper, the Halle-Keyser theory of iambic pentameter comes close to achieving strong adequacy at the three levels proposed by Chomsky. Further investigation by linguists into the rules of linguistic prosody and by psychologists into the principles underlying the perception of sound should make a fully adequate theory possible, not just for the category of meter, but for all three categories of foregrounded sound. Such a theory would enable the prosodist to explore the relations between sound and meaning in poetry in a principled and comprehensive way. It would provide him with a sound basis and a precise vocabulary for what will no doubt remain one of the subtler arts of literary criticism.

Footnotes:

[1]Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), p.8.

[2]Quoted by David Crystal in Prosodic Systems and Intonation in English (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969), p.29.

[3]Seymour Chatman and Samuel R. Levin, Essays on the Language of Literature (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p.69.

[4]Frye, p.7.

[5]I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1929), p.219. (Cf. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, Chs. XIV, XVIII.)

[6]Ibid., p.221.

[7]Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," in Essays on the Language of Literature, p.296.

[8]David Crystal provides a complete and detailed review of the work done in linguistic prosody by both British and American scholars up to the late 1960's. He demonstrates conclusively that early studies failed to grasp the full complexity of the prosodic systems of English. Until linguists successfully work out the theoretical issues underlying these systems, they can provide only tentative and fragmentary examples of what a complete grammar of prosody will contain. See Crystal, especially pp. 1-119.

[9]For a discussion of the distinction between the delivery of a poem and the poem itself, see pp. 18-21 of this paper.

[10]Jan Mukarovsky, "Standard Language and Poetic Language," in Linguistics and Literary Style, ed. by Donald C. Freeman (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970), pp.43-4.

[11]In the 1950's and early 1960's a number of studies were published which attempted to use statistics in the critical analysis of style. These were responsible for much of the early hostility toward linguistics by literary critics. A typical example from the field of prosody is "Phonological Aspects of Style: Some English Sonnets" by Dell Hymes in Essays on the Language of Literature, pp.33-53. Hymes does a statistical analysis of the "distinctive sound features" of twenty sonnets in order to explore the relation between "style as norm and deviation, as what is common (to a language, author, genre)" and "as the accomplishment of the individual poem" (p.34).

[12]The following account of Chomsky's model of adequacy is based chiefly on Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (Cambridge: M. I. T. Press, 1965) and Language and Mind (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1968), though the notion of observational adequacy comes from Syntactic Structures (the Hague: Moulton, 1957). Chomsky's terminology undergoes some shifting in keeping with developments and modifications in his thought. The qualitative distinction between formal adequacy and psychological adequacy is constant, however, despite the various ways in which it is formulated.

[13]Chomsky, Language and Mind, p.32.

[14]Ibid., p.24.

[15]It may turn out that in fact particular languages are not learned restrictions of a universal grammar and that innate linguistic universals are a mere chimera. This would not, however, invalidate an investigation into the possible existence of metrical universals. Whether such principles, if they exist, are learned or innate is irrelevant to the prosodist, and therefore I have ignored this question in adapting Chomsky's model to the category of meter.

[16]A second potential disanalogy between the acquisition of linguistic competence and the acquisition of metrical competence is that, while every normal person can acquire the former, it is not clear that every normal person can acquire the latter. In linguistic situations, each person both produces and perceives sentences; in the metrical situation, however, the poet produces lines and the audience merely perceives them. The metrist must thus deal with several questions that do not arise for the linguist: what is the nature of the listener's competence? must a competent listener interpret the rhythm in some way or is it enough merely to perceive it? is the competence of the listener, whatever that turns out to be, identical to the competence of the poet? In order to evade these issues, the metrist can work with an ideal native listener whose competence by definition matches that of the poet. This is the solution adopted here. But at some point the questions listed above require investigation for a complete prosodic theory.

[17]The number of metrical lines is infinite, even though metrical grammars contain no recursive device, because the number of English word combinations is infinite. Only a fraction of these combinations will be metrical, of course, but a fraction of an infinite number is itself infinitely large.

[18]Otto Jesperson, "Notes on Metre," in Essays on the Language of Literature, p.73. By "unsophisticated" Jespersen seems to mean that metrists must come to terms with what listeners actually hear in a line of verse, not what theorists deduce they ought to hear.

[19]Ibid., p.74.

[20]At this point, the metrist must cull from the many grammars of prosody available to him a list of rules relevant to his metrical concerns. The following list is intended as an example only. It applies to British English and uses a four level notation in which ´ = primary degree of prominence, ^ = secondary degree, ˇ = tertiary degree, and · = quaternary degree.

syntactic unit	prosodic configuration
1. Compound nouns	x́ x̌ as in drúg stòre
2. Modifier and noun	x̂ x̂ as in rêd drêss
3. Qualifier and adjective or adverb	x̂ x̂ as in sô wêll
4. Verb and noun object	x̂ x́ as in drânk mílk
5. Verb and partitive	x̂ x́ as in drânk úp

[21]Quoted by Chatman in A Theory of Meter (The Hague: Mouton, 1965), pp.95-6.

[22]Ibid., p.96.

[23]W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Concept of Meter: An Exercise in Abstraction," in Essays in the Language of Literature, p.93.

[24]In The Intonation Patterns of American English (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1944), David Pike explains why the delivery instance is beyond the control of the poet.

> One who is writing literature cannot use such symbols [symbols describing intonation contours] to show voice quality or intonation. He has, then, an inadequate 'alphabet.' Punctuation, italisis [sic] and the like, help some, but fail to express many speech characteristics significant to the social situation. Nevertheless, the writer often indicates these characteristics, but he must do so by employing words descriptive of them

> rather than by a direct one-to-one symbolism. He must describe the physical and psychological state of the speaker so that the reader will assume how the person will talk (p.103).

[25]In David Crystal's theory, the prosodic grammar is divided into two portions: the linguistic and the para-linguistic. The linguistic portion contains the rules governing intonation patterns and dealing with the prosodic sound variables (pitch, stress, juncture, etc.). The para-linguistic portion contains the rules governing "voice-qualifiers"--whispers, hisses, shouts, speeding up, slowing down, etc. As Crystal notes, para-linguistic features belong wholly to performance (or delivery) and depend on the performer's interpretation of the context. See Prosodic Systems and Intonation in English, p.139.

[26]In Aspects of the Theory of Syntax, Chomsky draws a comparable distinction between a scale of acceptability and a scale of grammaticalness.

> Acceptability is a concept that belongs to the study of performance, while grammaticalness belongs to the study of competence. . . . Like acceptability, grammaticalness is, no doubt, a matter of degree . . . but the scales of grammaticalness and acceptability do not coincide. Grammaticalness is only one of many factors that interact to determine acceptability (p.11).

The terms of Chomsky's distinction between acceptability and grammaticalness apply equally to the distinction suggested here between acceptability and metricalness.

[27]Chatman, A Theory of Meter, p.96.

[28]John Thompson, "Linguistic Structure and the Poetic Line," in Linguistics and Literary Style, p.337.

[29]Roger Fowler, "'Prose Rhythm' and Meter," in Linguistics and Literary Style, p.349.

[30]Ibid., p.348.

[31]This discussion of tension summarizes points made by John Thompson in Chapter One of The Founding of English Meter (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961).

[32]See, for example, I. A. Richards' remarks in Principles of Literary Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1925), pp.137-8.

[33]Morris Halle and Samuel J. Keyser, "Chaucer and the Study of Prosody," in Linguistics and Literary Style, pp.371-2.

[34]Ibid., pp.380-1. Condition 3 under Principle Two (dealing with zero occupancy of positions) is not listed in the version of the theory I've quoted here, but it is introduced later on in the discussion and it also appears along with the other conditions in the mathematical formulation of the theory contained in the appendix. See p.417. In the pages which follow, I shall use the term "rule" in place of "principle" in order to reserve the latter for the psychological operations which underlie the perception of rhythm.

[35]When foot substitution involves substituting an anapest or a dactyll for an iamb, it involves Rule Two as well. The substitution of a trochee is covered by Rule Three alone.

[36]Joseph C. Beaver, "A Grammar of Prosody," in Linguistics and Literary Style, p.432.

[37]Ibid., p.437.

[38]Chatman, A Theory of Meter, pp.20-5.

[39]Ibid., p.25.

[40]Ibid., p.26.

[41]Ibid., p.126. Although Chatman's work with verse delivery is irrelevant at the formal level of metrical theory, it is telling at the psychological level.

[42]See Roger Fowler, pp.347-365.

[43]Chatman, A Theory of Meter, p.117. That these groups are actually perceived and are not merely theoretical constructs seems likely, though many prosodists think otherwise (e.g., Jesperson, Halle and Keyser and, on occasion, Chatman himself). Ulric Neisser, reporting on experiments in psycholinguistics in a textbook of cognitive psychology, writes:

> When successive taps or drumbeats are separated by alternately long and short intervals, . . . we nearly always hear a series of pairs. Each pair is a segment, a cognitive unit, functioning much like the syllable of the word or the word or the constituent in speech. The "distinctive feature" involved seems to be the repetition of a sharp discontinuity at a fixed time interval, relative to neighboring internals.

See p.205, Cognitive Psychology (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967). Though accentual-syllabic meter is marked by prominent events rather than the time intervals between events,

the principle Niesser describes should apply to both.

[44]Quoted by Chatman, A Theory of Meter, p.114.

[45]Chatman, p.22.

[46]Quoted by Chatman, p.115.

[47]Charles Osgood and Thomas Sebeok, Psycholinguistics: A Survey of Theory and Research Problems (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ. Press, 1965), p.53.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Chatman, p.110.

[50]See Chatman, pp.109-111 and Halle and Keyser, pp.408-9. The classification suggested here cuts across the Halle-Keyser one: that is, category (b) is not a product of condition 1 and category (c) is not a product of condition 2, but rather both conditions produce dissyllables belonging to both categories. However, my categories include exactly the same class of units as the Halle -Keyser ones and entail no revision of their conditions. The reclassification is offered only in order to expose a possible phonological basis for the analysis of metrical units.

[51]The fact that native speakers cannot always agree where this juncture occurs within words is irrelevant for my purposes, for it is the occurence of juncture rather than its exact location which matters. Native speakers can agree on the number of syllables contained in an utterance or a line of verse. Because syllable juncture as defined here is not a phonetic category, it has received relatively little attention from linguists and so my discussion of it is necessarily speculative.

[52]Halle and Keyser, p.382.

[53]Actually, there are many other possibilities, for a line can contain as many as ten syllables with equally strong stress. These two patterns are sufficient to illustrate my point, however.

[54]Halle and Keyser use the term "stress neutralization" for both conditions 3 and 4, but they introduce and define it in connection with condition 4. Condition 3 is brought in as a further instance only later in the discussion in a brief and somewhat unclear fashion. See p.393.

[55]Halle and Keyser, p.390.

[56]Ibid., p.391.

[57]Jesperson, p.76.

[58]Unlike syntactic pause, a pause occuring between lines belongs exclusively to delivery and so can have no relevance at the formal level of theory. That is, there is no rule requiring a pause between lines; it is merely an option taken or not taken in accordance with individual taste. (Of course, a syntactic pause often occurs at the end of lines, but not by rule; there is no systematic correlation between end-stopped lines and subsequent initially inverted lines.) For this reason, one presumes, Halle and Keyser do not introduce the pause into their discussion of positions 1 and 10. Nonetheless, it seems implicit in that discussion. Certainly the premise, first, that a pause prevents the perception of contrast and, secondly, that a pause occurs between lines underlies not only Jesperson's discussion of initial inversion, but Halle and Keyser's formulation of condition 1 as well.

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THE MASKS OF SWIFT

Ruth Sullivan

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By RUTH SULLIVAN

Entitled THE MASKS OF SWIFT

Complies with the regulations of this University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality

For the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

Signed by the final examining committee

_____ Chairman

M. J. C. Hodgart

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Approved by the Dean of Faculty or Chairman of Department (or authorized representative)

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Among his several distinctions Swift may claim to have possessed one of the most intriguing personalities in literary history. This is due in part to the colour of his public life and the uncertain import of his private life. It is due too to the violence of his imagery, which remains arresting even for those who readily accept violence and obscenity as a normal convention of satire. But chiefly it is due to the variety of voices with which Swift speaks to the reader, the number of poses he affects to engage and move his audience. Swift is personally present in everything he wrote and he demands a personal response from the reader, yet he remains an elusive, even troubling figure behind his masks.

This paper shall attempt to characterize the masks of Swift, their relation to the man himself, and the purpose they serve in his works. A great deal has been written on Swift's use of the mask, but excepting Ewald's general survey,[1] attention has focussed chiefly on a handful of the more flamboyant personae--Gulliver, the Teller of the Tale, the projector in A Modest Proposal. Because these figures are complex and unusual, they challenge the critic in a way Bickerstaff or the Church of England Man does not. However, much can be learned of Swift's methods and the rationale behind these methods from a look at the full range of personae he employs.

These, I shall argue, fall into three major categories.[2]

The first might be called the public voice of Swift, the voice one hears in the sermons and pamphlets and occasional pieces he wrote throughout his career. The second includes the non-ironic poses Swift assumes in works like Letter to A Young Clergyman or the letters of the Drapier. The final category includes the ironic personae who appear in Swift's parodies and hoaxes. My method in this paper will be to look first at the assumptions which underlie Swift's use of the persona and then at each of the three categories I have outlined here.

1

Irvin Ehrenpreis has recently attacked the use of the concept of mask or persona in the criticism of Augustan literature.[3] Modern criticism, he suggests, has rescued the eighteenth century from Romantic stereotypes only to establish a limiting and distorting ideal of its own--the ideal of impersonal art. As Ehrenpreis explains it, impersonal art depends on constructing a fictional speaker or narrator who stands an intermediate figure between the author and his work. Since this figure "is not traceable to the author but is a detached expression of his creative sensibility,"[4] the views expressed in the work may not be identified with those of the author. What the author is or believes lies hidden, though the implication is that he is or believes something quite different from that which his

mask reveals. Ehrenpreis finds this mode of analysis inappropriate to the didactic genres of the Augustans: its method is circular, he argues, and it leads to distorted, if not absurd results. Even for those works which are clearly ironic, that is, works in which the author uses "a disguise that is intended to be seen through,"[5] he doubts the value of the persona as a critical tool. It is Swift who speaks, for the most part ironically, in works like Gulliver's Travels and A Modest Proposal; to posit intermediate figures only confuses the matter.

The main value of Ehrenpreis' article is that it calls attention to a number of important issues--what assumptions and requirements underlie the creation of a persona, for example, and what relations are implied between the author, his work, and his audience. A consideration of such issues must be part of a critic's task if he is to use the concept of persona validly. What is needed, however, is less "to distinguish the helpful from the misleading applications of the persona,"[6] than to distinguish among kinds of persona available to an author in different circumstances and different kinds of works. Ehrenpreis discusses but one type and it is the one least suited to the works of the Augustans.

The persona Ehrenpreis discusses is an independent figure expressing detached creative sensibility and operating as a formal element in a self-contained work of art.

Such a figure indeed belongs to a twentieth century aesthetic and is out of place in the didactic art of the Augustans. They write in order to affect the world they address. Their statements thus allude to reality and their claims are susceptible to proof or disproof as cognitive statements. The sort of distinction drawn by I. A. Richards between scientific and poetic statement would have little meaning to writers like Swift or Pope. Not surprisingly, then, the attempt to locate a persona of the sort defined by Ehrenpreis in the works of the Augustans leads to unacceptable results--to the absurdity that the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot "is irrelevant to the history and character of Pope, though uttered by a speaker with his identity"[7] or that Pope's purpose in writing "is not to tell the truth, but to appear truthful."[8] To avoid such absurdities, it is not necessary to reject the notion of persona altogether, however. Rather the concept must be enlarged to accomodate a variety of types designed to meet needs arising from different periods and genres.

The most compelling concern of the Augustan period was the problem of right reason and the related problems of defining the scope of human knowledge and dealing with distorting passions and interests. The Augustans wanted to know what faculties of mind are engaged in the process of cognition, the nature of these faculties, and their relation to each other and to the external world. They wanted to

know in what fashion and to what extent the mind of man can penetrate the mysteries of the universe. Above all, they wanted to know how to cope with the potential for error arising from human pride and from the host of passions and interests which engage each individual in his particular circumstances. One result of these characteristic preoccupations is that the Augustan test for the truth of a cognitive claim includes not only an examination of the appropriate empirical data or the appropriate rational principle, but also an examination of the process of cognition which led to the claim.[9] To evaluate the words of an author, the reader must consider not only the content of his statements, but also his character and his motives and the circumstances out of which he wrote. In this way the person of the author becomes part of what a reader responds to in a work. Thus, it is not enough for Pope to tell the truth in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot; if he is to be believed, he must appear to tell the truth as well.

Swift discusses this problem at some length in his review of Tindall's book The Rights of the Christian Church. He explains that there are two reasons for including a consideration of the author's character and motives in the evaluation of his work. First, rightly or wrongly, men in fact are curious; they want to know about an author and whatever knowledge they turn up will inevitably colour their judgement of his book, even if their information has little

relation to the intrinsic value of the work. Thus, though the truth of a statement does not depend on the merits of its author, the rhetorical effect of that statement to some extent does. "If," for example, "a theological Subject be well handled by a Layman, it is better received than if it come from a Divine." The reasons for this, though "of little weight in themselves, will ever have a great deal with Mankind."[10]

Secondly, in the case of a book like Tindall's, one which attempts to instill pernicious principles in its audience, the reader ought quite rightly seek the distorting element in the author's cognition, whether this be pride or passion or a covert interest of one sort or another, for the discovery of the distorting element robs the author's arguments of their validity and force. Swift illustrates this principle with a series of amusing analogies:

> So, when Milton writ his Book of Divorces, it was presently rejected as an occasional Treatise; because every Body knew, he had a Shrew for his Wife. Neither can there be any Reason imagined why he might not, after he was blind, have writ another upon the Danger and Inconvenience of Eyes. But, it is a Piece of Logic which will hardly pass on the World; that because one Man hath a sore Nose, therefore all the Town should put Plaisters upon theirs.[11]

Here and elsewhere on the basis of this principle he refutes the arguments of deists and atheists, simply by exposing their motives:

> When Men are curious and inquisitive to discover some weak Sides in Christianity,

> . . . it is plain they wish it were not true, and those Wishes can proceed from nothing but an evil Conscience.[12]

Such men are eager to overthrow religion in order that "they may gratify their Vices without any Reproach from the World," and they are zealous to corrupt others because "it is some kind of imaginary Comfort to have a Multitude on their Side."[13] Once these compromising motives have been revealed, the reader can dismiss their statements and arguments without further ado.

Conversely, in order for an author to write well on religion or any topic of public concern, he must be "a Man steady in his Principles, of exact Morals and profound Learning, and a true Lover of his Country,"[14] by which Swift means he must write solely for the general good of the society. These qualities are morally necessary in order to insure the truth of a writer's observations, and they are rhetorically necessary as well in order to insure the effectiveness of those observations.

Given these assumptions, a high degree of calculation in the author's presentation of his "self," the speaking voice in his work, is obviously necessary. The exigencies of the situation--the topic in hand, the author's relation to the topic, and the audience to be addressed--may require a certain amount of posing or disguise. The ideal sought is not impersonality, but rather right reason and equally the appearance of right reason. Thus, when Swift addresses

the educated public on the problem of party and the proper relations between church and state; he assumes the pose of a non-partisan layman in the Church of England. When he addresses a Whig parliament on the issue of Church revenues, he assumes the pose of a layman and a Whig. These poses, as Ehrenpreis suggests, consist of little more than a pseudonym and a few attached facts, but he is quite wrong in claiming that the details of the pose do not matter, that "a persona need not be peculiarly designed to encourage the reader's identification of himself with the author."[15] For the Augustans, such identifications were never a matter of course, but depended on a convincing show of right reasoning. As well as offering statements and arguments of what Swift believes to be true, then, the Whig layman and the Church of England Man claim and justify the right to argue aloud on a public issue and they define and legitimitize a particular interest in that issue.

The assumption that the character and motives of an author form part of what a reader responds to in a work of art is the major basis of the Augustan use of the mask. One source of this assumption, I have argued, is philosophical, a result of the general preoccupation during this period with the problem of right reason. A second source is literary.

One of the major conventions of Augustan literature was "the character." I use the term loosely here to include

the whole range of social and moral types inherited from Renaissance imitations of Theophrastus, from Restoration comedy and from the tradition of classical verse satire. In the heat of the seventeenth century pamphlet wars, Theophrastan character writing was expanded to include political and religious types as well.[16] The Puritan Fanatick was especially popular. These "credo-characters" were designed to exhibit a doctrine or a point of view on some controversial issue, and as the century advanced they grew in length to become homilies or essays in many cases. Both the character and the credo-character continued to be popular during the Augustan period. Examples may be found in the verse satire of both Pope and Swift, in Swift's prose writings, and in the periodicals of the day.

The most important character of the Augustan period, indeed one that grew into a controlling myth, was the honest man. As described by Empson, the honest man was for the Augustans the very "Type of man, the measure of all things;" he was the man who could "recognize and fulfill both his own nature and his duties to society."[17] Sir William Temple defined honesty as "that which makes men prefer their Duty and their Promise, before their Passions, or their Interest."[18] In Doctor Johnson's Dictionary "honest" means "upright, true, sincere, just, righteous, giving to every man his due."[19] The honest man was valued above all others because he could be trusted: his display of responsible public virtue was

backed by personal integrity.

In a study of Augustan poetry entitled The Honest Muse, Rachael Trickett describes the development of the concept of honesty from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries and its influence on the art of the Augustan poet. For the Elizabethans the word evoked the stock characterization of the "uncomplaining honest fellow who sees the world as it is, and in his plain-speaking shows his indifference to it,"[20] an indifference originating in stoicism. A few years later the concept centered on "the figure of the simple honest man, [a] patronized pastoral figure . . . associated with the idea of retreat."[21] This figure was noted for spurning the noise of the city in favour of a quiet life of rural virtue. Both of these early conceptions of honesty implied a passive sort of virtue, a virtue by default. In the second half of the seventeenth century the term underwent a shift in emphasis and though the ideas of retirement and simplicity and plain-speaking remained, the ideal virtue associated with honesty became an active one, embracing all the qualities needed for responsible participation in public life: independence, integrity, clear vision, dedication to duty, and so on. Finally, during the early years of the eighteenth century the concept was extended to include "the real sentiments of the heart"[22] as an ideal of personal sincerity was introduced.

The Augustan veneration for the ideal of honesty is

evident in the style of their poetry, which is formal and lucid, relying on direct, unadorned statement, and it is evident still more in the ethos of the Augustan poet. Trickett shows that the rhetorical stance the poet assumes towards his material is a major literary convention of the period. This is the mask of the honest man. Whether he is writing satire or compliment, elegy or polemics, the poet presents himself as an honest and therefore a trustworthy witness to the truth of his claims.

The mask of the honest poet is grounded in sound rhetorical strategy. In the Rhetoric Aristotle observes:

> It is not true . . . that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses (I,i).[23]

> The orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief; he must also make his own character look right. . . . There are three things which inspire confidence in the orator's own character--. . . good sense, good moral character, and good will (II,i).[24]

Quintilian similarly writes in Institutio Oratoria that if a speaker "is believed to be a good man, this consideration will exercise the strongest influence at every point in the case. For thus he will . . . give the impression not so much that he is a zealous advocate as that he is an absolutely reliable witness."[25] Both Aristotle and Quintilian prefer the strategy of ethos, that is, proof of the speaker's

good character, to pathos, appeal to the emotions of the audience and both detail ways in which ethical proof can be achieved.

The Augustans studied the classical rhetoricians and they had available as well a highly developed tradition of satire reaching back to Horace in which the ethos of the author figured as a major consideration. Alvin Kernan has traced the twists and turns of this convention during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in a book entitled The Cankered Muse.[26] The relations between the cankered and honest muse make a telling study.

According to Kernan, the persona of the satirist has both a public and a private personality. The former is the one he advertises to the world in order to sanction his critical judgements. He professes himself a blunt, plain-spoken, candid man of humble but honest origins, who in the simplicity of his heart desires nothing but a return to traditional values and plain old-fashioned virtues. The pattern of decent human life, he feels, has been lost through the degeneracy of the times. Thus, though mild and retiring by nature, his reason compels him to attack with indignation--almost against his will--the widespread practice of folly and vice.

The private personality of the satirist consists of a number of tensions which are produced by the very nature of the satirist's effort and which undermine his claims to

innocent simplicity. He claims to speak only the simple truth, but he uses all the tools of rhetoric and clearly distorts and exaggerates. His vigorous, often furious attacks on irrationality and vice seem themselves an instance of passion overwhelming reason. His critical pronouncements on everyone around him undermine his claim to humility, while his enthusiastic display of the mean, the disgusting and the obscene creates an impression of sick sensationalism.

Kernan's thesis is that during the Renaissance the conventional ethos created for the satirist was one which emphasized the moral ambiguities and strange twists of his private personality. Such a satirist could be guilty of sadism or envy or even hypocrisy. At best he is an unstable character, frequently unbalanced by melancholy. Though his perceptions of the world are distorted, he nonetheless sees himself a scourge of vice, a kind of moral surgeon, whose job it is to dissect and purge the evil in man's nature. For this reason he writes with Juvenalian fervour, lashing out at the manifold evils he encounters on his rounds.

It seems clear that the key to the public personality of the Renaissance satirist as Kernan describes it is honesty, in the way honesty was understood at the time. Further, this public personality evolved just as the concept of honesty evolved in the terms described by Trickett: first an emphasis on bluff plainspeaking and stoical resis-

tance and rationality, to which is added the ideal of retirement and the virtues of a quiet rural life. What happens in the second half of the seventeenth century, then, is a gradual repression of the private personality of the satirist while his public personality develops along with the concept of honesty. In this way the cankered muse is transformed into an honest muse whom all poets can serve. This transformation does not mean that Augustan satire is less violent or intense than the satire of the Renaissance; it means only that the ethos of the satirist has changed. Instead of calling attention to the contradictions and the distorting elements in his character, the Augustan satirist emphasizes his integrity, his responsibility, and his patriotic motives. If he speaks warmly, it is because he is sincere, and any overt expression of hate or anger is carefully justified by demonstration. In short, the Augustan satirist is an honest man.

There is, of course, a close connection between the Augustan concept of honesty and the concern for right reason. The qualities which make up the honest man are just those which guarantee the proper operation of right reason; and no man could be honest who failed to reason properly. Before we can see the ways in which Swift uses the mask of honesty, then, we must see just what he means by right reason. At no point does he provide a straightforward systematic account of his views on this crucial topic. It

is thus necessary for the critic to piece together an account from remarks scattered throughout his works--works written for a variety of occasions, in a number of different voices, and over a long period of time. Given these disparate sources, a remarkably clear and consistent picture emerges of Swift's version of right reason.

As Mariam Starkman has pointed out,[27] Swift's prescription for right reason assumes a traditional description of man's psychology. Originating in scholastic philosophy, this description arranges the faculties or powers of the soul in a hierarchy. At the lowest level, the vegetative faculty is comprised of the powers needed to sustain bodily life--the powers of nutrition, growth and reproduction. At the middle level, the sensitive faculty includes both the external and internal senses and the sensitive appetite. At the highest level, the rational faculty includes both the intellect and the will. The external senses of the middle soul refer to the five bodily senses (taste, touch, etc.) which provide knowledge of the external world through sensation. The internal senses refer to first a general sense,[28] which organizes the data of sensation; secondly imagination, which stores the data in the form of images; thirdly apprehension, which grasps the practical, common sense implications of the data; and finally memory, which stores the knowledge gained through apprehension. The knowledge of the external world which

the middle soul supplies to reason thus includes images from the imagination and data from the memory. The function of the rational intellect is a moot issue, but the traditional Christian view as laid out in Aquinas' adaptation of Aristotle characterizes this function as abstraction: the sensitive faculty apprehends particulars from which the rational faculty abstracts the universal or the essence. (A more Platonic view would hold that knowledge of universals or of essence is innate.) The will is the faculty of choice and is the rational counterpart to sensitive appetite. The will desires the good while the sensitive appetite desires particular objects presented by the senses. The potential for error arises from the potential discrepancy between what is good and what the sensitive appetite desires. Appetite can disrupt the other faculties of the middle soul with the result that the data supplied to reason is faulty or distorted. Operating on improper information, the will chooses improperly.

Swift's account of right reason assumes a hierarchal model like the one described above, but his approach is prescriptive rather than descriptive or analytic. He had little interest, it would seem, in formal philosophical problems like the distinction between primary and secondary qualities or the problem of universals. That he was familiar with such problems is clear from his parody and ridicule of philosophical speculation which is occasionally

very detailed. He reveals a knowledge of Locke's epistemology, for example, when he pokes fun at nominalism in the review of Tindall.[29] For the most part, however, he limits his focus to the operation of right reason in the everyday affairs of life.

Swift's model of right reason is a fairly simple one. It involves three basic elements: the data of experience, certain precepts of reason, and a faculty of judgement. The data of experience are drawn from sense perception and "common sense" apprehension in the manner described above. Swift takes a practical approach to the problem of sense perception, refusing to be drawn by Cartesian doubts. Man's experience of the external world comes to him through his senses, and unless there is a particular reason to suppose otherwise, this experience may be taken as an accurate representation of what is. The colour and size of an object are equally facts, whether they originate in the object itself or in the mind of the beholder. And the practical implications of such facts are readily apparent to common sense. In right reasoning, it is the task of the senses--the five external senses and common sense--to supply reason with the data of experience.[30]

In his account of the rational faculties Swift to some extent departs from the traditional Aristotelian view, for he assumes the existence of rational precepts or principles which man knows independently of the data of experience.

These are the common forms of human understanding, forms which have been held by sane men everywhere and in all times and to which one gives assent immediately without the slightest doubt or uncertainty. Whether such principles are technically "innate" is of little concern to Swift; they have the force of innate principles and this is what counts. Thus, in one of his rare philosophical moments Swift expresses disapproval of Locke's attack on innate ideas, not because it misrepresents the facts, but because it is "dangerous."[31]

The faculty of judgement is for Swift, as for most of his contemporaries, the distinguishing activity of reason. It is contrasted with fancy or wit, which is the activity of the imagination. Judgement discovers the differences among things: it analyzes and compares and draws distinctions in a sober and responsible fashion. Wit, on the other hand, discovers similarities in things which are actually unlike each other. Strictly speaking it is not a cognitive faculty at all, for left to itself it operates independently of both fact and precept, the two forms human knowledge assumes. In right reasoning fancy is never left to itself, but is firmly subordinated to the faculty of judgement. It is the task of judgement to measure the data of experience against the precepts of reason and draw conclusions on which the will may act.

The simplicity of this model of cognition is marred

of course, by the intrusion of man's instinctual nature. From this source originate man's love of self and his appetites, the myriad desires and interests which arise in the concrete circumstances of daily life. These have the power to undermine right reasoning at any point in its operation. As Swift remarks in his sermon On the Trinity,

> Reason itself is true and just, but the Reason of every particular Man is weak and wavering, perpetually swayed and turned by his Interests, his Passions, and his Vices. Let any Man but consider, when he hath a Controversy with another, although his Cause be ever so unjust, although the World be against him, how blinded he is by the Love of himself, to believe that Right is Wrong, and Wrong is Right, when it maketh for his own Advantage.[32]

Appetites distort perception, fire the imagination and corrupt judgement; self-love encourages men to replace the universal precepts of reason with their own idiosyncratic inventions. Successful cognition, then, depends on successful control of the instincts so that the senses may provide reason with accurate information and reason may judge that information accurately in accordance with its own principles.

Swift's model of cognition neatly synthesizes the two opposing models current in the early eighteenth century: the rationalistic deductive model of Descartes, with its a priori truths and the empirical inductive model of Locke with its tabula rasa. Man's knowledge of the world comes from sensation, but sensation becomes meaningful only when processed, in effect, by the principles of reason. Martin

Price has pointed out the resemblance between Swift's account of right reason and the views expressed by Bacon in Novuum Organum where the latter recommends an intimate working relation between empirical experiment and rational deduction and cautions against the various idols originating in passions and prejudices and in the wayward imagination.[33] In Bacon's allegory of the bee, the ants are men who merely collect and store data, while the spiders are men who make cobwebs out of their own substance in disregard of the data supplied by experience. The ideal bees, however, combine the two methods in a way that is at once mutually limiting and mutually enhancing. They gather their material from the garden, but digest and transform it by a power of their own. Swift uses Bacon's ideal bee as a standard of true learning in The Battle of the Books and his sympathy with "the wise Lord Bacon," as the Drapier calls him,[34] is further indicated when the arrow shot at him by Aristotle misses the mark and hits Descartes instead.

There is one way in which Swift differs sharply from Bacon, however, and that is in the moral function he assigns to the faculties of reason in proper cognition. Experience supplies the data and what reason supplies finally is a principle of moral valuation. Whereas Bacon's test for the truth of an axiom is its use, Swift's test for the truth of an axiom is its moral use. Swift's insistence on this criterion is evident throughout his works and can be seen as

early as 1692 in the "Ode to Dr. William Sancroft." Although occasioned by the death of Sancroft, whom he admires and eulogizes in the poem, Swift's major concern here is with the impassable gulf that separates eternal truth from the kind of truth available to man caught in the "giddy Circumstance/ Of time or place." Swift uses the Platonic doctrine of reflection as a metaphor to suggest the quality of this gulf:

> But where is ev'n thy Image on our earth?
> For of the person much I fear,
> Since Heaven will claim its residence as well as birth,
> And God himself has said, He shall not find it here.
> For this inferior world is but Heaven's dusky shade,
> By dark reverted rays from its reflection made;
> Whence the weak shapes wild and imperfect pass,
> Like sun-beams shot at too far distance from a glass.[35]
> (1.17-24)

There follows an amusing description of the efforts of "Cartesian artists" to resolve the misleading appearances through a variety of experimental toys. Their second distortion does not undo the first, however, but only makes it worse, and Swift concludes:

> Such are the ways ill-guided mortals go
> To judge of things above by things below,
> Disjointing shapes as in the fairy-land of dreams,
> Or images that sink in streams;
> No wonder, then, we talk amiss
> Of truth, and what, or where it is. (1.37-42)

In more straightforward terms Swift explains in his sermon On the Trinity that the doctrines of faith, like "the commonest Actions of Nature, the Growth of an Animal, a Plant, or the smallest Seed [are] a Mystery to the wisest among Men."[36] These mysteries are facts, "uncapable of

any Controversy," since God himself has revealed the one and our senses reveal the other, but they are facts whose "Reason or Manner . . . is above our Comprehension, and wholly concealed from us."[37]

The truths of metaphysics and of natural philosophy are not accessible to human intelligence. Man's efforts to penetrate the barriers to his understanding through speculation, experiment, or controversy are at best futile: opinion is "dark and blind" and disputes manage "to tire all patience out" but "not to satisfy the doubt." "Upon the whole," Swift concludes in his sermon On the Trinity, "it will be impossible to find any real Use towards a virtuous or happy Life" from probing the mysteries of God.[38] At worst, man's efforts to penetrate the barriers to his understanding are dangerous: "For swords are madmen's tongues, and tongues are madmen's swords." In this line Swift captures the essence of his "Digression on Madness" in A Tale of a Tub: the madness of proselytizers in philosophy and religion, like the madness of conquering princes, originates in pride and an illicit desire for power, a desire to possess the world.

The one sort of truth that is accessible to man in his "sublunary dance" is virtue:

> . . . all that our weak knowledge titles virtue, be
> (High Truth) the best resemblance of exalted Thee.

A man such as the good Sancroft is "the brightest pattern Earth can shew/ Of Heav'n-born Truth below." This identifi-

cation of truth with virtue is more than a pretty compliment in the Platonic mode to honour the memory of Sancroft; it lies at the heart of all Swift wrote. In Swift's version of right reason, the precepts to which the facts of experience must be submitted are moral precepts and the role of judgement is restricted to the functions of conscience. These are described by Swift in his sermon On the Testimony of Conscience:

> Conscience properly signifies, that Knowledge which a Man hath within himself of his own Thoughts and Actions. And, because, if a Man judgeth fairly of his own Actions by comparing them with the law of God, his Mind will either approve or condemn him according as he hath done Good or Evil; therefore this Knowledge or Conscience may properly be called both an Accuser and a Judge. . . . There is another Office likewise belonging to Conscience, which is that of being our Director and Guide . . . in those Actions which Scripture and Reason plainly tell us to be good or evil.[39]

Though Swift is concerned in this sermon with certain specific issues of religious controversy, the functions he assigns to conscience here apply to the whole range of human experience.

It is important to notice the distinction Swift draws here and elsewhere between the faculty of discursive reasoning which all men possess to a greater or lesser degree and the higher faculty of conscience which all men possess and which is the same for all men. Swift writes in his sermon On the Trinity:

> It must be allowed, that every Man is bound to follow the Rules and Directions of the Measure of Reason which God hath given him; and indeed he cannot do otherwise, if he will be sincere, or act like a Man.[40]

One cannot choose what thoughts come into one's head, for reason functions of its own accord; however, one can and must judge those thoughts in accordance with the dictates of conscience. Thus, in Thoughts on Religion Swift asserts:

> I am not answerable to God for the doubts that arise in my own breast, since they are the consequence of that reason which he hath planted in me, if I take care to conceal those doubts from others, if I use my best endeavors to subdue them, and if they have no influence on the conduct of my life.[41]

In Swift's account of right reason, the speculations of rational thought form part of the data of experience which must be submitted to conscience for a moral evaluation. In its role as director and judge, conscience measures this data against moral precepts--what "Scripture and Reason plainly tell us to be good or evil."

Swift's definition of conscience raises the difficult point of the relation between faith and reason. There were two opposing accounts of this relationship during the Augustan age. The deists held that reason alone provides sufficient grounds for religion and a sufficient guide to moral conduct. The fideists, on the other hand, were anti-rationalistic; they held that the tenets of morality and religion can be known only through faith, that in trusting

to unaided reason a man exposed himself to doubts and errors and at best was guilty of pride.

In her major study of Swift and the Augustan age, Kathleen Williams places Swift in the camp of the fideists.[42] At first glance, certainly, this would seem to be where he belongs. Swift's antagonism to deism and neo-stoicism is well-documented in his works. Book IV of Gulliver's Travels can be read as an attack on the doctrine of rational self-sufficiency, and a major theme of the sermons is the crucial importance of revealed doctrine in the life of a virtuous man. In the sermon On the Testimony of Conscience, Swift declares "there is no solid, firm Foundation of Virtue, but in a conscience directed by the Principles of Religion."[43] In the sermon On the Excellency of Christianity, he reviews errors of fact and morality committed by famous heathens in order to "prove that Christian philosophy is in all things preferable to Heathen wisdom."[44] Throughout his life Swift pressed the claims of formal Christianity as both a writer and politician as well as a clergyman. Finally, the pessimism characteristic of fideism and its insistence on the need for authority would appeal strongly to Swift.

For all that, Swift is not a fideist. He first of all rejects the distinction between two kinds of truth, a truth of reason and a truth of faith, entailed by the fideist position. This distinction is the foundation on

which the Royal Society was built and prospered, and Swift's attitude toward that organization is clearly revealed in Book III of Gulliver's Travels. In Swift's view, the doctrine of "rendering unto faith the things that are faith's"[45] was a piety which left atheists free to carry on their work of collapsing spirit into mechanism. Though it is possible to distinguish between facts revealed and confirmed by the senses and facts revealed and confirmed by God, the truth of either sort is judged by its moral significance, that is, by the extent to which it consists with virtue. This criterion produces a single kind of truth.

Secondly, Swift shares none of the skeptical doubts about human reason and perception which underpin the arguments of the fideists. Right reason reveals what men need to know in order to live virtuous lives and these truths are further confirmed by scriptural revelation; Scripture and Reason plainly tell exactly the same thing.[46] If men err, they do so because their instinctual natures interfere with the process of proper cognition, not because they lack the knowledge or faculties needed to reason correctly. "Reason itself is true and just, but the Reason of every particular Man is weak and wavering" on account of his interests and passions and vices.

Swift's view of man's instinctual nature is not flattering; on this topic he has more in common with Hobbes and Mandeville and La Rouchefoucauld than he does with

Bolingbroke: "Human nature is so constituted," Swift writes, "that we can never pursue any thing heartily but upon hopes of a reward. If we run a race, it is in expectation of a prize, and the greater the prize the faster we run."[47] The springs of human actions are self-love and appetite; in his instincts, man is a yahoo. Thus, in Book IV of Gulliver's Travels Swift quarrels with the deists--not because they overvalue human reason, but because they misconstrue human nature. The difference between men and Houyhnhnms lies not in their faculties of reason, but in their instinctual natures. While the Houyhnhnms naturally love their entire species and instinctively desire the good of the whole, man naturally loves himself and prefers the immediate gratification of his appetites to the welfare of the community. While the Houyhnhnms can see that the personal interest of each individual is identical to the welfare of the community, man is blinded to this truth by the pressure of irrational desire.

Swift attacked the deists because they wrongly believed that man instinctively desires the welfare of the whole community. For Swift, this is a truth revealed by right reason. But both locate absolute value or the good in the general welfare of society. Swift writes in his sermon On Doing Good:

> Besides [the] love we owe to every man in his particular capacity under the title of our neighbor, there is yet a duty of a more large, extensive nature, incumbent on

> us; which is, our love to our neighbour in his public capacity, as he is a member of the great body, the commonwealth, under the same government with ourselves; and this is usually called love of the public, and is a duty to which we are more strictly obliged than even that of loving ourselves; because therein ourselves are also contained, as well as all our neighbours, in one great body. This love of the public, or of the commonwealth, or love of our country, was in antient times properly known by the name of Virtue, because it was the greatest of of all virtues, and was supposed to contain all virtues in it.[48]

In his definition of the good, Swift diverges sharply from orthodox Christianity. For an orthodox Christian, the good is what God wills and the laws of God have absolute value because they express what God wills. For Swift, the laws of God have instrumental value: they are good because they formalize, authorize and enforce actions which contribute to the general welfare of society. He states quite baldly that the "Excellency of Faith, consisteth in the Consequence it hath upon our Actions."[49]

Swift thus shares with the deists their definition of value and their confidence in right reason to reveal the truths necessary for a virtuous life, while he shares with writers like Hobbes and Mandeville his low assessment of human nature. Reason teaches that a man's private interest is ultimately served by the welfare of the whole community, but for the bulk of mankind this is an axiom "too abstracted" to be of much use.[50]

> Every man is upon his own guard for his

> private advantage; but, where the public is concerned, he is apt to be negligent, considering himself only as one among two or three millions, among whom the loss is equally shared, and thus, he thinks, he can be no great sufferer.[51]

There is a strong element of elitism in Swift which is not taken into account by many who comment on his thought.[52] He writes, for example, in A Letter to a Young Clergyman:

> The true Misery of the Heathen World, was the Want of a Divine Sanction; without which, the Dictates of the Philosophers failed in the Point of Authority; and consequently the Bulk of Mankind lay, indeed, under a great Load of Ignorance, even in the Article of Morality; but the Philosophers themselves did not.[53]

Swift distinguishes between the few, those whose "personal merit" is sufficient to ensure right reason, and the many, the bulk of mankind who require an extra push. Religion provides this push with its concrete system of rewards and punishments:

> When Conscience placeth before us the Hopes of everlasting Happiness, and the Fears of everlasting Misery, as the Reward and Punishment of our good or evil Actions, our Reason can find no way to avoid the Force of such an Argument.[54]

Religion provides the sanction wanting in heathen philosophy; it appeals to hope and fear, which Swift believed to be two of the strongest human instincts,[55] and it therefore succeeds where reason all too often fails.

Swift, then, endorses religion not because its doctrines are facts--though this of course is the case--but because its precepts are moral and because it provides a

more forceful sanction for these precepts than reason alone can provide. In either case, however, whether one appeals to reason or to religion, the necessary and sufficient condition for making a man virtuous is to show him that his interest coincides with his duty. This is the rule of thumb Swift recommends to the young clergyman and it is the axiom on which his own sermons and political pamphlets are built.

Next to the sermons, the clearest statement of this axiom is to be found in A Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners. In this essay Swift proposes making virtue the requisite for getting ahead in the world in just the way religion makes it a requisite for getting into heaven. Both are schemes for enforcing morality and the value of both derives from their moral utility. Many readers and critics have been repelled by the apparent cynicism of Swift's methods for improving manners and morality. Ewald finds A Project so cynical that he concludes Swift must be using an ironical mask.[56] However, though the thrust of this essay is partly satirical, there is no evidence to suggest that Swift does not make his proposal seriously.[57] The impression of cynicism is partly a result of Swift's focus. In this essay and in nearly all his published works, Swift focusses on public duty rather than private morality. He is concerned with the way men think and act in their "public capacity," and

he looks upon himself and his audience as members of the commonwealth engaged in a common task, though not always in agreement on the proper means to reach the common goal. His task as a writer is to instruct the audience on the proper means--"to tell the People what is their Duty; and then to convince them that it is so."[58] Such a focus is a natural consequence of Swift's definition of virtue. It does not follow from this that he is indifferent to men's private relations with God or that he does not love instrumental goods for their own sake or that he himself lacks genuine religious piety. These values and concerns appear to some extent in the sermons where the context renders them appropriate. But even there and certainly elsewhere Swift both practices and appeals to right reason. Right reason does not require a man to love virtue in order to act virtuously or to love God in order to be a good Christian; it allows for these possibilities, but it requires only that a man think properly: that he test the data of experience against the precepts of morality in order to judge the moral utility of the issue in hand.

2

Having noted the terms of Swift's model of right reason, we may now turn to examine the ways in which this model influenced the creation of his various masks. Most of the works falling into category one, those I have charac-

terized above as revealing the "public voice" of Swift, were published anonymously. Exceptions to this rule are the sermons and a number of letters written to friends but intended for publication. In these works, the identity of Swift is apparent and he draws on his authority as a public figure who has distinguished himself in the service of church and country. Since my main concern lies with the kind of voice Swift establishes in the anonymous works where he must rely on the words of his discourse alone to create and characterize an identity, these works will not be included in the discussion to follow.

The voice Swift creates in the anonymous publications is a remarkably flexible yet consistent creation. While there is no valid reason to approach this voice as a disguise or a form of deception, we have already noted a good reason for approaching it as a kind of mask. This is the distinction Swift draws between private and public, a distinction arising from his concept of right reason and assuming a number of different forms. First of all, right reason entails a distinction between private thought and public utterance. Every man has the right, indeed the obligation to "follow the Rules and Directions of the Measure of Reason which God hath given him . . . if he will be sincere or act like a Man." However, this right and obligation does not extend to what a man performs in public. As we have seen, before the fruits of private

thought can legitimately be revealed, they must be submitted to the faculty of conscience. The statements and arguments contained in Swift's published essays, then, have been through a censor in effect: they express public views which may or may not correspond to the contents of his private thought.

Secondly, Swift's model of right reason entails a distinction between personal sincerity and public honesty. The sincerity of a man depends on all sorts of factors extrinsic to the operation of right reason: on his use of his own reason, as we have seen, but also on the bent of his imagination, the organization of his emotional life, and the details of his unique personal history. These are factors that distinguish one man from another and colour one's personal experience of life, in contrast to right reason which is the same for everyone. A perusal of Swift's private correspondance and the Journal to Stella reveals no startling discrepancy between his public and his private judgement, but it does reveal sides of Swift which are generally repressed in the works intended for publication--a frivolous taste for the bagatelle, a susceptibility to emotions like vanity or a desire to be revenged, and also the warmth of his feeling for his friends and his own heart-felt love of the public. In his personal writings, Swift reveals himself to those he trusts with a striking degree of candour and personal intimacy. In his public writings,

however, he wears a mask, not of impersonality, but of honesty. If Swift's mask seems impersonal, it is because he works generally with a concept of honesty that looks back to an earlier period in which honesty was chiefly a public ideal and did not yet embrace "the real sentiments of the heart."[58] The purpose of such a mask is not to detach the author from his claims, but rather to present the author as a reliable witness to the truth of his claims.

As Charles Beaumont points out in his study of Swift's debt to classical rhetoric, there are two ways of establishing the character of an author in a work.[59] One is through direct reference to details from the author's situation or straightforward exposition of his motives and qualifications. The other is implicit and indirect, being a product of the general tone of the essay and the author's attitude toward his topic and his audience. The works of Swift which fall into category one rely for the most part on the latter method. Without appearing to do so, Swift creates a carefully controlled impression of the author: a man who sticks to properly reasoned argument, in full possession of the relevant facts, above party faction, indignant at injustice but restrained in his attack, self-confident but not in love with his own opinions, respectful to his betters, above all a true lover of his country, devoted wholly to the public interest.

In order to illustrate the features of Swift's public

voice and to explore the means by which they are communicated, we may take a look at one of Swift's masterpieces in category one, The Conduct of the Allies. This treatise falls roughly into three parts. The first rehearses the history of the war from its inception to the present, while the final part considers the course to be taken in the immediate future. Swift's method in both these sections is to measure the facts of the particular case in hand against the precepts which ought to govern any nation in its foreign policies, especially its conduct of war and peace. Bridging these two sections is an account of the personal interests motivating certain factions of society at the expense of the public good. These factions, Swift asserts, are responsible for the ill course England has followed in the past and, unless strongly opposed, they will seek to continue this ill course in the future. Throughout Swift focusses the attention of the reader on the content of his arguments, calling explicit attention to himself only a few times in the course of the essay. Nevertheless, the reader is made to feel that he is dealing with a responsible witness, one who reasons rightly and avoids the pitfalls of pride and passion. This impression is managed in a number of ways.

First of all, Swift establishes a sweet reasonableness as the dominant tone of the essay. The precepts of proper government, as Swift presents them, are mere commonplaces,

propositions to which no one could reasonably deny assent. And Swift is at pains to point this out: "all Political Causists allow, . . . the Writers upon Politicks admit, . . . it is obvious that, . . . by what I have always heard and read, . . . it is well known that, . . . in common Reason, . . . in common Justice, . . . in common Prudence." Swift's principles have been shrewdly selected perhaps, but in themselves they are impeccable and he is careful to show that they are not his principles particularly, but belong to the general fund of human wisdom throughout the ages. Similarly, his facts are all "plain Matters of Fact" including a detailed history of events, various computations, reports from informed sources and paraphrases and quotations from official documents. These reveal a thorough and intimate knowledge of the subject as well as a responsible care for accurate detail. There is also a sly confession that the author has access to facts unavailable to others and so is in a better position to reason rightly on the present situation. In this way Swift marshalls as ostentatiously as possible the materials required for the operation of right reason--the precepts on the one hand, the data on the other. Furthermore, he invites the reader to participate in the operation with him: "let any Man reflect, . . . let any Man read these two Treatises from the beginning to the end, . . . let the World judge." Swift implies that the conclusions he reaches emerge from the mutual reflection

of himself and the reader: they are thus universal, the result of right reason rather than any personal idiosyncracy on his part, and so must be true. He can thus assert them with considerable confidence without appearing dogmatic or proud: "thus it plainly appears, . . . 'tis plain, . . . the Truth of this will appear indisputable, . . . it will be found."

The arguments Swift offers, especially in the first section, are long and complex. He analyzes his material in detail, considering every objection and exploring every alternative. He makes liberal use of the terminology of aggressive argument to give his remarks the appearance of closely reasoned deduction. There may be some justice in the charge made by Dr. Hare, who undertook the Whig reply to Swift, that he deliberately confuses his audience.[60] But the source of this confusion is also the source of one of Swift's most convincing proofs of character: his air of considering all the relevant material and letting it speak for itself.

This tone of sweet reasonableness dominates the entire essay, but especially section one. In section two, Swift turns from recounting the absurdities of England's participation in the war to reveal the causes of those absurdities in the corruption of certain individuals and factions within society. By the time the reader has worked through the thirty-odd pages of the first section, he is more than

ready to accept Swift's explanation here as the only one that could possibly account for the facts. Swift is thus able to rely more heavily in the final sections of the essay on the authority of his own voice. He asserts, for example, that "it is the Folly of too many, to mistake the Eccho of a London Coffee-House for the Voice of the Kingdom."[61] This bald assertion is typical of much in the latter portion of the essay. It implies a speaker well aware of his superiority to the rabble, and its epigrammatic form gives it the ring of a general truth. One hardly notices how arbitrary is Swift's dissociation of city and kingdom and the implicit corollary to this, the association of kingdom with the rural interests of the country. Elsewhere Swift sweetens this tone with a show of modesty and restraint. He tells us he has delayed the publication of his discourse "because I would give way to others, who might argue very well upon the same Subject."[62] He suggests that those who oppose an immediate peace "may perhaps change their Sentiments, if they will reflect a little upon our present Condition."[63] Many of his stronger assertions are softened with interjections like "I believe" or "I think" or "I doubt."

On the whole, however, section two is designed less to demonstrate the modest reasonableness of the speaker than to show off his virtue. Swift begins this section with an apology of sorts:

> If in laying open the real Causes of our present Misery, I am forced to speak with some Freedom, I think it will require no Apology; Reputation is the smallest Sacrifice Those can make us, who have been the Instruments of our Ruin . . . and it may be of some use to Us and our Posterity, not to trust the Safety of their Country in the Hands of those who act by such Principles, and from such Motives.[64]

Swift here introduces a new strategy to enhance his image and further secure the sympathy and cooperation of the audience. Like the honest satirist, he is "forced" into an open attack on his opponents by his need to tell the truth and serve the public good. In this passage he places himself and his readers firmly on the side of the angels against the small, but self-interested faction responsible for England's unhappy condition. This is accomplished through a careful manipulation of pronouns. Throughout section one, "we" or "us" is used to refer to the British nation, while "them" or "they" refers to other nations like Holland and Austria who are shown to have prospered at England's expense. Throughout section two, however, beginning with the passage quoted above, "we" and "us" are used to refer to Swift and the reader, and this standard rhetorical plural is explicitly identified with citizens, "whether Whig or Tory, whose private Interest is best answered by the Welfare of their Country."[65] "They," "them," and "those"--the exploiters--are reserved in this section for Marlborough, certain Whigs and the "Monied Men" of the city--the "Instruments of our Ruin."

Swift's identity as a true patriot is further established a few pages later by his vigorous and lengthy defense of the Queen. Here it is "they" against "I", as Swift assumes the stance of a lonely, but heroic defender of truth and justice. They try to deny the merit of the Queen in defeating the recent conspiracy against the nation: "They produce Instances, . . . They would have it that, . . . They blame . . . . But I am of another Opinion. . . . I still insist upon it as a Wonder, how Her Majesty, thus besieged on all sides, was able to extricate Her self."[66] In reporting his loyalty and admiration for the Queen, Swift becomes warm and somewhat aggressive. However, his indignation at the knavery of the Whig faction and at those who slight the merits of the Queen is never allowed to overthrow his reason.

Although honest, Swift does not hesitate to use most of the tools available to the rhetorician. The Conduct of the Allies includes whole catalogues of rhetorical questions; there are numerous examples of diminution, amplification and refinement; and Swift is often ironic and witty. He dwells on the absurdities of the war and praises the Allies for their shrewd exploitation of Britain. The devices he uses to establish his character are often turned to ironic exposition. In section one, for example, Swift concedes a few minor points to his opponents to suggest his reasonableness and lack of bias. Among these is the admission

that Britain would have made Holland jealous, and Austria discontent had she pursued the war to her own advantage instead of the Duke of Marlborough's. This, Swift concedes, "is very truly objected."[67] Similarly, qualifiers like "perhaps," "somewhat," and "a little" used in some contexts to suggest the speaker's modesty become ironic understatements in others.

As Martin Price notes, rhetoric achieves its ends by winning assent to what may or may not be true.[68] Because it can be used dishonestly, the Augustans officially condemned it while continuing to rely on it in practice. In The Conduct of the Allies, Swift provides a good example of the way rhetoric may be subordinated--or at least apparently subordinated--to right reason. The judgements for which he desires assent are carefully demonstrated as well as rhetorically heightened, and the heightening is to some extent disguised by the controlling tone of reasoned argument. Above all, the truth of Swift's judgements are guaranteed by his good moral character as revealed, for the most part implicitly, in the language of the essay.

Swift's voice in The Conduct of the Allies and the methods he uses to create and control it are typical of his practice not only in the anonymous works of category one, but in all his polemical writing. This voice is modulated, however, in keeping with the topic and still more the audience to be addressed: certain elements are heightened,

others are repressed. In his address to the October Club, for example, Swift's humility is featured far more than in The Conduct of the Allies. This work is "Humbly Offer'd" to a select group of readers and Swift apologizes for presuming to give advice to his betters. Many of the introductory tags suggest his diffidence: "It is necessary to say something to this Objection. . . . What shall I offer upon so tender a point? . . . It was commonly said, and I suppose not without some Ground of Truth, . . . I will venture to go one Step further, by adding." Diffidence is the controlling tone of this essay, but Swift is also careful to establish his crudentials by picturing himself as both having access to inside information and as speaking for "the common Reason of Mankind."[69] He notes that "every rational Man may be allowed to discern as well as lament, and . . . the wisest Minister may receive Advice from others of inferior Understanding."[70] He adds that the advice he offers "comes from no mean Hand, nor from a Person uninformed."[71] Finally, Swift avoids ironic or witty expression in this essay, for it would suggest a confidence and authority inconsistent with his diffident pose.

Elsewhere, one finds a very different combination of elements. In A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture, for example, Swift gives free reign to his taste for irony and wit. In this essay Swift addresses an Irish audience on its political and economic relations with

England, and he is full of energetic disgust at the absurd injustices tolerated by the Irish population. There is no need here to mount elaborate demonstrations, for the evidence is universally known and indeed overwhelming: "I could fill a Volume as large as the History of the wise Men of Goatham, with a Catalogue only of some wonderful Laws and Customs we have observed within thirty Years past."[72] Swift's tone here and throughout is aggressive and authoritative. He uses understatement, inverted praise or blame, ironic deference, and witty allusion and comparisons. These devices suggest not diffidence or sweet reasonableness, but rather biting impatience. What prevents this impatience from undermining the honesty of the speaker is, first of all, the obviousness of his claims and recommendations--"if the unthinking Shopkeepers in this Town, had not been utterly destitute of common Sense, they would have . . ."[73]--and secondly, in consequence, the obviousness of his irony. Most of it is mere sarcasm: he says the opposite of what both he and the audience know perfectly well to be true or right. There is thus no doubt or tension in the irony, no hint that the speaker has departed from the beaten paths of reason to wander in a world of his own. Although both the situation and what ought to be done about it are painfully obvious, Swift further guarantees the honesty of his views with numerous appeals to authority--to Archbishops and Divines, to the laws of nature and the nation, to

famous lawyers, to merchants, to the "Oracle of Reason," and on several occasions to Scripture. Finally, Swift's voice in this essay frequently becomes quite personal: near the end of the essay he alludes to his own experience in London and there are several witty "confessions" of private impressions and emotions. For example,

> I confess, that from a Boy, I always pitied poor Arachne, and could never heartily love the Goddess, on Account of so cruel and unjust a Sentence; which, however, is fully executed upon Us by England, with further Additions of Rigor and Severity.[74]

By making this and similar revelations, Swift counteracts the impression of private idiosyncracy potentially created by a heavy reliance on the devices of irony and wit. He assures the reader that his private sensibility is tender and disinterested; his imagination is controlled by pity at the misfortunes of others and indignation at injustice, not by pride or appetite.

The chief effect of the sarcasm and of the subtler uses of irony and wit in A Proposal is to create a sense of intimacy and fellowhip between Swift and the reader. This sense is reinforced by the play between the singular pronoun "I" and the plural pronouns "we", "us" and "our": "I could wish our Shopkeepers would immediately think on this Proposal, . . . I would now expostulate a little with our Country Landlords." Swift identifies himself and his reader as obvious victims of English injustice and the

unpatriotic indifference of certain segments in the Irish population. He presents his proposal as the obvious response to that injustice and indifference. The anger and authority in his tone, then, become simply a sensitive measure of the discrepancy between the way things obviously are and the way they obviously ought to be.

A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture along with Swift's address to the October Club and The Conduct of the Allies indicate the range of Swift's public voice and the extent to wnich it enters into his work as an element of persuasive rhetoric. Swift works with a handful of qualities: competence, authority, humility, deference, fairness, patriotism, restraint. These are combined and developed in different ways, but they are all qualities attached to the concept of honesty and they are all used to establish the author as a trustworthy witness to the truth of his claims.

In the works belonging to category two, those in which Swift uses an explicit but non-ironic mask, the same qualities are in evidence and they are established by the same methods as those used in category one. Apart from their amusement value, which should not be underestimated, Swift seems to have bothered with these masks mainly as a strategy for dealing with the touchy problem of interest. In each case, the one or two details of personal identity on which the mask is built tend either to define some

legitimate interest, that is, one acceptable to the audience given the topic in hand, or else to suggest a lofty disinterest. The speaker in the Letter to a Young Clergyman is convincing on the topic of sermons, for example, because he himself belongs to the group whose welfare is at stake. The speaker in Some Arguments Against Enlarging the Power of Bishops is a Whig speaking to Whigs and a layman speaking to laymen on the problem of Episcopal revenues. In Sentiments of a Church of England Man, on the other hand, Swift's non-partisan layman is convincing on the politics of religion because he has no personal interests at all to distort his judgement of what will best contribute to the public welfare. Once these details are established, Swift has little to do beyond his usual practice.

A major exception to this generalization is the Drapier, who grows into a real character and a complex device in the course of the letters in which he appears either as author or as object of concern. This complexity is due partly to the fact that the Drapier addresses a number of different audiences: Letter I is for the semi-literate portion of the Irish population; Letter II, addressed to Mr. Harding the printer, is for a more educated class; Letter III is offered to the "Nobility and Gentry." The tone and scope of these letters varies considerably depending on which audience is addressed. And in all the letters Swift writes

partly for the ear of England. As Ewald points out,[75] one of the Drapier's several functions is to convince the English government that Ireland will not accept Wood's coins and that it would be dangerous to try to force them down her throat. Swift also uses the Drapier to protect his own identity in dangerous times, and when this is no longer possible, in Letter V he uses details from the Drapier's life to construct an allegorical defense of his own part in the Wood affair. Thus, though Letter V provides a wealth of information about the Drapier's personal history, Swift himself is the apparent author of the work and the details function as metaphors rather than rhetorical proofs of character. Once it is sufficiently obvious to the audience that Swift and the Drapier are one, the mask also becomes a source of fun: it's a good joke, reminiscent in some ways of Swift's Bickerstaff hoax.

The Drapier is more complex than Swift's other non-ironic masks and he is also more highly developed as a character. The Church of England Man and the speakers in the Letter to a Young Clergyman and Some Arguments Against Enlarging the Power of Bishops differ from Swift himself only in being educated laymen instead of deans or in being Whigs instead of Tories. These differences entail no significant changes in Swift's style, for the public voice of one man of letters is apt to resemble the public voice of another; all serve the honest muse. A Dublin shopkeeper,

however, is not a man of letters and it would be incongruous for him to speak as one. Swift is thus obliged to pay some attention to the character of the Drapier. Like Swift's other labels, he defines an interest in relation to the topic and the audience, but unlike the others, he also colours the presentation of Swift's views on the topic in hand.

The Drapier is an ordinary fellow who departs from the ordinary in certain useful ways: he's unusually intelligent and energetic, unusually well read, unusually garrulous. Though his normal practice is to tend his own business in keeping with his station in life, the Wood affair has aroused his honest indignation, for it is an affair in which the everyday business and interests of the ordinary population is directly at stake. The Drapier's indignation is strong and warmly expressed, but it is also carefully justified. The Drapier shows he is capable of right reason by measuring the "plain story of the Fact" against highly authorized precepts in order to discover his duty and the duty of his fellows. He writes "by plain Reason, unassisted by Art, Cunning or Eloquence."[76] Further, he shows that the warmth of his protest against Wood originates in patriotism, not pride or a venal self-interest:

> I have no Interest in this Affair, but what is common to the Publick; I can live better than many others: I have some Gold and Silver by me, and a Shop well furnished; and shall be able to make a Shift, when many of my Betters

are starving.77

So far from serving a private interest, the Drapier heroically exposes himself to the dangers of a law suit, imprisonment and possibly even ruin.

The most striking element in the Drapier's character, however, is his sincerity. His honest anger at Wood contains a strong element of personal indignation: it is an offense to his sensibilities as well as to right reason that a mere hardwareman should take it upon himself to ruin a nation. The Drapier's sincerity is also evident in the intimacy and familiarity with which he speaks to his audiences, even his betters. He has met many of them on the streets or in his shop. As a result of this personal contact, he is keenly aware of his superiority to the semi-literate and morally insensitive portions of the population, but equally conscious of the incongruity of a man like himself participating in public controversy. He justifies this presumption in a number of ways throughout the letters, often by citing authorities or explaining how he came to have a certain piece of information, but also by insisting on his own right to respond to public issues. The following passage from Letter III captures the tone of manly sincerity that makes the Drapier an attractive character as well as a successful device:

> This (may it please your Lordships and Worships) may seem a strange Way of discoursing in an illiterate Shop-keeper. I have endeavoured (although without the

> Help of Books) to improve that small Portion of Reason, which God hath pleased to give me; and when Reason plainly appears before me, I cannot turn my Head away from it.[78]

This insistence on using one's God-given reason to its fullest capacity is, we have seen, what Swift means by manliness or sincerity. So long as one's private reasoning accords with the dictates of conscience, it is a further indication of good character in an author.

Swift's strategy in the works of category one and two is to create a responsible voice, a speaker whose right reason the audience can rely on. His strategy in the ironic works of category three is to create an irresponsible voice, one whose false reasoning or false judgements are in violation of the norms of conscience. For this he must invent not a "rounded character" so much as a thinking mind, a showcase in effect for faulty cognition of one sort or another. Swift's fictional masks generally use the same forms he does. They write letters and pamphlets and proposals; and they address themselves to the same public issues. Further, they use the same proofs of character he does in presenting their views: they too indicate their patriotism and humility, their fairness and restraint, their personal sincerity; they define interests they believe will appeal to their audiences; and they marshall facts and introduce precepts in a show of honest right reason. The irony arises because they reveal some flaw

or failure in their reasoning process.

Not all of the works in category three rely on a specially invented fictional character. Swift draws from the stock of formal character types available to the Augustans and some of his personae are living individuals like Lord Wharton or James II. As noted earlier, the Augustans had a well-established convention of portraying characters either through the formulae of the character genres or through dramatization on the stage or finally through impersonation. Before Swift, this last was a very undeveloped art, confined mostly to the periodicals.[79] The typical periodical mask of the day was much like the masks Swift uses in category II: they merely indicated some particular interest or else a position above interest altogether. Even "humorous" personae like the Tatler or the Grumbler remained largely undeveloped. It was left to Swift to exploit the dramatic and ironic possibilities in the method of impersonation. Though Swift never wrote for the stage, he clearly had both a taste and a talent for dramatization. His flair for reproducing the language of social types and his skill in parody are evident in the great satires and also in works like the allegory of Anglo-Irish relations entitled Story of an Injured Lady or his collection of polite conversations. Swift could well have written comedy of manners. The advantage of impersonation over dramatization for him presumably lay in the greater

intellectual intimacy of the former, the way in which it lays open a mind engaged in the process of thinking and judging.

The characters Swift impersonates in the satires express views and make judgements which reveal a morass of bad taste, corrupt values and false reasoning, while their efforts to establish themselves as good characters or reliable witnesses are uniformly undermined. Swift's method of exposure varies from work to work, however. In some works the speaker is discredited chiefly because of the content of his views and judgements; in others the content of his views and judgements is discredited chiefly because of the speaker himself who is made to flaunt his unreliability as a witness.

Examples of the first method are A Modest Proposal and An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity. In both these works the speaker takes great care to develop a strong ethical proof. The Modest Projector displays tender sensibilities on a number of occasions to establish his personal sincerity; he emphasizes his patriotism and his disinterested motives; he judiciously considers objections and alternatives; he cites a number of authorities; he compiles statistics; above all, he meticulously measures every aspect of his proposal against the value scheme of his audience in the manner prescribed by right reason. Except for a minor solecism near the beginning of the pro-

posal, where the Projector lets slip his personal interest in the case, he is a model author. Swift's public voice at its best has nothing on him. The reader nonetheless gathers from the content of the proposal that something is amiss. The error, of course, lies in the faulty system of values to which the Projector appeals. These are not his values particularly, for he himself belongs to the Irish middle class, but like a good rhetorician he accepts them for the sake of his argument. Perhaps he has been blinded by his desire for an everlasting fame. In any case, the major thrust of Swift's satire in this work is at the audience for which it was specially designed--the irresponsible Irish landlords and the rapacious British ministry.

A similar strategy is at work in An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity. Swift's speaker here begins by apologizing for his sturdy independence of mind, another of the qualities associated with sincerity. Though he is not dogmatic, he nonetheless finds he cannot acquiesce in "the general Humour and Disposition of the World," but must follow his own God-given reason. He too makes a great show of impartially considering all objections, of conceding points where justice is on the other side, of deferring to his betters and above all, once again, of measuring all the relevant facts this time concerning nominal Christianity against the value scheme of the audience. Here too the system of values taken so much for

granted by the speaker is in clear violation of the true norms of conscience. It is this system of values, held by the audience to which the speaker addresses himself, that is the main object of attack in the satire.

Gulliver's Travels and A Tale of a Tub are examples of works which focus on the unreliability of the speaker. The cognitive errors of Swift's unreliable witnesses tend to occur in three areas, the one leading readily to the next: first, the distortion of perception by pride; secondly, the disjunction of the empirical and rational modes of cognition; and thirdly, the inversion of the proper hierarchy of the faculties in madness. The Teller of the Tale best illustrates the last-- the madness of reason controlled by imagination in the service of the flesh. Such madness is an exact inversion of the proper hierarchy of the faculties and it allows for every kind of cognitive distortion. Anything which such a speaker approves, for example modernism or enthusiasm, is thoroughly discredited. The other cognitive errors listed here are best illustrated by the character of Lemuel Gulliver.

Swift's handling of Gulliver is unusually complex. In keeping with the conventions of the travel genre, we are given an intellectual history of Gulliver's progress through the four voyages as well as his description of the countries he visits. In certain ways this progress is akin to the plot of the bourgeois novel.[80] Book I begins with

a brief autobiography in which Gulliver describes his studies, apprenticeship, marriage and early struggle to secure a livelihood and a decent position for himself in society. Like his counterpart in the bourgeois novel, he is animated by the ideal of self-improvement. In his youth this ideal chiefly takes the material form of social advancement: getting a place, earning some money, winning prestige. However, the quest for material improvement is soon supplemented by a desire for intellectual development as Gulliver reads books, observes customs, performs dissections and exhibits in general an insatiable curiosity. Finally, Gulliver's urge for self-improvement becomes a quest for moral perfection. These developments in Gulliver's character are shown to be, in part at least, the result of interaction with his environment through time. What distinguishes Gulliver from the novelistic hero is the presence in his character of another equally strong imperative, namely an urge to improve the rest of the world, which emerges during the Voyage to Laputa. The two poles of Gulliver's character are reflected in his two professions, seaman and doctor: the man who voyages into the unknown in order to discover the riches of the world and the man who heals the infirmities of his fellow creatures.[81]

Gulliver's progress from social to intellectual aspiration is indicated in several ways in the Travels. The voyage to Lilliput, for example, is motivated purely

by financial need, while the voyage to Brobdingnag is motivated by curiosity. He returns from the voyage to Lilliput with a number of diminutive cattle which he first displays, then sells (anticipating his own fate a voyage later) for "a Considerable Profit." The spoils of Brobdingnag, however, have merely scientific value, consisting of a number of curiosities which Gulliver donates to Gresham College. In Lilliput Gulliver enters wholeheartedly into the pomp and intrigue and gossip of court life. He works hard for the upward social mobility he enjoys there and prides himself on being a Nardac in contrast to the treasurer who is only a Glumglum. In Brobdingnag, however, the focus shifts. Here Gulliver indulges a taste for the new philosophy and spends much of his time collecting data in the manner of "modern" experimental science.

It is in Book II that Gulliver first reveals in a striking way his most characteristic cognitive errors: the disjunction of fact and value and the distortion of perception by pride. There are two sides to the error of disjoining fact and value: one is to collect the facts of experience independently of the values of conscience; the other is to make and maintain value judgements independently of the facts of experience. Gulliver exhibits both.

In the early pages of Book II Gulliver confides that

> the whole Scene of this Voyage made so strong an Impression on my Mind, and is

> so deeply fixed in my Memory, that in committing it to Paper, I did not omit one material Circumstance.[82]

There follows a detailed account of "the material Circumstances" of Gulliver's first evacuation in Brobdingnag--between two Sorrel leaves, approximately two hundred feet from the farmer's house. "These and the like Particulars," he assures us, "will certainly help a Philosopher to enlarge his Thoughts and Imagination."[83] Much of Book II is a catalogue of such trivialities told in the deadpan voice of the scientist, totally bland and dispassionate and totally free of value judgement. In Chapter One, for example, Gulliver repeatedly compares himself to small animals--weasels, toads, sparrows, rabbits, kittens and puppy-dogs, or "any hateful little animal"--in order to explain his relation to the Brobdingnagian giants. His comparisons are apt insofar as they correctly reveal the size difference and the attitude of his hosts, that is, they reveal the facts, but Gulliver is oblivious to the qualitative import of these comparisons, to the value judgement they convey. This is true of his account of all the ridiculous accidents he suffers during his stay in Brobdingnag. In each case we are given a thorough, circumstantial account of all that led up to the event, the event itself, and the aftermath of the event; it is further classified as being more or less humiliating. Never, however, does Gulliver indicate any understanding of the moral implications of the event.

He views his adventures as experiments in relativity--
"nothing is great or little otherwise than by Comparison"[84]
--instead of testing them against the absolutes of conscience. Through these adventures Swift satirizes the new philosophy and in particular the assumption that truth is a quantitative matter, the sum of all possible empirical details.

An obvious corollary of the scientific approach to reality is a willingness to accept things on appearance. As the Teller of the Tale has found from his own experience, "the Outside hath been infinitely preferable to the In:"

> The Sight and the Touch . . . never examine farther than the Colour, the Shape, the Size, and whatever other Qualities dwell, or are drawn by Art upon the Outward of Bodies; and then comes Reason officiously, with Tools for cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing, offering to demonstrate that they are not of the same consistence quite thro'. Now, I take all this to be the last Degree of perverting Nature.[85]

By resolutely preferring the outside to the inside, Gulliver is able to blame the humiliating accidents which befall him in Book II on physical size alone. When the Brobdingnagian Queen holds him up to the glass next to herself, he smiles, for "there could be nothing more ridiculous than the comparison."[86] Gulliver sees the external form only. He finds he is ridiculous <u>because he is small</u>, just as the English lords and ladies in their birthday clothes "strutting and bowing and prating" are ridiculous because

they are small, not because of the intrinsic folly of such behaviour. The actual source of Gulliver's difficulties, of course, is not his size, but his impenetrable vanity which spurs him on to make a fool of himself at every opportunity, leaping cowpies and the like. He is like an eight year old child in Book II, eager to demonstrate to the adults around him how big he is and in consequence all the things he can do.[87] When his efforts to show off end in disaster, he is able to perceive the superficial loss of dignity that comes from spoiling his clothes or being force-fed by a pet monkey, but he does not perceive that these physical indignities are but images of the genuine loss of dignity that comes from his refusal to acknowledge and accept what he is.

Though most of Book II is given over to illustrating the error of the ant, Gulliver's account of human nature and European civilization as told to the Brobdingnagian King illustrates the obverse error of making value judgements independently of the facts of experience. His description of the roles and institutions of British society is in fact a series of ideal definitions, not a description at all. Gulliver's preconceptions come from the common stock of society in contrast to the Tale Teller, for example, who begets his conceptions out of his own imagination. Both, however, demonstrate the error of the spider in that they rely exclusively on the rational mode

of cognition and fail to test their deductions against empirical reality. Gulliver's reason for preferring definition to description is the same as his reason for preferring the outside to the inside: the definition flatters in a way description would not. In trying to prove his physical prowess Gulliver suffers a series of physical humiliations; similarly, in trying to inflate the image of man, he provokes the morally humiliating appraisal of the human race made by the Brobdingnagian King.

Gulliver's pride and his habit of disjoining fact and value are equally evident in his response to Houyhnhnm-land, only this time with more serious consequence. At the beginning of Book IV Gulliver quite rightly calls himself a great lover of mankind. Midway through the book, however, he undergoes a sudden reversal and ends by becoming one of the world's great misanthropes. Gulliver's change of heart is occasioned by his confrontation with the yahoos in whom he perceives a "perfect human Figure." Once again confounding the external appearance of a thing with its internal reality, Gulliver concludes on the basis of the formal identity between man and yahoo that the two species are substantially the same. In effect he concludes that men are yahoos because they more or less look alike. On this conclusion is based his unflattering account of human nature and European civilization in Book IV.

Gulliver's account in IV simply inverts the ideal definitions offered to the Brobdingnagian King in Book II. In the earlier account, for example, the law courts of England were run by "venerable Sages and Interpreters of the Law [who determine] the disputed Rights and Properties of Men, as well as the Punishment of Vice, and Protection of Innocence."[88] In Book IV those very same courts are run by "a Society of Men . . . bred up from their Youth in the Art of proving by Words multiplied for the Purpose, that White is Black, and Black is White, according as they are paid. To this Society all the rest of the People are Slaves."[89] In this way Gulliver handily exchanges one set of definitions for another without the bother of consulting empirical fact.

Gulliver's pride is demonstrated in Book IV by his response to the shocking revelation that men are yahoos: he tries to exempt himself from the human race. Just as in Book II Gulliver sought to evade the humiliation of being small by identifying himself with the physical superiority of the Brobdingnags,[90] so in Book IV he seeks to evade the humiliation of being human by identifying himself with the moral superiority of the Houyhnhnms. When Gulliver returns home after his voyage to Brobdingnag, he perceives his fellow men to be mere pygmies over whom he towers like a Brobdingnagian giant. When he returns from Houyhnhnm-land, he perceives his fellow men as yahoos over whom he may

claim moral superiority. In both instances his perceptions are distorted by pride.

As Robert Elliott has noted,[91] Gulliver is a satirist in Book IV. Swift's unflattering portrayal of the satirist is of interest because of the element of self-revelation and self-criticism it contains, but also because it adds a gloss on the relations between satire and honesty in the Augustan period. In Swift's portrayal of Gulliver, it is clear that the darker side of the satirist's personality emerges once again, but it is important to see how that happens. Before Gulliver becomes a satirist in Book IV he first becomes a projector in Book III. In the Augustan period, the pride and distortion formerly associated with the cankered satirist becomes attached to the figure of the mad projector--a character who professes to represent the ideal of honesty but inadvertently undermines himself in the course of expounding his project.

The satirist and the projector are naturally related to each other because both possess a vision of how the world ought be and both find themselves in the position of Hamlet, born to set things right. There are some few differences, of course. The vision of the satirist is general and often drawn from the past, whereas the vision of the projector is limited as a rule to some particular problem for which he has personally found the solution. The projector thus tends to look forward to the future; his

tone is confident and optimistic, whereas the tone of the satirist is generally grim. The odds of his ridding the world of evil and folly on the whole are not very good. The satirist writes anyway, however, for he knows that an accurate perception of reality is the bedrock of a prosperous, well-ordered society. Since he is among the few who see things as they are, it is his duty to society to attack the illusions held by the many. The projector, on the other hand, at least as he is portrayed in the Augustan character, is oblivious to reality. Blinded by pride, his whole effort is to rebuild society on an illusion born out of his own eccentric imagination. In short, the satirist is honest whereas the projector only thinks he is honest. This makes a very great difference, of course, but there is nonetheless a common impulse between the satirist and the projector of which Swift could hardly be unaware since he had tried his own hand at (honest) projecting on many occasions.

Swift's interest in the figure of the projector is clear from the number of times it appears in his works. The first great satire, A Tale of a Tub, is a close study of the Projector's Instinct--the passion for recreating the world in one's own best image. Much of Swift's subsequent satire explores this instinct and the gallery of "Grand Innovators" who possess it. There are projectors in religion called Fanaticks or Enthusiasts, projectors in

philosophy called Virtuosi, projectors in learning called Moderns and projectors in politics called Great Princes. In Gulliver's Travels Swift adds a new portrait to this gallery of madmen: the projector in morals.

Gulliver's instinct for projection is not revealed until the Voyage to Laputa, where his quest for knowledge is transformed into a quest for moral perfection and his ambition to improve himself swells to embrace the world. As the Teller of the Tale explains, "the first Proselyte a Grand Innovator makes, is Himself, and when that is once compass'd, the Difficulty is not so great in bringing over the others."[92] Gulliver freely acknowledges the projector's instinct in himself. Describing his introduction to the Academy of Lagado, he writes:

> My Lord was pleased to represent me as a great Admirer of Projects, and a Person of much Curiosity and Easy Belief; which indeed was not without Truth; for I had been myself a Sort of Projector in my younger Days.[93]

Gulliver's movement through the four kingdoms of Laputa can be read as a kind of initiation into the secrets of satiric projecting. He stops first at the Flying Island just long enough to pick up the smattering of mathematics and dose of volatile spirits needed for admission into Lagado's Academy. After reviewing the Academy's projects in applied science, speculative philosophy and politics--all flowers of modern wit--he passes on to Glubbdubdrib, where he reviews the history of Western civilization from

the classical age to the present. During the course of this review he conceives a great admiration for the ideals of the past and a rather violent distaste for the corruptions of the moderns. In this respect, Gulliver differs from Swift's other Grand Innovators (and resembles Swift himself), for he is being fitted for the role of satirist. And fittingly enough, it is just at this point that Gulliver's movement in Book III culminates in his visit to the Struldbruggs who have realized the oldest and strongest of man's aspirations--eternal life.

One of the striking aspects of Gulliver in Book III is his restlessness. The honourable and advantageous offers he receives make no impression on him; he prefers to move on--until he hears of the Struldbruggs. These beings strike Gulliver with "inexpressible Delight," with "Rapture." He immediately reverses his decision to leave Luggnugg, resolving to "pass my Life here in the Conversation of those superior Beings . . . if they would please to admit me."[94] Gulliver here established a pattern that will soon be repeated in Book IV: the Houyhnhnms too are superior beings with whom Gulliver wishes to spend the rest of his life. It becomes clear at this point that Gulliver has a visionary Project of his own, the nature of which he outlines to the Luggnuggian audience. When asked what he would do were he a Struldbrugg, he responds:

> I answered, it was easy to be eloquent on so copious and delightful a Subject,

> especially to me who have been oft apt to amuse myself with Visions of what I should do if I were a King, a General, or a great Lord; And upon this very Case I had frequently run over the whole System how I should employ myself and pass the Time if I were sure to live for ever.95

According to Gulliver's "System," he would first secure himself a fortune sufficient to make him "the wealthiest man in the kingdom"; he would next secure an education by which he would "in time excel all others in Learning"; finally, he would turn his attention to the public and "certainly become the Oracle of the Nation."[96] He would be an educator of the young and a guardian of Virtue, "giving perpetual Warning and Instruction to Mankind which, added to the strong Influence of [my] own Example, would probably prevent that continual Degeneracy of human Nature, so justly complained of in all Ages."[97] Gulliver's vision is shattered a short while later when he actually meets a Struldbrugg, but he quickly recovers. He regrets he cannot bring a few home with him, for their ghastly deformities--"the most mortifying Sight" he has ever beheld--would make a good lesson against the fear of death.

Gulliver here summarizes the entire curve of his progress through the four books of Gulliver's Travels. The vision of first wealth and prestige, and then knowledge, gives way in Book III to the vision of the moralist, as Gulliver pictures himself an Oracle and Example. Then, when hope is shattered by the horror of reality, he turns satir-

ist, fixing on what's ghastly and mortifying as his means of instruction. The souvenirs Gulliver would bring home this time are in striking contrast to the Lilliputan cattle and Brobdingnagian curiosities of Books I and II.[98]

The pattern of hope, shattered by horror, followed by the urge to inform and instruct is exactly repeated by Gulliver in Book IV. During his first interview with the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver reports:

> I was amazed to see such Actions and Behaviour in Brute Beasts; and concluded with myself, that if the Inhabitants of this Country were endued with a proportionable Degree of Reason, they must needs be the wisest People upon Earth.[99]

As it turns out, instead of the wisest people on earth, Gulliver encounters the most depraved. Once again he is forced to experience, this time more seriously, an upsetting collision between fact and value. He is forced to perceive simultaneously the value he had confidently attached to the cattle of Houyhnhnm-land--"I had never beheld in all my Travels so disagreeable an Animal"[100]--and the fact that this animal is man--"My Horror and Astonishment are not to be described, when I observed in the Abominable Animal, a perfect human Figure."[101] Later, instructed by pure Reason in the form of the Houyhnhnm master, he is forced to perceive simultaneously the values of Reason--benevolence, friendship, civility, honesty, and so on--and the facts of human irrationality and depravity. In the discrepancy between the two the impulse to satire is born. The greater

the discrepancy, the greater the frustration the satirist must bear. Like the projectors at the Academy of Lagado, he is "driven equally on by hope and despair."[102]

The final book of Gulliver's Travels is perhaps the most upsetting book in the tradition of English literature. It more than anything else is responsible for Swift's reputation as the most upsetting author of that tradition. In response to the over-reaction of the nineteenth century, recent criticism has emphasized the gap between Gulliver and Swift. We are to laugh at Gulliver, for example, when he claims for himself the right "to inform and instruct Mankind, over whom I may, without Breach of Modesty, pretend to some Superiority. from the Advantages I received by conversing so long among the most accomplished Houyhnhnms."[103] But Gulliver makes an important point here: the moralist and the satirist and the projector all set themselves above the common run of men because they really do possess a vision ordinarily missed by the common run of men. They see what man is capable of and they see what he performs. Their vision is true, but it alienates them from their fellows and themselves; it makes them suffer and potentially it drives them mad.[104] There is indeed an important distinction between Gulliver and Swift. Gulliver is a misanthrope, Swift is not. Gulliver has lost touch with reality, Swift has not. Gulliver's claim to honesty is undermined by pride and faulty reasoning, Swift's is not. Gulliver's

vision is nonetheless Swift's and it would not do to underestimate the force or the violence of that vision or the tensions and frustrations that accompany it. Gulliver exposes the underside of the satirist, a side that must be repressed in the service of honesty, but a side that is most certainly there.

The most powerful points in the body of Swift's satire occur when Swift exposes the connections between his own honest efforts and the efforts of personae whose sanity could not withstand the tensions and frustrations of world-improvement. Such points occur in Book IV of Gulliver's Travels where Gulliver joins Swift in satirizing human nature and European society and in the final pages of A Modest Proposal where Swift reviews his own proposals designed to alleviate the misery of the Irish, his own weariness with "offering vain, idle, visionary Thoughts," and his own despair of success. In passages such as these Swift achieves his subtlest and most intense irony. And this irony cannot be understood without reference to the concept of mask or persona.

Ehrenpreis' remarks on these passages nicely illustrate the inadequacy of his approach. He argues that Swift speaks ironically through most of A Modest Proposal; that is, he proposes a preposterous scheme and the reader infers that, since he is "a decent, intelligent man . . . he doesn't mean it, that he is ironical."[105] However, in the final

passages of the work, Swift switches from an ironic mode to "the mode of direct, bitter statement (like the vituperations that grow thick and frequent toward the end of Gulliver's Travels)."[106] In denying the use of a mask in these passages, Ehrenpreis limits Swift to a single voice and to a rather crude form of irony: he must be either straightforward and mean just what he says or else ironic and not mean what he says.

In fact Swift's art in these passages consists precisely in being both at once: the words of the text are appropriate to the author Swift in one way and to the pseudo-author, Swift's persona, in another; that is, both speak the very same words at the same time, but with a slightly different import. We may take as an example the penultimate paragraph of A Modest Pronosal in which Swift writes:

> I desire those Politicians, who dislike my Overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an Answer, that they will first ask the Parents of these Mortals, Whether they would not, at this Day, think it a great Happiness to have been sold for Food at a Year old, in the Manner I prescribe.[107]

In this passage Swift means exactly what he says: the present conditions of Ireland make the lives of the Irish a perpetual misery and death a welcome release. This is a rhetorically charged statement designed to arouse pity and shame in the audience as a preliminary to reform. The very same words express a second meaning, however--the meaning intended by the Modest Projector: the politicians have

no basis for attacking his proposal since the Irish themselves would approve it. The irony of the passage is due to the tension between these two meanings, one of them Swift's, the other the persona's. The intensity of the passage is due to the sudden narrowing of the distance between the two: all that separates them is a slight shift in emphasis and implication. By using the words of the persona to express his own meaning Swift is able to harness the manic energy of the former to his own honest purpose. In this way he achieves what is, even for him, a remarkably intense irony.

The same art is going on in Gulliver's violent attacks on human nature and European society in Book IV. Gulliver's revulsion for man is shown to originate in certain cognitive errors and the violence of his attacks is shown to originate in pride. Thus when Swift himself--using the words of Gulliver--satirizes man and society in the vituperative outbursts of Book IV, the violence and ugliness of these attacks is readily attached to the character of Gulliver. Both Gulliver and Swift mean to undermine the optimistic and flattering self-image of European man, but for slightly different purposes. Gulliver humiliates in order to give expression to a violent hatred, whereas Swift humiliates in order to move his audience to reform. By using Gulliver as his mouthpiece, he manages a really passionate attack on vice while accruing none of the distrust aroused by a

man who distorts and exaggerates and cannot control his emotions.

I have argued in this paper that Swift's reliance on the mask, whether straightforward or ironic, arises from a characteristic Augustan concern with the problem of honest right reason. This concern is evident in the focus of philosophical discussion during the period and in Augustan literary conventions as well. In the case of Swift there may also be a personal dimension which made the mask attractive and in particular suggested its development as an ironical device. I refer here to Swift's love of the bagatelle--his talent for the frivolous, the unusual and the grotesque--and also to the tensions and frustrations he experienced as a man with a passionately held vision. The device of the ironic persona provides an honest outlet for such talents and tensions. It provides a way of expressing the quirks and ambiguities in one's private personality while assessing them in accordance with the norms of conscience. As Swift himself wrote, approving Bolingboke's characterization of him, "My mind was like a conjured spirit that would do mischief if I would not give it employment."[108] With the device of the ironic mask Swift found honest employment for his spirit and could fairly boast in his "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift" that it was he who introduced ironic impersonation into Augustan satire, "Refin'd it first, and shew'd its Use."

Footnotes:

[1]William Ewald, The Masks of Jonathan Swift (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1954).

[2]Swift's poetry is excluded from this study. There are some prose pieces as well which do not fit into this classification--Story of an Injured Lady, for example--but for the purposes of this paper the classification is adequate.

[3]Irvin Ehrenpreis, "Personae," in Restoration and Eighteenth Century Literature, ed. Carroll Camden (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963). pp. 25-38.

[4]Ibid., p.29.

[5]Ibid., p.34.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid., p.33.

[8]Ibid., p.32.

[9]A third test, at least for Swift, is to examine the effects or concrete results of a claim. The Church of England Man "desire[s] no stronger Proof that an Opinion must be false, than to find very great Absurdities annexed to it." See the Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man in Davis, vol.II, p.22. Similarly, the Drapier asserts "if any Lawyer should tell me that such a Point were Law, from which many gross, palpable Absurdities must follow, I would not, I could not believe him." See The Drapier's Letters, in Davis, vol.X, p.28. That Swift uses this kind of proof frequently in his satires requires no demonstration.

[10]Remarks upon Tindall's Rights of the Christian Church, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), II, 67.

[11]Ibid., pp.67-8.

[12]On the Trinity, ed. Davis, IX, 166.

[13]Ibid., p.165.

[14]Remarks upon Tindall's Rights of the Christian Church, p.68.

[15]Ehrenpreis, p.35.

[16]This account of the seventeenth century character and the development of the "credo-character" relies on the scholar-

ship of Benjamin Boyce. See The Polemic Character (Lincoln, Nebraska: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1955) and The Character Sketches in Pope's Poems (Durham, North Carolina: Duke Univ. Press, 1962), especially pp. 76-98.

[17]Quoted by Rachael Trickett in The Honest Muse (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p.9.

[18]Quoted by Trickett, p.10.

[19]Quoted by Trickett, p.9.

[20]Trickett, p.10.

[21]Trickett, pp.10-11.

[22]Ibid., p.149.

[23]Aristotle, Rhetorica, in The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), p.1329.

[24]Ibid., pp.1379-80.

[25]Quoted by Charles Beaumont, Swift's Classical Rhetoric (Athens, Georgia: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1961), p.150n.

[26]Alvin B. Kernan, The Cankered Muse (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959). See especially pp. 15-30.

[27]Marian Starkman, Swift's Satire on Learning in A Tale of a Tub (New York: Octagon Books, 1968). The account of traditional psychology offered here uses the terminology of Aquinas and differs from Starkman's in certain details, but in general outline is similar to the model Starkman describes in pp. 28-36.

[28]Aquinas calls this the sensus communis, but it is not what is ordinarily meant by "common sense"; it refers rather to the faculty of receiving and organizing sensation and is therefore "the common root and principle of the exterior senses." See The Summa Theologica, Question 78, Article 4.

[29]In Remarks on Tindall's Rights of the Christian Church, p.80. No educated Augustan could fail to have some knowledge of technical problems in philosophy, for they were the stuff of popular literature during this period. See MacLean's study of the ubiquitous presence of Locke throughout the eighteenth century: John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962).

[30]Swift does not comment on the role memory and imagina-

tion play in storing the data of experience. Like most men of his times, he emphasizes the inventive role of the imagination--what it does with the images available to it and its tendency to pander to the appetites. Hobbes and the neo-Epicurians were exceptional in praising the inventive power of the imagination and allowing it to be a source of truth. As Marian Starkman has shown, their view of the imagination is one of the objects of Swift's satire in A Tale of a Tub. See Starkman, pp. 39-41.

[31] Remarks on Tindall's Rights of the Christian Church, p.97.

[32] On the Trinity, ed. Davis, IX, 166.

[33] Martin Price, Swift's Rhetorical Art (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1953), pp.3-4. The following account of Bacon's allegory of the bee is drawn from Price.

[34] The Drapier's Letters, ed. Davis, X, 120.

[35] This and subsequent quotations from the "Ode to Mr. William Sancroft" and "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift" are from Swift: Poetical Works, ed. Davis (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967).

[36] On the Trinity, p.164.

[37] Ibid., p.167.

[38] Ibid., p.168.

[39] On the Testimony of Conscience, ed. Davis, IX, 150.

[40] On the Trinity, p.161.

[41] Thoughts on Religion, ed. Davis, IX, 262.

[42] Kathleen Williams, Jonathan Swift and the Age of Compromise (Lawrence, Kansas: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1958).

[43] On the Testimony of Conscience, p.154.

[44] On the Excellency of Christianity, ed. Davis, IX, 243.

[45] This dictum was used by Bacon in his defense of experimental science. Quoted by Basil Willey in The Seventeenth Century Background (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co, 1953), p.35.

[46] I refer here only to the moral precepts used by con-

science in judging man's thoughts and actions and not to the theological doctrines revealed by Scripture. Swift clearly does not believe that reason provides sufficient grounds for religion. The issue I'm interested in is whether he believes reason is a sufficient guide to moral conduct.

[47]On the Excellency of Christianity, p.244.

[48]On Doing Good, ed. Davis, IX, 233.

[49]On the Trinity, p.164.

[50]On the Excellency of Christianity, p.244.

[51]On Doing Good, p.236.

[52]An exception is Ricardo Quintana in The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift (London: Methuen and Co., 1953) who frequently comments on this aspect of Swift's thought.

[53]A Letter to a Young Gentleman, Lately Entered into Holy Orders, ed. Davis, IX, 73-4.

[54]On the Testimony of Conscience, p.155.

[55]Swift writes in his sermon On the Testimony of Conscience: "Fear and Hope are the two greatest natural Motives of all Men's Actions." See p. 155.

[56]Ewald, p.46.

[57]The idea appears in other contexts as well where the earnest intention is unmistakable, for example in the description of ideal Lilliputan institutions in Book I of Gulliver's Travels. Ewald's response is interesting, for it reveals a cynicism of its own: it assumes the futility of Swift's project; Swift is "naive" to think a scheme proposed by one individual to another could have any effect on public morality. Swift did not think much of human nature, but his continual efforts to change and improve and reform show quite clearly that he assumes men can establish sound social institutions to regulate human nature and that the effort of good individuals can make a difference in the world. In this sense Swift is not cynical enough for a modern like Ewald.

[58]A Letter to a Young Gentleman, p.70. Swift here speaks of writing sermons, but the principle applies to all didactic writing.

[59]Beaumont, p.16.

[60]Davis, "Introduction" to Political Tracts: 1711-13, Vol. VI of Prose Works, p.x.

[61]The Conduct of the Allies, ed Davis, VI, 53. The underlining is Swift's.

[62]Ibid., p.53.

[63]Ibid. The underlining is mine.

[64]Ibid., p.40. Notice the unusual capitalization of Those and Us in this passage.

[65]Ibid., p.45.

[66]Ibid., pp.44-5.

[67]Ibid., p.23.

[68]Price, p.4.

[69]Some Advice Humbly Offer'd to the Members of the October Club in a Letter from a Person of Honour, ed. Davis, VI, 74.

[70]Ibid., pp.74-5.

[71]Ibid., p.74.

[72]A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture, ed. Davis, IX, 15.

[73]Ibid., p.17.

[74]Ibid., p.18.

[75]Ewald, p.100.

[76]The Drapier's Letters, p.29.

[77]Ibid., p.22.

[78]Ibid., p.28.

[79]Ewald and Price both dicuss the periodical masks and emphasize their minimal development. See Ewald, pp.3-4 and Price, pp. 63-5.

[80]Gulliver's resemblance to the Drapier should also be noted, for the latter can be seen as a preliminary study or sketch for the more elaborately developed character of Gulliver. Both are average middle class fellows who have

been educated, apprenticed, and gone on to a modest success in society. They are distinguised in some ways, but not outstandingly so. The everyday lives of both, given over normally to the pursuit of personal and professional interests, is disrupted by an unusual event which thrusts them unexpectedly into the world of public letters. For the Drapier this event is the Wood affair; for Gulliver, it is his confrontation with the yahoos. In both cases this participation in public life is motivated by patriotism: they write to inform and instruct the reader in his duties as a contribution to the general welfare of society. Being simple, honest men, both prefer the plain style. Finally, both are sincere.

[81]The Renaissance satirist often conceived himself a kind of doctor or surgeon. However, Swift does not develop this metaphor even though Gulliver becomes a satirist very much like the Renaissance sort.

[82]Gulliver's Travels, in Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings, ed. Ricardo Quintana (New York: The Modern Library, 1958), p.69.

[83]Ibid., p.68.

[84]Ibid., p.62.

[85]A Tale of a Tub in Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings, p.343.

[86]Gulliver's Travels, p.80.

[87]This impression is suggested by Gulliver's pride in his trivial feats of prowess, his competition with the dwarf, and also by his relationship with Glumdalclitch who feeds and dresses and supervises Gulliver in just the way a mother cares for a child.

[88]Gulliver's Travels, p.97.

[89]Ibid., p.202.

[90]The reader realizes that the large physical stature of the Brobdingnags is a metaphor of their moral stature, but Gulliver does not. He thinks they're better because they're tall and expresses contempt for several of the most ideal features of Brobdingnag.

[91]Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1960). See chapter IV, pp.184-222.

[92]A Tale of a Tub, pp.342-3.

[93]Gulliver's Travels, p.142.

[94]Ibid., p.167.

[95]Ibid.

[96]Ibid., p.168.

[97]Ibid.

[98]A further measure of Gulliver's progress from II to III may be had by comparing his views on the degeneration of human nature through the ages in II to his views in III. In II, he finds this a foolish idea, suitable to entertain girls and old women, whereas in III he endorses the idea on several occasions.

[99]Gulliver's Travels, pp.182-3.

[100]Ibid., p.181.

[101]Ibid., p.186.

[102]Ibid., p.141.

[103]Ibid., p.240.

[104]The potential for madness arising from the frustrations of the honest projector or satirist is revealed by the persona of A Modest Proposal. In the final paragraphs of his tract we learn of the many sane proposals he has made throughout the years, the total indifference with which they've been received, his own despair, and the sudden revival of hope when he fortunately fell upon something "wholly new"-- and wholly mad as it turns out.

[105]Ehrenpreis, p.36.

[106]Ibid.

[107]A Modest Proposal in Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings, p.495.

[108]Quoted by Price, p.42.

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A READING OF HARD TIMES

Ruth Sullivan

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In 1947, F. R. Leavis published an article in Scrutiny calling attention to the merits of Hard Times, a novel which had been largely ignored by critics up to that time. Leavis begins by asserting that "Hard Times is not a difficult work; its intention and nature are pretty obvious."[1] To judge from the controversy sparked by Leavis' article, however, it would seem that the nature and intention of Hard Times are not after all so very obvious. Leavis himself calls the book a moral fable. Frye, whose interpretation is congruent with Leavis', classifies it with Dickens' other "fairy tales in the low mimetic displacement."[2] Most detractors of the work approach it as a social satire which fails because Dickens' analysis of the social situation of his time is shallow or contradictory or because the solution he recommends for the various ills of his society is hopelessly inadequate.

Both Leavis and Frye analyze Hard Times in a literary context, for the most part ignoring its relations to the social and historical context in which it was written. Dickens' purpose, Leavis asserts, is to show that "life . . . is spontaneous, unmeasurable and creative; and that men, all the same, are continually trying, in one way and another, to ignore or defeat these truths."[3] For this purpose, no special understanding of Victorian civilization is necessary. Coketown represents a society--any society--which attempts to deny the individual humanity of its members by turning

them into machines for producing and consuming goods. Opposed to Coketown is the circus--Frye's "congenial society"--which represents "life that is lived freely and richly from the deep instinctive and emotional springs."[4] The novel is structured on the conflict between these opposing poles of value and ends with the defeat of industrialism by the forces of spontaneous vitality.

Leavis is aware that the sticking point in his interpretation is his elucidation of the circus, but he thinks the issue is "merely one of tact:" whether Dickens' symbolism is sentimentally false, whether a travelling circus is the right vehicle for Dickens' purpose.[5] In putting it this way, Leavis begs the question, for he assumes exactly what is in need of demonstration--that Dickens intends in the circus a symbol of "not merely amusement, but art."[6] This claim is unconvincing and remains undemonstrated in Leavis' article. John Holloway, on the other hand, is able to marshall half a dozen quotations from the text to support his view that the circus players are offered "not as vital horsemen, but as plain entertainers."[7] Holloway takes this to be a damaging criticism of Dickens, but I hope to show in this essay that the stature of Hard Times as a work of art is not in the least tied to the stature of the art in Sleary's circus.

A major criticism of Hard Times made by those who approach the work as social satire centers on Dickens'

handling of Slackbridge and the union. Holloway calls Dickens' portrayal of Slackbridge a "deliberate falsification" of his own first-hand experience, as reported in Household Words.[8] Although Humphrey House defends Dickens against this charge, explaining that the unions in Dickens' time were indeed "grotesquely top-heavy and therefore unstable,"[9] he too accuses Dickens of misunderstanding the true nature of unionism. Both he and Holloway find a fundamental contradiction in Dickens' acceptance of the doctrine of identical interests between labour and management. This doctrine "was common to the utilitarians and the economists;" in accepting it, Dickens subscribes to "the fundamental ethical and political proposition of the political economy he generally so much deplores."[10] On the issue of the unions, I hope to show that Dickens was not so shallow as his critics, who have the advantage of hindsight.

The second major criticism of Dickens as a social critic focusses on the so called "solution" to the muddle he depicts. There are two distinct, though related, interpretations of this solution. The one, touched on above, emphasizes the role of fancy in the novel. I quote from David Lodge:

> One might almost think that Hard Times takes its cue for the criticism of "the accumulation of facts", "calculating processes" and the "principle of Self" from the Defence. But whereas Shelley opposes to these things poetry, imagination, the creative faculty, Dickens can only offer Fancy, wonder, sentiments--though he does so with the same seriousness and the same intentions as Shelley, as a panacea for the ills of modern society.[11]

The other emphasizes the speeches of Stephen Blackpool on the need for people to treat each other sympathetically as human beings instead of cogs in a machine. This solution won't do because it inconsistently requires a change in the character of Bounderby, who is forcefully portrayed as a character incapable of change. Moreover, "when Stephen's answer is tested in the world of the novel, it seems curiously 'wrong'. . . . The one instance in which generosity is shown to Stephen by someone above him leads exorably to Stephen's death."[12] I hope to show in this essay that the notion of "solving" the muddle is itself wrong-headed and misrepresents the intention of the book.

A third approach to Hard Times suggests that the controversy over the book has arisen not because of any weakness in Dickens' intentions, but because of a weakness in the nature of his work. O. J. Cockshut, for example, complains that Hard Times is not generically consistent, but wavers between the world of moral fable and the world of the novel.[13] Gradgrind and the circus belong to the former, while characters like Bounderby, Harthouse and Tom are firmly rooted in the latter. In trying to serve two masters, Dickens is sometimes forced to sacrifice the probability and psychology one wants from a novel to the arid symmetry of the fable. Along similar lines, P. E. Gray suggests that Hard Times wavers "between self-enclosed art and denotative argument. It is neither completely self-dependent

nor literally true."[14] In particular, the comments of the narrator throughout the novel and the use of Stephen as a thinly disguised mouthpiece rupture the fictional reality created in the work by introducing evidence and arguments from external reality. While conceding that the comments of the narrator in Hard Times are intrusive and annoying, I will argue in this essay that Hard Times is by nature a perfectly consistent moral satire and that, given the basic premises of its satire, which are adequately demonstrated within the book, its intentions are clear and acceptable.

Grey complains that Hard Times "takes its stand" on the ill-defined border between fiction and non-fiction, but this is where satire always takes its stand. One distinguishing feature of the genre is its high degree of involvement with external local reality. Successful satire, of course, abstracts its critical assessment of local reality from its usual setting in journalism and transforms it into what Matthew Hodgart calls "a high form of 'play' which gives both recognition of responsibilities and irresponsible joy of make-believe."[15] Satire thus contains an element of lampoon, of direct aggressive attack on some feature of the satirist's local reality, and an element of fantasy, some device by which the local reality is transformed into play.

The main device used in Hard Times to transform criticism into play is allegory. Dickens' allegory is fairly complex, because the characters are made to assume

a variety of relations to each other, but they all exist in the same "plane of reality" as it were, and the terms they personify are easily grasped. It is because Cockshut and Holloway attempt to force Hard Times into a novelistic mode that they miss the allegorical significance of certain characters and actions. The central device of allegory is supplemented in a variety of ways, in keeping with the usual practice of satire. Dickens develops several symbolic imagery motifs and includes a number of parodies; he uses Sissy as an ingenu, and nearly all the "good" characters become mouthpieces for the author at one time or another. One of the most successful devices used in the book is fanciful simile. Finally, there is the narrator who occasionally betrays, it is true, a failure on the part of Dickens to transform criticism into play.

A basic requisite of all satire is that the object of criticism be something contingent on human choice and therefore available to change. What the satirist always ridicules is an unnecessary loss of human dignity arising from some misconception about how the world is: a character deceives himself or allows himself to be deceived by others, usually from motives of foolish vanity or, more seriously, from pride or greed. Social satire casts its eye on particular manners or practices or institutions in a society--those which are evil or absurd, but needn't be so. Moral satire, however, enlarges this somewhat limited scope, for it places

its particular criticisms of local reality in the context of a full exploration of human nature and the human condition. Its intention is to expose the basic givens of the human condition and then explore particular responses to it. Those which are inappropriately based on illusion are ridiculed and condemned; those which allow for a graceful and dignified accomodation with reality are approved.

The major intention of Hard Times is to ridicule and condemn Utilitarianism as a response to the human condition. It is, Dickens shows, based on a faulty picture of human nature and leads to an unnecessary loss of human dignity. The philosophy of Utilitarianism is personified by Mr. Gradgrind. Its features are explored in the system of education he devises, his method of raising his children, and his statistical approach to social and economic problems. Its unfortunate effects are demonstrated in the flaws of his pupils and children and in the susceptibility of the Coketown hands to a variety of opiates. The circus, on the other hand, represents the favoured response to the human condition, a response variously embodied in Mr. Sleary, in Sissy, and in Rachael. The characters representing everyman in the allegory are Louisa and Stephen; they must choose between alternate responses to the human condition. This condition itself is personified by Coketown.

Coketown is not a congenial place to live. It is the classic city of satire: "a labyrinth," "a dense formless

jungle," "a muddle," and in general a kind of hell with its deep furnaces and endless smoke. Dickens' keynote description in chapter five introduces the major focus and most of the images which control his presentation of the city throughout the book.

> It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood it was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness.[16]

Dickens' description of Coketown emphasizes the unnaturalness of the place and the dangerous potential of such unnaturalness. Industrialism imposes the mindless repetition of machinery upon the organic processes of human life. This monotony becomes a major them of the work. Though Dickens occasionally touches on the material poverty of the Coketown hands, arising from an unfair distribution of wealth, his concern is focussed almost exclusively on the spiritual poverty of their lives, which is revealed in the dismal sameness of everything, from the streets and buildings to the people and their daily routine. "Every day was the same as yesterday and tomorrow, and every year the counterpart of the

last and the next" (p.20). There is no harmony here between the cycles of the natural world and the cycles of human life. Though the daily orbit of the sun and the yearly round of the seasons are duly experienced in Coketown, their effects are uniformly demonic. In the rain, which might be thought to have a certain vitalizing effect,

> the Smoke-serpents, submissive to the curse of all that tribe, trailed themselves upon the earth. . . . The steam from the escape pipe, the litter of barrels and old iron, the shining heaps of coals, the ashes everywhere, were shrouded in a veil of mist and rain. (p.64)

In the sun, which might be expected to bless what it shines on, Coketown "fries" and "bakes".

> The sun . . . was less kind to Coketown than hard frost, and rarely looked intently into any of its closer regions without engendering more death than life. (p.103)

What intervenes between man and nature is the machine:

> No temperature made the melancholy mad elephants more mad or more sane. . . . The measured motion of their shadows on the walls, was the substitute Coketown had to show for the shadows of rustling woods; while for the hum of insects, it could offer . . . the whirr of shafts and wheels. (p.102)

The unnaturalness of industrialism is further emphasized by Dickens' use of fanciful and organic imagery to describe machines and mechanistic or mathematic imagery to describe the workers. The machines are "melancholy mad elephants;" the goods they produce "increase and multiply;" the workers, however, are just so many statistics recorded in Parliamentary

blue books. Stephen works in a "forest of looms" which "throb" at the end of the day "like a fainting pulse." Stephen, himself, at the end of the day, feels as if the machines have "worked and stopped in his own head." Such imagery reveals the way in which the machines drain the energies of the workers and invert the desired relation between man and his tools.[17]

Much of Hard Times, then, is devoted to documenting industrialism's antagonism to life--to anything organized on organic rather than mechanistic principles. To this extent, Leavis' account of the work is fully justified. What both Leavis and critics like Holloway neglect, however, is Dickens' acceptance of the evil effects of industrialism. He accepts them because they are involuntary and cannot, therefore, be willed away. Dickens' own comment on his key-note description of the factories makes this very clear.

> These attributes of Coketown were in the main inseparable from the work by which it was sustained; against them were to be set off, comforts of life which found their way all over the world, and elegancies of life which made, we will not ask how much of the fine lady, who could scarcely bear to hear the place mentioned. The rest of its features were voluntary. (p.20)

Dickens' parody of the utilitarian calculus is well done here. Though it appeals to arguments and evidence belonging to the real world of Victorian England in the manner Gray finds objectionable, in this case the criticism is successfully transformed into play.[18] Dickens exposes the

inadequacy of the utilitarian calculus to distinguish what is moral or good from what is immoral or evil and he shows how this calculus can be used to support an insupportable complacency. But the parody in no way affects the basic facts about Coketown: its existence is posited on industrial labour and industrial labour is in essence inimical to the natural rhythms of life. This aspect of Coketown is not one of the voluntary ones.

Dickens' vision in Hard Times is thus a good deal darker than is generally reported. We are not offered a choice between a mechanistic society and an organic one; still less do the forces of life triumph. Our choice is between alternate ways of responding to the mechanistic society in which we live and from which we cannot, in fact, escape. For Coketown is not only a negative society; it is also a closed one. The only characters who leave Coketown--Stephen and Tom--do so as criminals. That is, they do not leave one society to join or create another, but are expelled from society altogether. Both die trying to return. Nor is there a country-city contrast of the sort one finds in Joseph Andrews. The countryside around Coketown is a pleasant enough place for a Sunday outing, but it offers no alternative to life in the city. The nature Dickens depicts is disorganized and mostly unhuman. There are no intimations of a transcending spirit here and the only signs of human life in the environment are abandoned mine pits--that is, further

evidence of the treacherous effects of industrialism. Finally, the escape provided by Sleary's circus is illusory--not an escape in fact, but an escape in fancy only.

Dickens takes pains to emphasize the discrepancy between the theatrical effects achieved by the circus and the threadbare, even sordid props out of which they are created. This discrepancy is displayed in the scenery and costumes of the circus and in the players as well. Master Kidderminster, for example,

> made up with curls, wreaths, wings, white bismuth, and carmine . . . soared into so pleasing a Cupid as to constitute the chief delight of the maternal par of the spectators; but in private, where his characteristics were a precocious cut-away coat and an extremely gruff voice, he became of the Turf, turfy. (p.27)

What the circus provides is a momentary respite from reality, a momentary escape from facts, through the creation of pleasing fancies. So the narrator repeatedly tells us: what the workers and the Gradgrind children need is "relaxation . . . a vent,--some recognized holiday" (p.23). So Sleary tell us: "People mutht be amuthed. They can't be alwayth a learning, nor yet they can't be alwayth a working" (p.38,p.269). Dickens makes the point as well with his recurring use of fanciful analogies. Mr. Gradgrind's knobby head is "like the crust of a plum pie;" Mrs. Sparsit is a bank fairy or a bank dragon, depending on the point of view. Bounderby is a giant. Rather than transforming

reality into make-believe, these analogies juxtapose the two in a deliberately artificial way so that the discrepancy between them is especially apparent. Their effect is thus ironic: they show that reality cannot really be transformed by imagining it to be otherwise. But they also show the value of fancy as a way of coping with reality, for they provide the reader with an instant of "irresponsible joy" as a kind of holiday from his serious responsibilities to the issues of the book.[19]

The role of fancy in Hard Times has troubled most commentators. As we have seen, there are two ways of responding: one is to claim that by fancy Dickens really meant imagination; the other is to attack him for his paucity of imagination and his willingness to feed the masses amusements instead of bread. Both responses read Dickens from the point of view of the Romantics and therefore fail to do justice to the intentions of his book.

There is much in Hard Times that is reminiscent of the Romantics and the temptation to read Dickens as one is understandable. "Sowing," "Reaping," and "Garnering," the subtitles of the book, almost inevitably call to mind the Romantic model of time in which the rhythm of human life is rooted in the rhythm of the seasons and the agricultural year.[20] This association is reinforced as Dickens develops the motif in the text. We have already noted the way in which the demonic side of industrialism is revealed through

its corrupting effect on the beneficent cycles of nature. The demonic side of utilitarianism is similarly revealed through images of thwarted natural growth. As described by Louisa, utilitarianism is a "frost and a blight" on her youth, and she demands to know what happened to "the garden that should have bloomed" in her childhood. Tom reveals the effects of utilitarianism on himself by slashing at flowers and defacing trees. Tom and Louisa have been robbed of their innocence and thrust into the world of experience before their time, much in the manner of Blake's pathetic chimney sweeps; they must walk in "chartered streets" and suffer the "mind-forged manacles" imposed by corrupt social institutions. As a tonic to this oppression, Dickens gives us Mr. Sleary and the circus. Sleary is a kind of prophet and speaks for a different kind of wisdom from the rational philosophy of Gradgrind. This wisdom has the power to liberate the innocents of Coketown from their bondage to fact.

All this is very like the sort of thing one finds in Romantic poetry, but there is a crucial difference. The Romantics locate reality in a transcendent spirit which animates both man and external nature. Man achieves harmony through a full participation in nature and arrives at truth by using his imagination, for only imagination has the power to release him from his bondage to material circumstance and so reveal truths of the spirit. Dickens, however,

posits no such participation by man in nature. The harmony between human cycles of growth and natural cycles of growth is metaphorical only, based on the idea of analogy between the two and not a shared transcending spirit. Dickens locates reality in social relationships--in the relations of men to each other and to the means of production within society. Thus, for Dickens, any belief in higher truths or transcendent realities available to an imaginative faculty, but not to reason or the senses, is simply false. Such a belief is itself a fancy; no different in kind from Sissy's belief in her father's return or Rachael's belief in a heavenly hereafter.[21] Such fancies have a valuable function in life, but this doesn't make them any less fanciful.

Dickens, then, cannot be faulted for failing to liberate the victims of Coketown with romantic imagination. That fancy operates as a kind of opiate in the work, however, cannot be denied. One need only quote the narrator:

> Utilitarian economists, skeletons of schoolmasters, Commissioners of Fact, . . . the poor you will always have with you. Cultivate in them, while there is yet time, the utmost graces of the fancies and affections, to adorn their lives so much in need of ornament; or, in the day of your triumph, when romance is utterly driven out of their souls, and they and a bare existence stand face to face, Reality will take a wolfish turn, and make an end of you. (p.150)

Such a pronouncement must be offensive to a critic educated in the tradition of Western liberalism. Even if one grants that Dickens' utilitarian argument here is a deliberate

appeal to the values of his audience, there is no getting around his willingness to put up with other people's poverty. Such an attitude goes hand in hand, it seems, with his rejection of the union and his slanted portrayal of its leader, Slackbridge.

In order to understand the basis for Dickens' rejection of the union, and in general his political quietism, it is necessary to glance again at his analysis of industrialism, this time focussing on its causes rather than its effects. Dickens' analysis of industrialism from this point of view is almost Marxist in approach. (This, presumably, is the basis for the enthusiasm of a critic like Shaw.) He shows that the political and social organization of society and the distribution of power among its classes depends on the mode of economic production. Industrialism is the result of a change in this mode which entailed a re-distribution of power. Prior to industrialism, the aristocracy controlled society by virtue of its inherited ownership of the land. Under the industrialism of Victorian England, however, the basis of social organization is the manufacture and distribution of goods: those who own and control these means of production control society.

The transfer of power from the aristocracy to the manufacturing class is well documented in the book. Bounderby, who represents this class, controls everything and imprints everything with his own self-image. He is the

pivotal character of Hard Times, the means through which the various characters and the two distinct plots are brought into relation to each other. He holds this key position because he owns the factory and the bank, the economic bases on which industrial society is organized. Mrs. Sparsit, Coketown's resident aristocrat, is Bounderby's servant. Her fall from aristocratic height is exactly proportionate to his rise from the gutter. He can hire and fire her at will, which makes her as vulnerable to him as the Coketown workers. Though she thoroughly despises him, her contempt does not prevent her from courting him and expending her considerable energies in his service. James Harthouse, who comes by his aristocratic pretensions honestly, embodies the spiritual and moral exhaustion of the genuine aristocracy. Harthouse has abandoned the land in order to wander about and go in for things, and he too courts the favour of Bounderby. Finally, the country estate--the one piece of ~~unblighted~~ landscape in all of Hard Times--likewise belongs to Bounderby. Formerly, such an estate might have formed the nucleus around which an agricultural community would be organized. The manor house would act as a source of material and spiritual patronage, expressed in the cultivation of the land and in the pastimes of aristocratic leisure. For Bounderby, however, such an estate has no function at all--except to mirror back his own philistinism. He gets rid of the non-utilitarian horses in the stables and

plants aggressively humble cabbages in the flower beds.

Although the social, economic and political power over industrial society is concentrated in the hands of Bounderby, there is one manufacturer in Coketown who is more powerful even than he and from whom he receives his power in trust. I refer to the "Great Manufacturer" Time, who wields "innumerable horsepower." As the title suggests, Hard Times is very much a book about time. One of its major intentions is to critically examine the assumptions behind the Victorian notion of progress. This notion conceives of time as a medium of continual forward motion toward some goal. Minutes and hours become discrete units of utility--like coins--which may be used for gain or squandered. Perhaps the clearest expression of the Victorian ideal of progress to be found anywhere occurs in Tennyson's poem "Ulysses." Ulysses complains of the little profit to be got from a still hearth and longs to "follow knowledge like a sinking star,/ Beyond the utmost bound of human thought" (1.31-2). There are men like Telemachus, he notes, who are content to follow a quiet round of domestic duties and pleasures, but the heroes are men like himself who have the strength of will "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield" (1.70).

In Hard Times, Bounderby draws the same distinction between himself and the circus players: "You see, my friend . . . we are the kind of people who know the value of time,

and you are the kind of people who don't know the value of time" (p.28). Bounderby has used the units of time allotted him in life to raise himself, not quite from the gutter, but certainly from a lower position to a higher one. His boast is thus less a falsification than an idealization of his own experience. Though the goal he seeks is material rather than spiritual self-improvement, he is moved by the same ideal as Ulysses and he makes the same assumptions about time and the potency of the human will in its relations with the external world. These are the assumptions that underlie the tradition of liberalism from which hostility toward Dickens' social thought has come. And they are the assumptions Dickens tests and finds wanting in Hard Times.

A major theme of Hard Times is the idea of upward versus downward movement. The ideal, we have seen, is upward movement, but in Dickens' satire, aside from Bounderby and Bitzer, everyone sinks. The most striking demonstration of downward mobility is, of course, Stephen's fall into Old Hell Shaft. Stephen strives, but all his efforts to raise himself up consistently thrust him deeper into his muddle. His wife returns with the monotonous regularity of a machine to wipe out any small progress he makes during her absences. When he attempts to escape this bondage, he gets into trouble with Bounderby. Subsequent efforts to avoid trouble first isolate him from his fellow workers, then get him fired from his job--a circumstance which entails the

additional loss of Rachael and of his good name. The curve of Stephen's "progress" is complete only when the gulf between his desired goal, imaged in the star, and what he actually obtains, a fall into Old Hell Shaft, is as great as metaphor can make it.

Though Stephen's fate is unusually severe (in its own way it is as exaggerated as Bounderby's), it is nonetheless representative of the experience of the workers. Stephen is not the first to have fallen into Old Hell Shaft.[22] In general, the workers strive and seek, but they do not advance: "the Mills is awlus a goin' but . . . they never works us no nigher to onny dis'ant object--'ceptin' alwus, Death" (p.138). The typical experience of the Coketown workers is a demonic inversion of Bounderby's, as told by Bounderby: "Vagabond, errand-boy, vagabond, labourer, porter, clerk, chief manager, small partner, Josiah Bounderby of Coketown" (p.15). Stephen is permanently married to the imaginary mother Bounderby successfully escaped.

Bounderby's boast is an idealization and a kind of fantasy, but it differs significantly from those of Sleary's circus. Unlike Sissy and Rachael, Bounderby does not believe his own idealization. It is merely a deception he practices on others, part of his strategy for improving his station in life. But in a paradoxical way, unlike the naive fantasies of Sissy and Rachael, Bounderby's cynical one originates in a serious misconception about the world. This is his

mistaken belief that he is the cause of his own success, the controller of his fate, and that others could do like him if only they would. Herein lies the real falsification in Bounderby's boast. For Dickens shows that the traits of character and the material circumstances which allow one man to rise while everyone around him is crushed are arbitrarily distributed.

Dickens documents the randomness of the Coketown world chiefly through the history of Stephen, who is the scapegoat of Frye's ironic mode: the unlucky victim, "selected at random or by lot, and no more deserving of what happens to him than anyone else would be. . . . He is guilty [only] in the sense that he is a member of a guilty society, or living in a world where such injustices are an inescapable part of existence."[23] Dickens also gives us a series of unaccountable contrasts between paired individuals. Louisa and Tom, for example, are raised by their father in identical fashion, but Louisa resists the temptation to sensuality and has a capacity for disinterested love wholly lacking in Tom, who succumbs to temptation on every occasion. Similarly, Tom and Bitzer receive the same education, but Bitzer is a good mathematician while Tom is not. Tom is enervated by the calculations he is forced to do; Sissy, on the other hand, is not even touched. Despite her steady application, she can make no progress at all at Gradgrind's school. The same caprice is evident among the Coketown

workers. Faced with a soul-destroying existence, some--like Rachael--go in for religion, while others--like Stephen's wife--turn to alcohol. There is no rhyme or reason to these individual differences. They are the given, the results of an arbitrary fate.

Dickens' version of the human condition, then, is extremely bleak. Society is organized on the basis of economic relationships, in industrial society the relationship of man to machine. Such relationships, though necessary to sustain life, are in essence hostile to life. Moreover, contrary to the assumptions behind a belief in progress, men have little power to shape their destinies. The human will is a puny instrument against the great manufacturer time, and the only thing to be safely counted on is death. These conditions have not been caused by the manufacturing class Bounderby represents or by Gradgrind's philosophy of Utilitarianism. Both Gradgrind and Bounderby personify responses merely to conditions which Dickens accepts as inevitable.

Bounderby's response is to exploit the situation in Coketown. Motivated by pride and greed, he seeks his own interests at the expense of others. The humiliation and privation of others serve as valued occasions for his own self-aggrandizement. The genuine evil of this response, however, is masked by Bounderby's rationalizations--the myth of the self-made man and the associated doctrines of <u>laissez</u>

faire and the identity of interests. Under these rationalizations, pride and greed are transformed into virtues; the exploitation of one's fellows becomes the merited reward of a strong will to succeed; and the unnatural smoke of Coketown becomes "the healthiest thing in the world . . . particularly for the lungs" (p.116).

Gradgrind's response to the situation in Coketown arises not from pride and greed, but from vanity. He genuinely seeks to serve the interests of others, but he is insensitive to the evil effects of his system until he is made to feel them on his own flesh. Gradgrind's system is a classic hobbyhorse, betraying a quirk of vanity in an otherwise kindly soul and creating a blind spot in an otherwise perceptive intelligence. When such a hobbyhorse is merely eccentric, like Uncle Toby's in Tristam Shandy, it is comic and even endearing. It is similar in many ways to the benevolent fancies of Sleary's circus. Gradgrind's system, however, though based on illusion, is by no means a harmless fancy. Like Bounderby's boast, it aids and abets the evils of Coketown; it provides a moral rationalization and moral support for the pride and greed of the manufacturing class. This relation is clearly indicated in the allegory: at the end of their period of "sowing," Gradgrind's children and his star pupil Bitzer all go to Bounderby in one fashion or another.

Stripping industrialism of its rationalizations is not

going to destroy it or even hamper it in any serious way. At the end of the narrative, Gradgrind has been educated and Bounderby has been deprived of his favorite boast, but Coketown remains substantially the same. Stripping industrialism of its rationalizations has value, however, because it prepares the way for cultivating a more suitable response. The first condition of human dignity is an undistorted look at the way things are. Bounderby's boast, we have seen, originates in a misconception about the external world and man's relation to that world. Gradgrind's system is equally ill-conceived, but it is based on a misunderstanding about human nature.

Satire traditionally locates the essence of human nature in man's reasoning faculty. Reason distinguishes man from the other animals and is the source of his moral impulse as well as specific moral norms designed to guide behaviour and control the wayward passions. At the end of the eighteenth century, however, a new version of human nature and in consequence a new model of morality emerged. This version locates the essence of human nature in one or another of man's irrational faculties. For the Romantic poets, we have seen, the faculty that counts is the imagination--the inner eye that cuts through the gauze of material reality to grasp the truths of the spirit. Though Dickens' conception by comparison is definitely low-brow, it nonetheless belongs to a respectable tradition of what might be called "sentimental

satire," originating with Fielding in Joseph Andrews and continuing to the present with the satire of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. In this tradition, the faculty that counts is sentiment. The essence of human nature and the source of human morality is located in the spontaneous overflow of sympathy, of feeling for one's fellows that arises automatically at the mere recognition of humanity in the other. The difference between the sentimental faculty and the imaginative one is rather like the difference between negative capability and the egotistical sublime. They are alike, however, in championing the irrational human spirit against the rational facts of material reality.

Given such a view of human nature, it is not surprising that Dickens finds Utilitarianism objectionable. Like the models of morality glanced at above, it too derives its notion of the good from what it takes to be the essence of human nature. In the case of Utilitarianism, this is the desire for happiness. All men desire happiness and happiness is defined as the fullest possible realization of one's interests. What is morally right is that which will produce the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people. It is thus the duty of individuals to make decisions and of the state to pass laws and create institutions that will maximize happiness; an action or a law has value--or "utility"--to the extent it realizes this end.

The difficulty with the Utilitarian conception arises from the need to calculate and compare amounts of happiness. In order for the state to pass a law, for example, it must count the number of people affected by the law; then it must count the number favourably affected and the number unfavourably affected; finally it must count the number very favourably affected and the number very unfavourably affected. Only after the various degrees of happiness produced for the various numbers of individuals involved are tallied and measured against each other can the utility of the law be known.

The implications of this calculus are immediately apparent. First, individuals must be regarded as discrete mathematical units, each of which is a receptacle of utility. Secondly, utility itself must be defined in exclusively material terms. Only tangibles can be counted and measured. Thus, when it comes time to decide if Louisa should marry Bounderby, the terms on which the decision is based are not love--an intangible--but the ages of the parties involved, their class, their property, and so on. A third implication of the calculus is the use of statistics and the formulation of general laws of human behaviour. We have seen how complicated and lengthy a procedure the utilitarian calculus requires. In order to facilitate moral efficiency, some sort of shorthand is necessary. Thus, to determine the utility of the age difference between Louisa and Mr. Bounderby

Gradgrind refers her to the relevant statistics.

> I find, on reference to the figures, that a large proportion of these marriages are contracted between parties of very unequal ages, and that the elder of these contracting parties is, in rather more than three-fourths of these instances, the bridegroom. It is remarkable as showing the wide prevalence of this law, that among the natives of the British possessions in India, also in a considerable part of China, and among the Calmucks of Tartary, the best means of computation yet furnished us by travellers, yield similar results. The disparity I have mentioned, therefore, almost ceases to be disparity, and (virtually) all but disappears. (p.91)

Parodying the Utilitarian calculus is not difficult, but Dickens does it well. Here his thesis is that utilitarian calculations, designed to maximize the happiness of everyone, are actually irrelevant to the happiness of any one in particular. This thesis is slyly reinforced in the passage by making Gradgrind speak like a pedant, a stock character of comedy and satire and humourous sketches. Everybody knows that the pompous rhythms and foolish erudition of the pedant have nothing to do with life.

Though Utilitarianism as originally conceived does not deny the unmeasurables in man, it is forced to disregard them and from there it is a small step to de-valuation and finally to outright repression. This repression is exercised with the best of intentions in Gradgrind's system of education. He wishes to stamp out wonder and fancy and sentiment in order to maximize utility and teach his children to maximize utility. He is moved by high-minded moral idealism

which he attempts to instill in others. The actual effects of his system, of course, differ considerably from the intended ones. In crushing the spiritual side of man, Gradgrind not only fails to assure the moral health of his pupils and children, but actually undermines that health. To the extent his system is successful in destroying the natural instincts, it produces individuals who are physically alive, but spiritually and morally dead.

The personification of successful Utilitarian education in the book is Bitzer, who is so untroubled by natural sentiments of any kind that he puts his own mother in the work-house. Bitzer's success shows that a Utilitarian education is a very good thing for a man who wants to rise in the world. Though upward movement cannot be assured, Bitzer at least will never fall on account of a miscalculation. But Bitzer's success further shows that Utilitarianism encourages the rise of the worst, not the best, to positions of power in society. Though it did not make Bitzer the sort of person he is, it most certainly nurtured and developed his natural tendency to pride and greed.[24]

Eradicating the natural instincts is not generally so easy, however, and in most cases Gradgrind's system produces individuals who are maimed and distorted--neither good calculators nor good human beings. Their energies, finding no natural outlet, become dangerously dammed up and must eventually seek unnatural outlets.

> All closely imprisoned forces rend and destroy. The air that would be healthful to the earth, the water that would enrich it, the heat that would ripen it, tear it when caged up. (p.206)

This is what happens to Tom and Louisa and to the greater number of the Coketown hands. Louisa nearly commits adultery; Tom gambles and robs a bank; Stephen comes close to murdering his wife; and the majority of Coketown workers drink or take opium or resort to "low haunts." All these are evils, but unlike the monotony of industrialism, they are not inevitable evils. They are the result of the non-economic institutions of Coketown--the schools and churches and hospitals and jails--which have freely and deliberately chosen to repress natural instinct in the mistaken belief that repression will make people better. This belief is the major object of satire in Hard Times. It is explored most thoroughly in the allegorical histories of Stephen and Louisa.

Stephen and Louisa are the only more or less round characters in Hard Times. Their purpose is to represent man confronting his world and trying to discover and hold fast to the proper moral response. In satire, this is the means through which human dignity is achieved. Both Louisa and Stephen are associated with the imagery of imprisoned natural elements. Both are threatened by a black gulf, Stephen in the form of Old Hell Shaft, Louisa in the form of Mrs. Sparsit's staircase. Finally, both are tempted to

lose their humanity by committing a serious crime.

The image of fire, in particular, plays an important role in the allegory of Hard Times. Dickens establishes its significance and its connection with Louisa in the opening pages of the narrative. She is described peeping through "the loophole" into Mr. Sleary's circus: "struggling through the dissatisfaction of her face, there was a light with nothing to rest upon, a fire with nothing to burn, a starved imagination keeping life in itself somehow" (p.11). Fire symbolizes the natural instincts, the sentiments and affections, which if properly nurtured provide warmth and light. If not properly nurtured, fire may turn to ash, like the red sparks Louisa studies "dropping out of the fire, and whitening and dying" (p.50). Or it may flare up and threaten explosion like the fire in the furnaces of Coketown or the "wild dilating fire" in Louisa's eyes. When Stephen reports his marital frustrations to Bounderby, he "fires like a proud man" (p.67). Slackbridge has a "fiery face" and his oratory gives off "violent heat." The danger of explosion in Coketown is signalled by the vast amounts of smoke, which coil like serpents and turn buildings into savages. As Louisa comments to her father, "There seems to be nothing there but languid and monotonous smoke. Yet when night comes, Fire bursts out" (p.92).

Water is used in a similar way in the allegory. The "little vessels" in Gradgrind's school have "gallons of facts

poured into them until they are full to the brim" (p.2). This precarious balance is disrupted by Slackbridge who stirs the workers into a "thundering sea." Similarly, when Stephen learns there is no law to help him out of his bad marriage, his frustration is described in terms of "wild waters" and "the raging sea." Unusually violent storms occur on the nights of both Louisa's and Stephen's temptations to symbolize their inner strife.

Just because Louisa and Stephen hang onto their humanity despite hostile circumstance, they have a potential for violent explosion. Stephen is tempted to give vent to his frustration at the injustice of the muddle by murdering his wife. He is saved by his angel Rachael, who embodies all the Christian virtues, but most notably patience and love. She urges him to leave the muddle alone because she knows the futility of striving against the world. Rachael casts out the storm in Stephen's soul and becomes his guiding light, and though she cannot solve the muddle, she provides guidance and consolation to make it bearable. It is Stephen's committment to the values of patience and charity, made on the night of his temptation and symbolized by his promise to Rachael, that prevents him from joining the union.

Louisa's demon is Harthouse, who is explicitly described as a temptor and associated with Lucifer on several occasions. Harthouse symbolizes cynical amorality and Louisa's attraction

to him reveals one of the major inadequacies of Utilitarianism as a moral philosophy. One expects a moral philosophy to invest absolute value in certain ways of behaving and to absolutely condemn others, these distinctions providing the basis for some particular notion of human dignity. Utilitarianism, however, attaches only instrumental value to actions. Theoretically, then, any action at all can be invested with value and prima facie all actions have equal value. The murder of Stephen's wife, for example, would certainly maximize the general happiness and so, according to Utilitarianism, must be morally good. Such a judgement goes counter to man's deepest intuitions. If Utilitarianism is right, those intuitions must be false. If every action is as good as any other, then indeed, "What does it matter?"[25]

Louisa has struggled from childhood with the conflict between natural intuitions and the rational views she is taught. This conflict is not resolved by her marriage, for she is moved by both affection for Tom and despair over herself to marry Bounderby. When Louisa meets Harthouse, she encounters for the first time an attractive embodiment of the cynicism she herself feels. "Any set of ideas will do just as much good as any other set," says Harthouse (p.119), and his philosophy comes "as a relief and justification. Everything being hollow and worthless, she had missed nothing and sacrificed nothing" (p.153). Harthouse reveals the consolation in amorality: if one cannot realize one's

humanity by doing good, neither can one lose it by doing evil; one may as well enjoy what pleasures life has to offer.

Louisa resists Harthouse's temptation--barely--and only in despite of her Utilitarian upbringing. Though she has almost "crushed [her] better angel into a demon" (p.199), she tells her father:

> I do not know that I am sorry, I do not know that I am ashamed, I do not know that I am degraded in my own esteem. All that I know is, your philosophy and your teaching will not save me. (p.201)

Louisa falls, not into the sensual gulf at the bottom of Mrs. Sparsit's staircase, but certainly into a spiritual gulf from which she is rescued only by the ministrations of Sissy. As Louisa's better angel Sissy confronts and exorcises the demon Harthouse, just as the forces of sentiment and natural intuition cast out cynicism and amorality.

Sissy is made to act as the ingenu in Dickens' satire--the traveller from another world who responds to the world of the satire with fresh, undistorted vision. Thus, in school she makes mistakes like perversely transforming McChoakumchild's problems in statistical calculation into problems of individual human happiness. Most importantly, however, she illustrates an alternate model of growth to Gradgrind's system, which serves as the basis for an alternate response to the human condition.

Dickens' model of growth closely resembles Wordsworth's. Both place a great emphasis on childhood intuition and the

role it plays in later life and though the content of this intuition is very different in the two, for both the child is "the best Philosopher." The child is valued by Dickens because he has not yet been forced into an economic relationship with society and so is free for a while to disregard the facts of reality and create, through fancy, the kind of world he desires. This is a world without thorns, where the wicked are punished and the good never die--in short, the world of the fairy tale. These creations of fancy are crucial because they are the child's first and best expression of his moral intuitions. As the child grows up, shades of the prison-house indeed begin to close, and he soon finds himself in a world where the wicked prosper and the good fall into mine shafts. Neither Wordsworth nor Dickens attempts to deny these facts of adult life, but both find in the "embers" of childhood a way of coping with the "inevitable yoke."

> . . . those first affections,
> Those shadowy recollections,
> Which, be they what they may,
> Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
> Are yet a master light of all our seeing.
> (Intimations Ode, 1.150-4)

The recollected intuitions of childhood provide both consolation and moral guidance. They

> . . . have no slight or trivial influence
> On that best portion of a good man's life,
> His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
> Of kindness and of love.
> (Tintern Abbey, 1.32-5)

Thus Louisa tells her father that the "ashes alone" of a proper childhood would have saved her from the void into which she has fallen. In Sissy, the fancies of childhood were carefully nurtured and so she is able to preserve her moral idealism and to transform to a significant extent Gradgrind's child-raising factory into something resembling a family.

The family has a crucial importance in Dickens[26] because it is the one institution of society whose function is to reproduce people instead of manufactured goods. It is therefore organized on personal human relationships instead of economic relationships and on a cyclical rather than a progressive model of time. It is a place where fancy and wonder and sentiment may thrive protected from the external world of fact. It thus provides a safe place in which to nurture children and a refuge for adults.

More than anything else, Sleary's circus personifies ideal family life. Each member of the company participates in family relations with some of the other members and the company as a whole forms a single extended family to which each member contributes in keeping with his abilities and stage of development. The result, Dickens emphasizes, is harmonious and fertile. The players are described as continually grouping and regrouping in various configurations--to form new families or to create new illusions. The illusions are deliberately crude and childish (vaulting acts,

"chaste" renditions of Shakespeare) because their function is to renew the beneficent and vitalizing intuitions of childhood.

Sleary's circus is a remarkably static place. It is not timeless, however. As the experience of Sissy's father shows, it is vulnerable to the great manufacturer time in the way real life always is. But though some players age and die, new children are born who grow to take their places. Thus the circus remains constant and against the progress of public life in Coketown, whether upward or downward, it offers the private circle of the ring. We are introduced to Sleary in the early pages of the book and we return to him again at the end. During the intervening period of time, Gradgrind and his children and his pupils all develop with time and change in one way or another, but Sleary does not: he looks the same and elaborates the same philosophy of the circus, which is to make the best of it, not the worst. At the beginning Gradgrind leads Sissy away from the circus; at the end she leads him back. "Sissy's progress" thus describes a circle, which is no progress at all. Like Telemachus, she is content to follow a round of domestic pleasures and duties.

The image of the circle occurs in another telling way in Hard Times, when Stephen is rescued from the depths of the mine shaft. As Sissy and Rachael spread the news of Stephen's fall, the people of the neighborhood are roused

from their lethargy. "They no sooner understood her than their spirits were on fire like hers" (p.245). The workman who leads the rescue is in a drunken slumber when Sissy encounters him, but after a quick baptism in a dirty pool of water, he is immediately sobered and described as the most vigourous rescuer of them all. When a crowd of spectators forms, he organizes them into "a large ring round Old Hell Shaft" (p.246). Within this ring, the rescuers are like circus players: the crowd is intent on their performance and loses all sense of its various independent identities, each with his own troubles, to respond as one to the troubles of Stephen. When he is found, there is "a universal cry . . . then a deep profound hush;" when he is raised onto the grass, "a low murmur of pity went round the throng" (p.248).

The ring of spectators around Old Hell Shaft is a spontaneously formed community of workers; its purpose is to rescue Stephen, and its leaders are drawn by "general consent" from the community itself. Dickens obviously intends a contrast to the union which exiled Stephen in the first place. This group of workers is mustered and organized by Slackbridge, who is an outsider and who appoints himself to lead. The methods he uses to raise the fire in his audience are contrived and in particular his use of political cliches suggests he is a kind of automaton and casts doubts on the sincerity of his motives.

As we have seen, Dickens is almost universally criticized for his handling of Slackbridge and the issue of unionism. Even Leavis concedes his lack of understanding, not just of the trade unions, but of Parliament and the religious chapels as well. If Hard Times were a moral fable, then Dickens' social thought would not matter, for the moral fable deals with eternal verities in a timeless, spaceless setting. But Hard Times is a satire, and Dickens is engaged with his local reality. Under the fable of Hard Times, he offers an analysis of Victorian industrialism as a context for criticism of particular institutions and practices. As a satirist, Dickens must distort and exaggerate, but his distortions must be transparent and the discursive content of his criticism must be justified.

Given the basic premise of Hard Times, which is Dickens' account of human nature and the human condition, his treatment of Slackbridge and the union is justified. As a response to the evils of industrialism, the union differs from the other flawed institutions of Coketown only in being a creation of the working class rather than the manufacturing class. It too looks on the members it is supposed to serve as receptacles of utility or as units of production and consumption. Such units can have economic relations with each other, but not human relations. At the union meeting, when Stephen attempts to assert his humanity as an individual with a moral imagination, he is

exiled. His committment to the values embodied in Rachael is not understood. Similarly, at Bounderby's house, when he suggests that the relationship between labour and management might be personal rather than merely economic, he is fired. Dickens here suggests an identity of interests between union and management that is more subtle than his critics have understood. He does not claim that union and management desire the same distribution of goods or that what materially benefits the management will ultimately benefit the workers, but he does claim that union and management share a preoccupation with the distribution of goods and material benefits that misses the real evil of industrialism and so leaves untouched the real hardship in the workers' lives. This, we have seen, is the monotony of their daily lives, the unnatural routine at the machines which destroys the spirit because it forces human energy into a non-human expression.

Dickens is not oblivious to the material hardships of the workers' lives. He shows that the pollution caused by the factories could be at least reduced if Bounderby would invest in new boilers from time to time. He gives Stephen what is meant to be a heart-rending speech on the unnecessary deaths caused by conditions in the mining industry, which could be prevented if the owners would go to the trouble. He occasionally attacks the unfair distribution of the nation's wealth. But such criticisms are largely incidental

in Hard Times and leave Dickens open to a number of accusations. First, he betrays an ill-justified complacency in caring so little for the material side of the workers' lives. Secondly, he makes improvements along these lines the prerogative of the management class. Thirdly, in consequence, he is blind to the value of the union, and of progressive parties in the legislature as instruments to correct social injustice. These criticisms of Dickens are valid. Subsequent history has shown that credit for improving the material conditions of the workers' lives must go largely to unions and progressive politics.

Within the major focus that Dickens establishes, however, his satire of Slackbridge and the union is justified. Giving the workers higher wages is not going to alter the essentially destructive nature of industrial work. In this respect, subsequent history is not embarrassing to Dickens. The problem of the "spiritual" welfare of workers has become an important issue in industry. Though workers possess more economic power today than they did in the past, the essential incompatibility between economic relationships and the human spirit remains.

Dickens, then, posits as the defining feature of the human condition a discrepancy between the forms of desire and reality itself. In order to survive, man must have some kind of economic relation with society. Under industrialism, this relation is particularly destructive, but

industrialism is itself an involuntary product of time. Time destroys childhood innocence and binds the individual to a demonic circle until it finally destroys life altogether. The loss of innocence in Hard Times is not preliminary to a higher form of innocence beyond experience, as it is in Blake. Nor is death the poignant culmination of a benevolent process, as it is in a poem like Keat's "Ode: To Autumn." Time is rather "the deadly statistical clock" in Mr. Gradgrind's observatory, "which measured every second with a beat like a rap upon a coffin lid" (p.88). In addition to being demonically monotonous, time is also demonically capricious. There is the inequality of birth, which compared to the inequality of death is hardly worth mentioning; and in between there is the inequality of life with its arbitrary distribution of thorns and roses.

Hard Times is a study of the responses made by Victorian England to this condition. Gradgrind, Bounderby and Slackbridge all make the worst of it. In one way or another, their responses are based on lies about the true nature of man and the world in which he must live. Whether deliberate or inadvertant, these lies have the effect of rationalizing and so exacerbating the evils of that world. Sissy and Rachael, on the other hand, make the best of it. They do not in any sense "solve" the problem of evil; they merely respond to it in a way that allows for graceful and dignified accomodation to things as they are.

Paradoxically, the truest response to reality is the one that places supreme value on illusion. The illusions of childhood are needed because they confirm man's instinctive moral intuitions--that life is good, that the impulses of sentiment are good, that exploitation of others is bad and will be punished. Illusions in adult life are needed because the facts of adult life for the most part go contrary to man's moral intuitions. Some contact with illusion, then, is needed to revive the sentiments of childhood--to remind man of his moral nature, in effect. The more demonic the world in which man is required to live, the greater the need for such reminders. Thus, even though utilitarian institutions like Gradgrind's school and Slackbridge's union equip one to deal more effectively with the economic realities of Coketown, Dickens attacks them on moral grounds.

Reminding man of his moral nature is the function of moral satire. As a novel, Hard Times has many weaknesses. The world it creates is not self-contained, and it is rather thin. There is no one character in the work who claims our special attention and allegiance and whose development we trace through the gradual unfolding of the plot. Our sympathies are diffused among Louisa, Stephen, Sissy and Rachael. Moreover, Dickens cares little for the emotional lives of his characters. We find out through a series of dialogues and from the comments of the narrator, not what they are like, but what they represent--attitudes,

ideas, classes. As several critics have noticed, this is not what one wants from a novel. Similarly, as a social satire Hard Times has many flaws. It documents the injustices of Victorian industrial society and then goes on to attack the institutions of that society which were most progressive and most concerned to give the working man a break. In their stead, Dickens recommends a broken down circus whose low-brow amusements, should they succeed, can only have the effect of insuring the status quo. As a moral satire, however, Hard Times succeeds for it adequately evokes the traditional world of satire and it shows in a convincing way that the only human response to this world is a moral one.

Footnotes:

[1]F. R. Leavis, "Hard Times: The World of Bentham," in Dickens the Novelist (Hammondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1970), p.251.

[2]Northrop Frye, "Dickens and the Comedy of Humors," in Experience in the Novel, ed. by Roy Harvey Pearce (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1968), p.49.

[3]Leavis, p.278.

[4]Ibid., p.256.

[5]Ibid., p.259.

[6]Ibid., p.258.

[7]John Holloway, "Hard Times: A History and a Criticism," in Dickens and the Twentieth Century, ed. by John Gross and Gabriel Pearson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p.168.

[8]Ibid., p.167.

[9]Humphrey House, "Politics," in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Hard Times (Englewood Cliffs: Prentic Hall, 1969), p.27.

[10]Ibid., p.26.

[11]David Lodge, "The Rhetoric of Hard Times," in Language of Fiction (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966), p.158.

[12]Paul Edward Gray, Introduction to Twentieth Century Interpretations of Hard Times, p.10.

[13]O. J. Cockshut, "Hard Times--Dickens' Masterpiece?" in Twentieth Century Interpretations, p.66-7.

[14]Gray, p.10.

[15]Matthew Hodgart, Satire (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p.13.

[16]This and subsequent quotations from Hard Times are from the Rinehart Edition (San Francisco, 1958).

[17]Dorthy Van Ghent has made similar observations on Dickens' imagery. Se is quoted by David Lodge, p. 156.

[18]Dickens' irony here is almost Swiftian: he manages a strong

tension between the bland, cheerful tone and the distressing import of his statement.

[19]Lodge offers a lengthy discussion of the fairy tale elements in Hard Times. He believes these elements operate most effectively as an ironic rhetorical device.

> It is possible to read the novel as an ironic fairy-tale, in which the enchanted princess is released from her spell but does not find a Prince Charming, in which the honest, persecuted servant (Stephen) is vindicated but not rewarded, and in which the traditional romantic belief in blood and breeding, confirmed by a discovery, is replaced by the exposure of Bounderby's inverted snobbery. (Lodge, p.162)

Such ironic debunking of the world of romance is, as Frye points out, a technique of satire. My interpretation differs from Lodge's in several ways, however.

First, Dickens' irony is more complex than Lodge allows. It is not a simple debunking of romantic illusions, for Dickens has a special interest in the impulse behind romance. He wants to approve this impulse, for it is the source of human morality. But he wants at the same time to emphasize how illusory are the forms which this impulse creates.

Secondly, Lodge believes that Dickens' irony is only sporadic, that in his handling of the circus and of incidents like Tom's escape or Sissy's dismissal of Harthouse, Dickens uses the fairy-tale elements straightforwardly and so succumbs himself to the "morally-simplified, non-social, and non-historical view of human life and conduct" that informs the fairy-tale. This ciriticism is not justified and disappears when the allegorical function of the characters and incidents is understood. Sissy, for example, does not defeat Harthouse as a good fairy defeats a demon king, but as sentiment and affection defeat moral cynicism.

[20]To this model of time one may contrast the "hard times" of the title. Dickens' subtitles have several functions, most notably to evoke the Biblical warning and as an ironic comment on Gradgrind's system of education.

[21]The difference between Dickens and the Romantics may be measured by comparing his attitude toward heavenly rewards to Blake's. Both treat these rewards as illusory, but while Blake is horrified and enraged by the passive acceptance of injustice such illusion encourages, Dickens approves. He knows that the heavenly illusion will not protect one from harm, but he believes that harm is inevitable, and so a comforting illusion is not to be despised.

[22]The general downward tendency of the workers' lives is suggested by the recurring image of the ladders used to lower their coffins to the street. These ladders are like Stephen's mine shaft and Louisa's staircase.

[23]Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), p.41.

[24]Bitzer's version of the utilitarian calculus is, of course, a distortion. To the utilitarian imperative to maximize the general happiness, he appends the stipulation that each individual, pursuing his own happiness, will (somehow) produce the greatest amount of happiness for all. Bitzer has adapted the economic doctrine of laissez faire to the sphere of morality--a telling adaptation and one that considerably simplifies the problem of morality.

[25]These are the words of Louisa when she agrees to marry Bounderby. See p.92.

[26]Frye notes the importance of family life in all Dickens' novels. See "Dickens and the Comedy of Humors," p.68-70.

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