

SATIRE AND JAMES HOGG'S PRIVATE MEMOIRS AND

CONFESSIONS OF A JUSTIFIED SINNER

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ABSTRACT

SATIRE AND JAMES HOGG'S PRIVATE MEMOIRS AND  
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by

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This paper attempts to prove that James Hogg's Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner is a satire. It has four chapters. The first deals with general criticism regarding Hogg, regarding the Justified Sinner, regarding satire as a genre, and how these theories apply to Hogg. Northrop Frye's general division of the four genres provides the basis for the three remaining chapters: Chapter II deals with the universe, Chapter III, the institutional environment, and Chapter IV, man. Each of these chapters shows the conditions essential for satire within its particular area of investigation and in the novel as a whole.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. THE CRITICS . . . . .	1
II. THE GODS. . . . .	15
III. THE INSTITUTIONS. . . . .	35
IV. THE MEN . . . . .	65
APPENDIX. . . . .	92
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	95

## CHAPTER I

### THE CRITICS

Edicate a' men and women too, say I, as much as possible but dinna expect impossible results. If edication be confined to the mere understandin' a man may gang out o' school and institutions, and colleges, after seven years' study, far waar than a coof. For a coof generally kens, or at least suspects that he is a coof; but an 'Intectual - all - in - all' as Wordsworth weel ca's him, thinks himsell the verra perfection o' God's creters.<sup>1</sup>

The above passage, ascribed to James Hogg, must not be taken too seriously as he tended to exaggerate and his pronouncements, like many of his works, were made without any notion of their implications.<sup>2</sup> From our vantage point of time, the quotation is dramatically ironic in that the only guardians of Hogg's fame are intellectuals or, more properly, the literati:<sup>3</sup> those whose interest in Hogg lead them to search beyond the footnote that usually haunts the title of Wordsworth's last real poem, "Extemporary Effusions on the Death of James Hogg"; those who read his own works out of academic curiosity; and those interested in the background of The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. Some of the irony within the quotation disappears, however, when we absorb the gist of the criticisms of the Justified Sinner. Few

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Simpson, James Hogg: A Critical Study (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1962), p. 208.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. Thomas Thomson ed., The Works of the Ettrick Shepherd, 2 vols. (London: Blackie & Son, 1874), 1:441.

<sup>3</sup>Andre Gide, Foreword to The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, by James Hogg (London: Cresset Press, 1947), p. ix.

works have been criticized so poorly as this one and the manner in which this criticism is couched casts grave doubts on the craft of academic criticism. This performance, however, bears rehearsal because it does provide not only a background of critical bibliography but also an opening into a valid discussion of the work.

Among the critics of Hogg's Justified Sinner only three have real value and interest<sup>4</sup>--André Gide, because of his stature in literature, Louis Simpson, because of his extensive work on Hogg, and Northrop Frye, because of his critical theories. Two of these are ultimately linked together by their failure to overcome their critical limitations. Most of the other critics who comment on Hogg's work are those writing on much grander names and themes such as Sir Walter Scott, religion in Scottish literature, Scottish literature in relation to world literature, the reading habits of the Scottish people or the doppelgänger in literature. To pursuits such as these Hogg's work is peripheral: it is only another example to substantiate the critic's main thesis. The Justified Sinner has rarely received extensive examination for its own sake. The tendency has been to pigeonhole Hogg's best work, a novel finer than Scott ever wrote<sup>5</sup> with a facile ease born, no doubt, from already chosen positions--an indication in itself that the book occupies more holes than imagined or that the proper hole has not been found yet. A list of their names and titles is enough to show their particular biases: David Craig, Scottish Literature and the Scottish People

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<sup>4</sup>Since I tend to agree with Simpson's judgement of Edith C. Batho, I exclude her from my "real value category". See Simpson, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Karl Miller, "Walter Scott; Laird of the Gang," Times (London), 4 January 1969, p. 15.

1680-1830; I.R.J. Jack, English Literature 1815-1832; Coleman Q.

Parsons, Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott's Fiction; Rosenburg, "The Doppelganger in Literature"; Kurt Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature. We can excuse the ineptitude of such critics on the grounds that they limit themselves to specific subjects and adhere to these limitations in their presentations; we can accept their brevity necessitating superficiality; and we can by-pass them as effective critics because of the distortions brought about by their specialization and limitations of space. The same arguments cannot be offered for Gide and Simpson. Both men eulogize the Justified Sinner but their praise is tempered by a weak criticism and by an attack on Hogg's ability as a writer. Though neither of them would admit it, their approach in the final analysis is an ad hominem one, similar to Saintsbury's and Lang's who argue that since Hogg was an uneducated boor it would have been impossible for him to write such an accomplished work by himself.

André Gide's introduction to the Cresset Edition of the Justified Sinner is short, explicit and acritical. He praises the work when he says that he "plunged" into the Justified Sinner "with a stupefaction and admiration that increased on every page. . . . It is long since I can remember being so voluptuously tormented by any book."<sup>6</sup> He gives some background information when he quotes Defoe on the Antinomians of Johannes Agricola (1538). He summarizes the novel and then he attacks it:

The events related in Hogg's book are less [than those in James' Turn of the Screw] naturally explicable and even towards the end of the book, phantasmagoria takes possession of the circumstances a

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<sup>6</sup>Gide, p. viii.

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little too easily and somewhat regrettably. It ceases to be merely the spiritual fabrication and emanation which one might suppose it in the first three quarters of the book. But don't let us ask too much of Hogg; we must be very grateful to him for not granting his strangeness anything--or almost anything--that is not psychologically revealing. Taken as it is, his book well deserves to re-emerge from the shades in which it has been awaiting us for more than a century. I consider it an extraordinary achievement and shall be happy if what I say of it awakens the belated glory to which I believe it has a right.<sup>7</sup>

Does Gide seriously propose that all art should conform to such psychological orthodoxy? Does not art have its own informing and internal criteria and, if so, how then is the Justified Sinner to be faulted? Why bother bringing such a weak work "from the shades"? Gide obviates the answers to these questions by simply blaming Hogg for his lack of psychological knowledge-- ". . . don't let us ask too much from Hogg; . . . "

Louis Simpson's attitude to the Justified Sinner can be seen in the following passage taken from his own work James Hogg: A Critical Study:

Hogg vacillated from one kind of writing to another, and from good to bad; there is no clear development of his art. I have therefore not dealt with his works in order of their appearance. Instead, I have begun with a description of his life; then I have considered his verse and last, at great length I have discussed his prose. This, I believe, is the right balance and the right order of going, for the Ettrick Shepherd, poet of The Queen's Wake, is a less important figure than James Hogg, author of the Justified Sinner. This work, which towers above the rest, I have treated last of all. Everything that came before was a preparation for the writing of this novel; nothing that came after was as original or powerful.<sup>8</sup>

After reading this passage, after reading scholarly criticism of Hogg's life and his works, it is anti-climatic to read Simpson's actual critique of the Justified Sinner in his chapter entitled "The Antinomian

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

<sup>8</sup>Simpson, p. v.

Devil." The disappointment lies in the limitations of an almost total historic approach to the work.

Simpson sets out in the beginning of the chapter to prove that since Hogg came from Ettrick, the same Scottish district as the Antinomian Reverend Thomas Boston, and because he included the same Thomas Boston as a character in several of his writings<sup>9</sup> that Hogg "obtained the subject of antinomianism from both local tradition and his own reading."<sup>10</sup> Simpson, with sincerity, suggests that James Hogg became involved in the Auchterarder Creed controversy because its seconder in the Assembly of the Church of Scotland was a Reverend James Hog of Carnock. The excuse offered by Simpson for such presumption on his part is that since "Hogg could convince himself that he was born on the same day as Burns" he could "perhaps by a similar prompting" convince himself that James Hog of Carnock was "an antinomian spectre bearing his name" and that he was "obliged to exorcise it" by writing. Simpson destroys his own argument by ending this tawdry episode with a slight dissertation of Burns' "Holy Willie's Prayer." Burns did not come from Ettrick, nor had he any connection with Boston or Hog but he was a Scot who was personally aware of the religious controversies taking place in his land.<sup>11</sup> The same controversies were available to Hogg through his daily life--the celebrated Gavin Hamilton case took place when Hogg was sixteen years old--through his religion, and also through "Holy Willie's Prayer."

"The Antinomian Devil" continues with a rather long and distorted

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 171-172.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>11</sup> David Daiches, Robert Burns (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1950), pp. 71-76.



summary of the novel:

The Justified Sinner is divided into three parts. The first, the "Editors Narrative," presents the story of Robert Colwan's life until he is in possession at Dalcastle; the second, Colwan's "Memoirs," recapitulates the events of his life from his own viewpoint and carries it forward to the moment of his death; the brief third part relates his death, according to "traditional history", and describes the finding of the memoirs.<sup>12</sup>

Simpson, in this introductory paragraph to his summary, gives the impression that the Justified Sinner is a continuum: an impression that runs throughout the summary. Hogg goes to great length to avoid a sequential presentation of events and to give the reader a mirror image of them: they are not simply "the events of his life" but the same events repeated, especially those that the Editor narrates.

Simpson in the summary also stresses the "Editor's Narrative" as though he believes the Editor to be Hogg, when the Editor is as much a fictional character, a persona and mask as is Robert Colwan.<sup>13</sup> Simpson's trust in the Editor's objectivity distorts his summary and reduces its efficacy. The summary continues, however, with the "Memoirs" of Robert Colwan and the reason behind the title of the chapter, "The Antinomian Devil"--Gil-Martin. Colwan's "Memoirs," the crux of the novel's themes of duality, ambiguity and duplicity, of subjective and objective reality, are literally leapt over in one paragraph to arrive at the analysis of Gil-Martin. Colwan's mind, according to Simpson, is a "false membrane capable only of cant, bigotry, lies and self-deception." Events crucial to a sympathetic or poetic understanding of that mind--the John Barnet episode, the McGill episode and Scrape's Digression--are

<sup>12</sup> Simpson, pp. 173-174.

<sup>13</sup> Parsons, Lee and Gide make a similar error when they state that Hogg obviously approves of the Dalcastles when it is the Editor who approves of them.

barely mentioned or totally omitted. No mention of such literary precedents as the Presbyterian penchant for confessions,<sup>14</sup> or the similarity to St. Augustine's Confessions is made in this paragraph. Simpson's empathetic agreement with the Editor is complete--both of them can only see the empirical side of the story.

The analysis of Gil-Martin is divided into two parts: it resumes the summary, including "the finding of the memoirs" and then it goes on to the actual analysis of the Devil. The summary is somewhat controlled by the analysis: Simpson's claim that Gil-Martin is the Devil is manifested in the summary's emphasizing those events in Colwan's life in which Gil-Martin plays a large role. As a summary, however, it is a fairly just one until it comes to "the finding of the memoirs." Simpson, as he does with Colwan's life before Gil-Martin arrives on the scene, dispenses with this portion rather quickly. He omits telling us that it is in this part of the book that James Hogg, the character, and more importantly, tradition are proven to be liars. He also avoids telling us that the Editor's attempt to determine actual dates is an abject failure according to this episode.<sup>15</sup> Both of these points, fine though they may be, are vital to any analysis of the work because they provide part of the frame that eventually causes us to suspect the Editor as an impartial observer.

Simpson's analysis of Gil-Martin hangs on the point that he is the Devil. Simpson is quick to point out that Welby and Gide think so.

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<sup>14</sup> Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957; Peregrine Books, 1968), p. 77.

<sup>15</sup> Simpson, p. 186.

too.<sup>16</sup> But it is only an assumption. Hogg certainly surrounds Gil-Martin with allusions pointing towards such an assumption but that neither he nor most of his characters actually call Gil-Martin the Devil indicates a far more subtle characterization than Simpson posits. Gil-Martin could be Satan but to say categorically that he is, destroys the doubt that Hogg places before us. And this is a novel concerned with doubt about reality and sensory experience. Gil-Martin's ability to change his external appearance at will drives right to the center of these concerns. Simpson's failure to see Gil-Martin as an ambiguous character is reflected in his avoidance of him as a metaphor, as a poetic construct leading to a more profound understanding of the work as a whole.

The rest of "The Antinomian Devil" is taken up with a presentation of an authentic case of devil possession of which James Hogg "might have known the details" (Italics mine.) and a refutation of Lang's and Saintbury's attacks--Hogg's credibility as the sole author of the Justified Sinner.<sup>17</sup> Thus the chapter ends as dismally as it began: a misleading summary and an analysis based on hasty assumption bracketed by presumptive history and tradition.

"The Antinomian Devil" is, in terms of normal critical objectives, a weak analysis but worst of all it is, in terms of the critical standards Simpson applies when dealing with Hogg's verse and other prose, a failure. In an earlier chapter, entitled "Story-telling" Simpson runs through a list of writing faults found in Hogg's work,

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 190-192.

some of which could be as easily applied to the Justified Sinner.

Necessary information in the wrong place; distracting digressions, a frigid artificiality in prose style and an inconsistency in his use of dialogue<sup>18</sup> can all be found in "the climax of his career". Examples of these faults are so obvious and so similar in kind in the Justified Sinner to the ones on Simpson's list that he cannot be unaware of them. Nor can he be unaware of the critical paradox created by their very existence on one hand and his claims of art on the other: i.e. Can such a faulted work be considered as art? He is caught between his agreement with the body of Western criticism on the subject of unity that would reply negatively to the question and his pledge to praise the Justified Sinner as a work of art. In other words, Simpson cannot explain his emotional reaction to the novel in critical terms. Had he kept his critical wits about him, he might have assumed that some of the faults were deliberate and, this being the case, he would have been forced by logic to adopt a more critically enlightening position than the one he did. Instead of attempting a dissolution of this paradox he resorts to the double subterfuge of concentrating his efforts on those elements that he deems praiseworthy while neglecting completely those that would detract from his argument. He concentrates on the correctness of Hogg's traditional and historical facts and omits any mention of these essentially formal errors other than a footnote comment from another author.<sup>19</sup> Simpson, in his anxiety to separate "the Ettrick Shepherd, poet of The Queen's Wake" from "James Hogg, author of the Justified Sinner", covers

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 119-124.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

up the Ettrick Shepherd by conveniently forgetting his own critical standards and by lauding James Hogg as some kind of rustic chronicler, but truly not as an artist.

Northrop Frye barely mentions the Justified Sinner in his examination of "specific continuous forms." Here he posits that there are four forms of prose fiction:

The novel tends to be extroverted and personal: its chief interest is in human character as it manifests itself in society. The romance tends to be introverted and personal: it also deals with characters but in a more subjective way. . . . The confession is also introverted, but intellectualized in content. Our next step is evidently to discover a fourth form of fiction which is extroverted and intellectual.

And the fourth form, he goes on to say, is Menippean Satire or the Anatomy.<sup>20</sup> Although Frye rather hastily puts "The Confessions of a Justified Sinner" [sic] "among confessions," he does allow it a wider classification when he says in summary of his four forms that ". . . exclusive concentration on one form is rare. . ." and that ". . . six possible combinations of these forms all exist."<sup>21</sup> While the Justified Sinner has some of the characteristics Frye assigns to the confession form--"some theoretical and intellectual interest in religion, politics, or art."--it seems to have more of those he gives to the Anatomy:

The Menippean Satire deals less with people than with mental attitudes. Pedants, bigots, cranks, parvenus, virtuosi, enthusiasts, rapacious and incompetent professional men of all kinds, are handled in terms of their occupational approach to life as distinct from their social behavior . . . the Menippean satirist sees them as diseases of the intellect, as a kind of maddened pedantry which

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<sup>20</sup> Northrop Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 308.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 321.

the philosophus gloriosus at once symbolizes and defines.<sup>22</sup>

The list of characteristics of Menippean Satire's protagonists and the attitude of the satirists are an apt summary of the Justified Sinner's hero and Hogg's feeling towards him.

Finally, there are, within the Justified Sinner itself, too many literary devices that oppose "introversion" to be listed here but perhaps a small and obvious one will suffice to demonstrate Frye's haste. There are in the title and throughout Hogg's book many allusions to St. Augustine's Confessions but the moment the saint's name, his life and his writings are yoked with Robert Colwan's they become parodies--Augustine, recognized holy man, early father of the church, and respected Western sage, is reductively associated with Robert Colwan, rapist, murderer, and liar. Parody is essentially an extroverted technique in two senses: first of all, its full effect is wasted unless the reader is aware of its object and it is this quality of awareness that focuses his attention on something external to the work he is involved with at that specific moment in time; and secondly, the author by using such a device is directing his ridicule towards elements that are not explicitly mentioned in his work. Parodies and other "extroverted" devices occur so frequently in the novel that to classify it as a "confession" is an error in reading or judgement. With Frye's scheme, with the qualifications extrapolated from that scheme, and with the evidence from the Justified Sinner in mind, it is possible to posit that Hogg's work is more of a Menippean Satire or anatomy than it is a confession.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 309.

<sup>23</sup> For further details on Frye's theory see APPENDIX

The characteristics of Frye's essential satire are so similar to the essential Justified Sinner that the deductive conclusion that Hogg wrote a satire is ineluctable. Such a conclusion, however, is as much a descriptive one as to state that Hogg's work was written in prose. James Hogg wrote a satire, not to fulfil any definition of satire but, because all the other elements in his story dictated that he do so. Satire is simply another of the many elements that an artist has to juggle with in his search for unity--a slight change in plot, the use of poetry instead of prose and the Justified Sinner could be described as a romance or a comedy. As a description, the conclusion is helpful to this thesis in two ways. Firstly, by linking the Justified Sinner with satire through the invocation of a prestigious authority, it cuts through a maze of critical problems. Once the idea is accepted, it then becomes easier to use other criticisms of satire without presenting theoretical justifications for them. Secondly, this thesis will follow a plan suggested in Frye's theory. It will deal in order with the supernatural elements in the novel, with the institutions and their effects on the work, and with the problems involving man and his perceptions of reality.

Any criticism maintaining that Hogg's Justified Sinner is a satire or a work of art must show its universality or its relevance to all men at all times. Sheldon Sacks' definition of and conclusions about satire give an indication of the relevancy of the Justified Sinner and, in doing so, also gives a direction for an analysis of the work.

Let us assume tentatively that satires are works which ridicule particular men, the institutions of men, traits presumed to be in all men, or any combination of the three. But they do not do this incidentally; all their parts are designed to this end and, indeed, can only be understood as parts of a whole to the extent that they contribute to such ridicule. In other words, this is the principle that actually informs the work. Unless all the elements of a work make such a contribution, we will temporarily refuse to classify it as a coherent

satire. If we assume also that Gulliver's Travels is a coherent satire, then all the elements of fiction it contains--the traits ascribed to the created characters, the actions portrayed, the point of view from which the tale is told--will have been selected, whether consciously or intuitively, to maximize the ridicule of some combination of the three objects of satire. If this is true, there are some obvious consequences to our description of the form. One consequence is that none of the fictional creations in Gulliver's Travels can ever themselves be satirized; since all three objects of satire are extant only outside the fictional world created in the book, any ridicule which attaches to Gulliver, the Houyhnhnms, or the Lilliputians, or disgust which attaches to the Yahoos, can be understood, in relation to the whole work, only as an attempt to facilitate the ability of the fictional creations to ridicule the objects, of whatever sort. Similarly, any virtues which attach to the fictional creations within the book can be understood only as traits which enable Swift to maximize the ridicule directed at the external world.<sup>24</sup>

Transferring these conclusions to the Justified Sinner, we can say that its objects of ridicule belong to a world lying in the direction from which the Editor comes rather than the 18th century and the rural Scottish one towards which he directs us. The parenthetical arrangement of the three stories implies, according to Sacks, an exploding progression. The Editor's "Narrative" encloses Robert's "Memoirs" which in turn contain Scrape's Digression or, in satiric terms, the inmost world ridicules its external one, which ridicules its surrounding world, which ridicules a world beyond the Editor's. This does not mean that 19th century Edinburgh is the sole target for Hogg's ridicule anymore than Swift meant 18th century Redriff to be his but rather means that it is Hogg's microcosmic representation of the macrocosm of the human condition. This paper intends to show the relevancy between the internal and external worlds by examining the similarities between their universes, their institutions and their men. It will do this by using the internal world

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<sup>24</sup>Sheldon Sacks, Fiction and the Shape of Belief (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 7.



of the Justified Sinner as a mirror to reflect a description of the external one.

The critics would have us believe that the Justified Sinner is an anomaly, a literary accident, created by a penurious hack striving to keep his debtors from his door. Some of this may well be true but it should not prevent us from looking at it once again or from trying honestly to bring it from "the shades" in which it has been waiting for more than a century."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Gide, p. xvi.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GODS

A description of the controlling ethos of the external world's or the reader's universe must rest on the description supplied by the forces behind the three universes within the Justified Sinner. If we adopt literary form as our criteria, these forces become more apparent and the suggestion of parenthetical structure of the novel is reinforced. There are in the Justified Sinner three representatives of evil who can be arranged on a scale measuring their allegorical natures: at one end of this scale is the wholly allegorical Devil of Scrape's Digression; the ambiguous Gil-Martin of the "Memoirs," reflecting elements from both ends, is in the fulcrum position; and towards the realistic end is the Editor, who, we hope to show, has all the evil elements of the other two but few of their allegorical drawbacks. An interpretation of the movement implied by the parenthetical arrangement of this scale suggests that the external world's universe is governed by inhumane powers. This interpretation is substantiated by an examination of the allegorical, the ambiguous and the real worlds in the Justified Sinner.

Scrape's Digression is the only example of a totally allegorical world in the Justified Sinner but this singularity should not be taken lightly. Indeed, it becomes noteworthy for three reasons: first of all, it is the only occasion in the novel where a conversation between two

Scots-speaking characters is reported; secondly, it is digressive in that it is the only time in the novel when none of the main characters is involved in its action; and, thirdly, it has a folkloric or balladic quality that sets it apart in tone and style from the rest of the novel. Its singularity is further emphasized by the historical knowledge that Hogg excised it from the 1828 edition<sup>26</sup> possibly because it was one of the "horrors" that prevented the 1824 edition from selling well.<sup>27</sup> The incident, in revealing the inefficacy of evil, also shows the benignity of the universe.

Although God is remarkably absent from its proceedings, the spirit behind Scrape's Digression is benign. Auchtermuchty is allusively Edenic. It is set in the Arcadian countryside and its people, described as hinds and weavers, make their living from the Arcadian sheep. And, since its people can only sin at the prompting of what is finally a clownish and ineffective devil, they are in the states of grace, innocence and, according to Protestant theology, free-will.<sup>28</sup>

Auchtermuchty's great moral weakness is, like Eve's, its pride in its own importance to God. Its people presume that because they praise God all the time that they are better than other men in the eyes of God and that they are beyond evil's power. ". . . Auchtermuchty grew so rigidly righteous, that the meanest hind among them became a

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<sup>26</sup> Edith C. Batho, The Ettrick Shepherd (London: Cambridge University Press, 1927), p. 127.

<sup>27</sup> James Hogg, The Works of the Ettrick Shepherd 2 vols., ed. Rev. Thomas Thomson (London: Blackie & Son, 1874), 1:459.

<sup>28</sup> Bertrand Russel, History of Western Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967), p. 236.

shining light in ither towns an' parishes."<sup>29</sup> It is precisely this weakness that the devils appeal to ". . . we must catch them and catch them with their own bait too."(p. 199) When a single devil enters into the kirk of Auchtermuchty he does so as such a "sublime stranger" that the congregation "weened him an angel come to exhort them in disguise." Exhort them he does by preaching a sermon based on Ezekiel: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he comes, whose right it is, and I will give it to him." In the sermon he extrapolates "it" to mean Auchtermuchty thereby confirming the congregation's previous conviction that they were indeed "it".(p. 200) "The good people" are so perfectly enraptured with him they cannot see his sermon leading to the improbable conclusion that Ezekiel was aware of Auchtermuchty when he composed his words centuries before in Israel. The great preacher appears again to send the people of Auchtermuchty "into fits, writhing and foaming in a state of the most horrid agitation" by means of "two discourses"(p. 200) about them.

Auchtermuchty and its citizens are on their way to perdition but they have really little to fear from this devil. Robin Ruthven, an "auld carl" who had been brought up by the fairies, overhears the devils conversing as corby-craws and, convinced that the new preacher has the same voice as one of the birds, marches in amongst the congratulatory crowd surrounding the minister to reveal his cloven foot. The people seeing the flaw realize their folly and the devil beats a retreat.

In a perverse way this demon is as idyllic as the rest of the

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<sup>29</sup> James Hogg, The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, ed. John Carey (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 198. Future references in the text are to this edition.

story. His ability to change his appearance, his disguise as a "corby-crow" and his cloven foot are all external signs of his evil or his antithesis to the natural order. He is allegorically faulted and as such he becomes impervious to interpretation by his co-evals as well as the reader. The debate surrounding Satan's role in Paradise Lost is due to Milton's sophisticated conception of evil and thus, in part, his sophisticated literary style of presentation. No similar argument exists over Archimago's or Duessa's roles in the Faerie Queene—they are immutably set in the roles Spenser intended for them by his allegorical style. Hogg's devil is equally set by traditional literary convention and by Hogg actually calling him the "Deil." Evil, in this instance, is tangible to the senses and man can rely on his own nature and faith in evil's existence to easily defeat it. The inefficacy of this "Deil" implies, if not a god, a heaven and a hope for mankind to reach that heaven.

The function of the Digression in the Justified Sinner is satiric. Its simple form and content contrast the complexity of the surrounding "Memoirs" by Robert. When the characteristics of the ambiguous world are compared to the utopian ones of the simple allegorical one, they reduce--virtues dwindle and vices worsen. Robert's reaction on hearing the tale shows its satiric efficacy.

. . . But, in short, it gave me a view of my own state, at which I shuddered. . . . I often communed with my heart on this and wondered how a connection, that had the well-being of mankind solely in mind, could be productive of fruits so bitter. I then went to try my works by the Saviour's golden rule, as my servant [Scrape] had put into my head to do; and behold, not one of them would stand the test. I had shed blood on a ground on which I could not admit that any man had a right to shed mine . . . (p. 204)

As the primal satire in the novel, the Digression's virtues and vices provide a base for judging its successor's qualities.

The universe presented in Robert's "Memoirs" is less allegorical and more realistic. It is a more complex land, peopled as it is with an aristocracy, professionals and workers. Its geographic boundaries are expanded to include all of the Scottish Lowlands and the centres of its action are Edinburgh and Glasgow--Scotland's two largest cities. Moralistic debates frequently occur and moral actions actually happen. It is an ambiguous world as Robert's first sentence states, "My life has been a life of trouble and turmoil; of change and vicissitude; of anger and exultation; of sorrow and vengeance."(p. 97) As such a world, it is one of choice and of doubt. The wholesome and baleful dimensions of this world are manifested in its representatives of good and evil--an allegorical and therefore benign God, a more realistic and, therefore, malign God, and a representative of evil that is both allegorical and realistic.

The allegorical God appears twice in the "Memoirs" only to be defeated on both occasions. His appearances occur when Robert is about to commit his two murders. The first occasion takes place the day before he murders Mr. Blanchard, "a worthy, pious divine, but quite of the moral cast,"(p. 130) who was actually holding forth, as a fact, that "it was every man's own blame if he was not saved."(p. 135) Robert, while approving in theory that this "wretched controvertist" should die, stood aloof spiritually from the actual deed.(p. 137) In this quandary he looks to Heaven for guidance:

. . . but there was a dimness came over my eyes that I could not see. The appearance was as if there had been a veil drawn over me, so nigh that I put up my hand to feel it; and then Gil-Martin (as this great sovereign was pleased to have himself called,) frowned and asked me what I was grasping at? I knew not what to say, but answered, with fear and shame, 'I have no weapons, not one; nor know I where any are to be found.' "The God whom thou servest will provide these," said he; 'if thou provest worthy of the trust committed to thee.'

I looked again up into the cloudy veil that covered us and thought I beheld golden weapons of every description let down in it, but all with all their points towards me. (p. 138)

The position of the weapons above Robert as though coming from heaven, their golden colouring and their direction of aim all indicate that this was a sign warning Robert away from his intended action and, also perhaps, from his friend, Gil-Martin. This interpretation is substantiated by another instance when Robert, just before murdering Blanchard, hears "a sweet voice behind me, whispering to beware." (p. 140)

Gil-Martin, however, interprets the sign to mean the exact opposite and, with a brilliant piece of legerdemain, presents Robert with "two weapons of pure beaten gold . . . that were two of the very weapons that were let down from in the cloudy veil, the dim tapestry of the firmament." (p. 139) They are conclusive evidence to Robert for him to go ahead with the homicide; "Surely this is the will of the Lord." (p. 139) God is defeated and one of the good people in the novel is dispatched by Gil-Martin's quick wits and trickery.

God fares no better on the second occasion. This time Robert is out to throw his brother George off Salisbury Crags. While resting in a "veil of misty white vapour," he again looks to heaven for direction, he again hears the small voice speaking words of "derision and chiding" but this time he sees a body in white coming towards him. "Preposterous wretch!" she says "how dare you lift your eyes up to heaven with such purposes in your heart? Escape homeward and save your soul, or farewell for ever!" These words combined with her gliding over rocks and vanishing, persuade Robert "that the radiant being had addressed me was one of the good angels, or guardian spirits, commissioned by the Almighty to watch over the steps of the just." (p. 158) Robert's analysis would

concur with any literary critic's but Gil-Martin again overcomes it by re-interpreting the vision's words to mean that she was chiding Robert for having doubts. (p. 158) Needless to say, Robert goes on with his attempt.

Both of these examples show this God's virtuous qualities. He, like the Good Shepherd, is so concerned for His creatures that He disrupts the natural order of the universe in an attempt to save one of the worst. He apparently believes in the free will of man because He simply warns Robert of the danger instead of preventing it. The ultimate decision to sin or not to sin is left to the human partner in the affair: Robert is in much the same position as Milton's Adam is in the Garden of Eden.

The other God in the "Memoirs", a variation of Calvin's, is ultimately vicious. Robert, like all Calvinists, believes that when Adam fell he corrupted the nature of all men so that their reason was darkened to such an extent that they could neither know or desire the good. In one of his more contemplative moods he shows his agreement with this statement, "I may be angry with my first parents for having sinned, but how I shall repent me of their sin, is beyond what I am able to comprehend." (p. 100) The heirs of Adam inheriting his sin, were doomed except that God freely granted grace to an elect few or as Robert asks John Barnet, "Hath he not made one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, as in the case of myself and thee?" (p. 101) The selection of the few took place before the creation of time and no good works or sin of man could alter that immaculate list.<sup>30</sup> Robert plainly realizes this, "I

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<sup>30</sup> R. Kellog and O. Steele, Foreword to The Faerie Queene by Edmund Spenser (New York: Odyssey Press Inc., 1965), p. 54.



had more sense than to regard either my good works or my evil deeds, as in the smallest degree influencing the eternal decrees of God concerning me, either with regard to my acceptance or reprobation." (p: 113)

Robert, like many other Calvinists, as Mr. Blanchard tells him, carries his ". . . ideas of absolute predestination and its concomitant appendages to an extent that overthrows all religion and revelation together." His interpretation lies in misconceiving the word "pre-ordained" to apply to all the acts of men and not to the ultimate outcome of the universe as Calvin suggested. Gil-Martin remonstrates with Robert on this point and apparently convinces him:

And, moreover, do you not acknowledge that God hath pre-ordained and decreed whatsoever comes to pass? Then how is it that you should deem it in your power to eschew one action of your life, whether good or evil? Depend on it, the advice of the great preacher is genuine: "What thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for none of us knows what a day may bring forth?" That is none of us knows what is pre-ordained, but whatever is pre-ordained we must do, and none of these things will be laid to our charge. (p. 126)

This God removes Himself from the partnership with man. David Hume points out the consequences of belief in this deity. If He controls all the actions of all things in the universe, then whatever man does, thinks, imagines or dreams must also come under His aegis.<sup>31</sup> Man is simply another thing or as Gil-Martin asks rhetorically, "What is the life of a man more than the life of a lamb, or any guiltless animal?" (p. 126) The vast majority of mankind, the non-elect, face an eternity of hell without any recourse to a Divine sense of pity or justice for their actions on this earth--they are the expendable pawns in a chess match of cosmic pro-

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<sup>31</sup>David Hume, "Of the Idea of Necessary Connection", The Scottish Moralists on Human Nature and Society ed. L. Schneider (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 17.

portions.<sup>32</sup>

Gil-Martin, evil's advocate in the "Memoirs," is more human in his dimensions than the Deil of Auchtermuchty and therefore, less subject to detection and more open to interpretation. His allegorical side again informs us of the basic evil in his nature. He has the protean ability to alter his appearance in order that he might enter the minds of people:

My countenance changes with my studies and sensations; said he. 'It is a natural peculiarity in me, over which I have no full control. If I contemplate a man's features seriously, mine own gradually assume the very same appearance and character. And what is more, by contemplating a face minutely, I not only attain the same likeness, but, with the likeness, I attain the very same ideas as well as the same mode of arranging them, so that, you see, by looking at a person attentively, I by degrees assume his likeness and by assuming his likeness I attain possession of his most-secret thoughts. This, I say is a peculiarity in my nature, a gift of the God that made me; but whether or not given to me for a blessing, he knows himself and so do I. At all events, I have this privilege, --I can never be mistaken of a character in whom I am interested.(p. 125)

Gil-Martin never reveals how anybody can avoid taking someone else for him. In fact he relies on this magical ability to fool most of the people in the novel. His evil is further manifested in other ways. He never prays because he "disapproved of prayer altogether, in the manner it was generally gone about . . . Man made it merely a selfish concern . . . asking for everything . . . God's creatures [should be] content with their lot and only kneel before Him in order to thank Him for such benefits as he saw meet to bestow."(p. 128) His name Gil-Martin "is not my Christian name; but it is a name which may serve your [Robert's] turn."(p. 129) It is "disagreeable" for him to talk about his single parent whom he refuses to acknowledge.(p. 130) He is prescient: he tells Robert when and where to meet his brother in order to murder him.(p. 156)

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<sup>32</sup> Norman O. Brown, Life Against Death (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1970), p. 214.

His clothes have the power of disguise. "There is a virtue in this garb, and instead of offering to detain you, they shall pay obeisance." (p. 207) Towards the end of the "Memoirs" he is prevented from following Robert for a day when Robert crosses the Tweed river. This recalls the traditional inability of the "Deil" to cross water.<sup>33</sup> All of these traits, despite the lack of the cloven feet, tell the reader that Gil-Martin is evil but to most of the central characters in the "Memoirs" he is just another man. In this we see another shift in evil's progression. When the people of Auchtermuchty rejected the Deil at the sight of his allegorical nature, they were in concert with the reader's interpretation of the signs but in the "Memoirs" situation the characters' perception of Gil-Martin's allegorical side is antithetical to the reader's.

Gil-Martin's most human property is that he is mutable: one critic goes so far as to say that he is mortal. As Gil-Martin pursues Robert through the Scottish Borders, his body exhibits the strain of the pursuit and the battles he fights for Robert. "How changed was now that majestic countenance, to one of haggard despair." (p. 229) After one particularly exhausting battle, he asks Robert to have pity on him, to look at his reduced state. Robert complies:

May my eye destined to reflect the beauties of the New Jerusalem inward upon the beatific soul, behold such a sight as mine then beheld! My immortal spirit, blood, and bones, were all withered at the blasting sight; and I arose and withdrew, with groanings which the pangs of death shall never wring from me. (p. 235)

Driven and harried by a flock of teeth-gnashing devils, the pair of them decide to commit suicide together. Robert finds comfort in the fact that Gil-Martin "... raging with despair at his fallen and decayed majesty

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<sup>33</sup> Daiches, p. 291.

. . . shall fall with me." (p. 239) As far as the "Memoirs" and Robert are concerned Gil-Martin does die. Lee argues convincingly that the suicide actually destroys Gil-Martin.<sup>34</sup> In his terms Gil-Martin is all too human. Evil in its lust for power, exchanged its cloven foot for an improved human form but, in doing so, became mortal. In this part of the novel as seen in Gil-Martin, it is becoming increasingly difficult for man to distinguish evil as an entity distinct from himself.

A great deal of critical energy has been expended on Gil-Martin's intimate connection with Robert as the following paragraphs indicate:

But as usual there is little agreement among the critics as to what Hogg's demon really is. We cannot neatly dispose of him by saying, as Edith Birkhead does, that the novel is the "account of a man afflicted with religious mania, who believes himself urged into crime by a mysterious being." In such a reading, there is no devil, there is nothing but a sick man. And, in response to André Gide's suggestion that the Devil in the novel might be only "the exteriorized development of our own desires, of our pride, of our most secret thoughts," Louis Simpson argues, with seemingly good evidence, that the Devil is an actual person within the realm of the novel. But one must argue, in return, that Gide's reading cannot be ignored, for the Devil, or Gil-Martin as Hogg names him, remains an elusive, subtle figure.

And neither is it quite sufficient, as Kurt Wittig proposes, to find an explanation for Gil-Martin in the Scottish imagination, the divided imagination of a divided culture. Walter Allen, reflecting the same attitude, says that the Justified Sinner could have been written by no one but a Scot. All this is true, certainly, but it leads us away from Gil-Martin himself.<sup>35</sup>

Lee himself goes on to argue that it is Gil-Martin's ambiguity that makes him more realistic in terms of literary history. But as a character in a satire this criticism of his internal motivation or his symbolism is wrongly directed--Gil-Martin can only point outward towards the Editor's "Narrative."

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<sup>34</sup> L. L. Lee, "The Devil's Figure: James Hogg's Justified Sinner," Studies in Scottish Literature, 3 (April 1966): 239

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 231.

"Confusion" and its various synonyms are Robert's most favoured words in the "Memoirs" and they are apt to describe his world. Good and evil vie for control of his universe and his immortal soul. He is offered and offers distinct choices between both. That he chooses evil as his directing spirit does not eliminate the good or the hope that goes with it and it is this hope that suggests some redemption in his cosmos.

Ostensibly the Editor's universe is benign or better than Robert's. He tells us so. Transportation has improved immensely (p. 8) just as lawyers are much better in covering up their patronage. (p. 48) And he implies that evil in human form no longer exists and that man is too sophisticated to believe in it anyway. (p. 254) If we, however, carefully examine his character, his God, and his philosophy, this wholesome picture is not the beauty he paints. In fact, since he has the last word, his universe is the worst of all.

The pleasant and reasonable exterior that the Editor presents to the reader has elements within it that point to a less benign personality. Ricardo Quintana in his exegesis of the Tale of a Tub suggests a scheme that helps to explain the duality of the Editor. He posits that there are two levels of personalities involved in Swift's work. First and most overt is the character level which contains the dramatis personae of the work--in Swift's case these are the Bookseller, the Modern Author and the Historian. Second and a little less obvious, is the level which contains "the satirist" or the "impresario." Quintana emphasizes that this second kind of personality is not Swift but a device that acts as a type of frame to point out ". . . that the sentiments being expressed with such conviction are nonsense and that the characters who are delivering them are so frequently the opposite of all they profess to be, and in the hubbub of

voices we must be aware of the voice of reason."<sup>36</sup> Possibly the most famous example of Swift's technique is the storm passage in the second voyage of Gulliver's Travels. The thing that sets this passage apart from the others is the extravagance of unexplained words. In all of his travels Gulliver goes to great lengths explaining or translating foreign words and he never uses an English one that requires a dictionary. Yet in this case he leaves the reader completely on his own and literally at sea. Obviously this is not the normal Gulliver but another personality parodying the simple seaman and in doing so destroying the verisimilitude of that character. This is Quintana's impresario "who calls all in doubt" and informs the reader that he is reading a satire.

Hogg uses a similar technique with the Editor. At the character level, he appears to be a real man, a reasonable, scientific, 19th century North Briton. The Editor surrounds his edition with an astounding array of verisimilar facts. The frontispiece is a facsimile of Robert's handwriting which the Editor specifically orders the printer to procure and "be bound in with the volume." (p. 253) He also includes an actual letter written by James Hogg to and printed in Blackwood's Magazine for August, 1823 (Blackwood's, XIV (1823), 188-190) telling of the discovery of Robert's suicidal grave. His reality is further confirmed by his caution over anything printed in Blackwood's at that time. "It [Hogg's letter] bears the stamp of authenticity in every line; yet, so often had I been hoaxed by the ingenious fancies displayed in that magazine, that when this relation met my eye, I did not believe it . . ." (p. 245) He is reassured by "Mr. L-----t of C-----d," his fellow townsman

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<sup>36</sup>Ricardo Quintana, Swift: An Introduction (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 55.

and college friend, that such a grave has indeed been found.

With this reassurance he rides down to the Scottish Borders surrounded by a crowd of men easily recognizable through his preposterously thin disguise of elliptic names. The Edinburgh and Border people of that time would have had as little difficulty in identifying everyone of them as they would have had in seeing that the above mentioned "Mr. L-----t of C-----d" was really Mr. Lockhart of Chiefswood, Sir Walter Scott's son-in-law and an authority on Blackwood's tricks as he perpetrated many of them himself. The verisimilitude of this journey is further emphasized when the Editor meets the recalcitrant James Hogg at Thirlestane's ewe fair. (p. 246)

The final word in the Editor's reality is the exhumation of Robert and the finding of the "Memoirs." He says "I will describe everything as I saw it before four respectable witnesses, whose names I shall publish at large if permitted." And describe he does, in every gory detail. The depth of the grave, the arrangement and condition of the bones and the remaining flesh, the colour and texture of the hair on the skull, the weave of the cloth and the type of shoe, the kind of bonnet and the contents of the "spleuchan" are all treated with such forensic, if not, loving care that the need for witnesses is almost superfluous.

The inference we are supposed to gather, and, according to many critics, should gather, from the handwriting, the Blackwood's letter, the real people in real places, the detailed description of the grave and implied historic perspective is that the Editor is an actual being, who is a totally objective observer. The satirist, however, shatters that illusion to show him to be a fiction, an opinionated liar and an

inept historian. The Editor claims in the third sentence of his "Narrative" that, history being meagre in this case, he "must appeal to tradition" for the rest of his facts and yet, throughout his portion of the novel, he constantly reports events and actions that tradition could not possibly supply. The most glaring example of this is when he describes not only Laird and Lady Dalcastle's wedding night conversation but also includes in that description a phonetic portrayal of the Laird's snoring and a graphic one of his dreams. (pp. 4-6) Since the conversation's two participants had been dead for over a hundred years, since only the Laird was present during his snoring, and since he was presumably unconscious at that time, it seems incredible that tradition could supply the detailed background that the Editor apparently claims for it.

Tradition itself is highly questionable source in the novel. The Editor claims that George Colwan, the elder, became the Laird of Dalcastle in 1687 and was married after assuming the title. Robert's "Memoirs" make a mockery of that statement by having Robert clearly say that he was eighteen years old on March 25, 1704. Since he was preceded by his brother by one year, this sets the marriage back to at least June 1684 and the title assumption even earlier. Robert is a notorious liar but for him to lie about his birthday is incongruous. Besides, in this instance, his faith argues for him, "Now . . . that I am an accepted person, I may the more freely confess them [lies] . . ." (p. 108) His sense of time is vindicated in Hogg's letter to Blackwood's. This shows Robert's late-dated entries into his "Memoirs" to be absolutely correct. (p. 243) The Editor's version of the time is equally ridiculous in terms of his own "Narrative" and the novel. By his reckoning



Robert would be a lad of fifteen and hardly an able or credible perpetrator of all the crimes he committed. The Editor's great source of information and, by association, the Editor are open to question.

His objectivity is an even greater myth. Although the following passage from Lee exhibits the error of assuming the Editor to be Hogg, it also points out the Editor's lack of objectivity.

Too, it is in this first section that Hogg presents most clearly and completely those persons of whom he obviously approves, especially the junior and senior George Colwans. They are both in love with life, free, happy, perhaps irresponsible but basically decent and kind, men capable of love; one is immediately reminded of the character of Tom Jones (cf. Gide, p. xii). Perhaps an eighteenth-century tone is appropriate for eighteenth-century man. Therefore, when the Wringhim set--Mrs. Colwan, her son Robert, and her spiritual guide (the minister, Robert Wringhim, who gives his name and possible existence to the son Robert) --are shown, they must be shown in contrast to the Colwans. The Wringhams are fanatic, envious, puritanical, hypocritical, life-hating;. . .<sup>37</sup>

With this type of bias in mind, many of the instances that the Editor writes about with such a convincing sense of justice become, in effect, unjust. Nothing the Colwans can do, in his eyes, is wrong and nothing the Wringhims can do is right. Carey, the most recent introducer of the Justified Sinner, points out, "that the Editor's limitations and separateness from Hogg are given early advertisement when a girl's desperate evasion of her disgusting old bridegroom strikes him as comic and wrong" and "His hero, seen through other eyes, is a young rowdy who slanders his mother in public and goes to church to spy on girls."<sup>38</sup> The Editor's own terms, "against the cant of the bigot and the hypocrite, no reasoning can aught avail," (p. 5) are particularly apt in describing his own lack of objectivity.

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<sup>37</sup> Lee, p. 231.

<sup>38</sup> John Carey, Foreword to The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner by James Hogg (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. xiii-xiv.

The satirist serves two purposes in the Justified Sinner. First of all, in a functional sense he provides the frame informing the reader that he is involved with a fiction and a satire. He is not to believe everything the Editor says as fact or more truthful than Robert's account of events. To do otherwise, to believe the Editor more than Robert, is, in Quintana's terms, to be deaf to the voice of reason and, thus one of the targets that Hogg and satire are aiming at. To accept one fictional character's word over another equally fictional character's is to display the same lack of logic prevalent in Auchtermuchty and in Robert. Failure to see that lack is a failure to search for the truth: it is a wilful act of complacency that deserves all the slings and arrows that satiric fortune can throw at it.

Secondly, in the symbolic sense of this novel, the satirist is a Robin Ruthven who lifts the Editor's verbal mask to reveal his cloven tongue and the novel's ultimate form of evil. The best proof of this conclusion is an examination of the ultimate God in the novel. The Editor's God is remarkably similar to Robert's:

But the ways of heaven are altogether inscrutable, and soar as far above and beyond the works and the comprehensions of man as the sun, flaming in majesty, is above the tiny boy's evening rocket. It is the controller of Nature alone that can bring light out of darkness, and order out of confusion. Who is he that causeth the mole, from his secret path of darkness, to throw up the gem, the gold, and the precious ore? The same that from the mouths of babes and sucklings can extract the perfection of praise, and who can make the most abject of his creatures instrumental in bringing the most hidden truths to light. (p. 56)

The only difference between this God and Robert's is the sentimental rhetoric that describes Him. He also controls the final destiny of man through Nature and man is again the pawn without any control of his own. The Deil and Gil-Martin believe in this God too. Whether their protestations of faith are ironic or not is of no matter because the final outcome

of this God, as we have demonstrated, is as baleful as they could possibly wish--hell.

It is interesting to note here that the "gems" thrown up by the pre-ordained mole are the least likely people to associate with any deity. The Editor is referring to the witnesses needed to implicate Robert in the murder of George. These witnesses turn out to be Mrs. Logan, the concubine of Robert's father, Mrs. Arabella Calvert, a prostitute exiled from England for her crimes, a thief who is Mrs. Calvert's lover and, irony of ironies, Gil-Martin. If all of these morally suspect people and the highly suspect Gil-Martin are the best this God can do in the way of "gems," we can only wonder at His effectiveness in running the universe.

The fateful dimensions of the Editor's universe can be seen in his guide for living. He believes in a variation of John Locke's famous philosophy which states that all men are born with an equal capacity for reason and that it is only upbringing and education that cultivates reason.<sup>39</sup> His ideas can be seen in his description of the lives and actions of the two brothers, George and Robert.

George is brought up in a house whose master is "a droll and careless chap" who "believed that he was living in most cordial terms with the greater part of the inhabitants of the earth, and with the powers above in particular."(p. 2) In this environment of harmony he "grew up and was a healthful and happy child" who, in time, becomes "a generous and kind-hearted youth; always ready to oblige and hardly ever dissatisfied with anyone"(p. 8) He was not much of a scholar but he had

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<sup>39</sup>Russel, p. 589.

the "deportment and appearance" and "all that constitutes gentility." Robert, on the other hand, is brought up by Mr. Wringhim, "the presumptuous, self conceited pedagogue," who teaches him "to pray twice every day and seven times on Sabbath days." But he was "only to pray for the elect and, like David of old, doom all that were aliens from God to destruction." He never hears anything good about his "reputed father and brother and is exhorted to pray against them every day of his life. In his prayer he asks:

. . . That the hoary old sinner might be cut off in the full flush of iniquity, and be carried quick, quick into hell; and that the young stem of the corrupt trunk also be taken from a world he disgraced, but that his sins might be pardoned because he knew no better.(p. 18)

Robert is hardly a Christian or a gentleman but he is a scholar--the best one at Mr. Wilson's school. Not unexpectedly he grows up to be a spiteful and hate-filled man.

Both brothers reflect their education in their behavior. George is always seen with a lively set of companions while Robert has only one friend--Gil-Martin. On two occasions, George asks his brother to forgive him for his maltreatment of him; "I . . . would as soon stretch out my hand to my own life, or my father's as to yours." And on both occasions Robert rebuffs him; first with his foot and again with a haughty laugh. Robert's hate drives him to have John Barnet fired and the same passion leads to McGill's expulsion from school. He kills Mr. Blanchard because his beliefs do not coincide with his of justification and he destroys all those who have given him signs of love--his brother, mother and mistress. Eventually his hate consumes him.

The brothers, to the Editor at least, are products of their education and environment but, if this be the case, then neither of them

has any free will. They act according to their training and not by any choice of their own. In a sense they are like Pavlov's dogs that are programmed to react in a certain fashion to external stimuli and not men choosing to act by their own volition. The Editor's philosophy is as fateful as his God is.

His universe, despite his claims to the contrary and his professed rationality, is hopeless and chaotic. It is ruled by a malignant ethos that cares little for the sorrows of man. In this universe, man can barely distinguish the difference between evil and himself. He is caught on its gigantic web of fate with little or no sign of a bright future.

We have shown through Hogg's variation of progress in the Justified Sinner how an ideal has become steadily perverted, how hope has dribbled into despair, and how the gulf between evil and man has gradually narrowed to a barely distinguishable film. This line of progress stops with the last word of the novel but Sack's description of satire suggests that it continues outward into our world like the series of ellipses at the end of an inconclusive speech. We must as in all such endings, draw our conclusions to the meaning of those ellipses from what has gone on before them. With the Justified Sinner that conclusion is ineluctable--man lives in a universe that is worse than any of those presented within its covers. Whatever evil exists in this world comes from the mind of man himself and not from any foolish demon.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE INSTITUTIONS

Hogg's vision of society is as dismal as is his vision of the universe. The parenthetical structure of the novel suggests that the good social forces, are gradually giving way to the evil ones. His last world, North Britain and his reader's wherever and whenever that may be, is within one step of total institutionalization or, in Hogg's metaphor, at the very gates of Hell. The Justified Sinner contains a metaphoric record of the process of institutionalization and, at the same time, the end result of that process--the human manifestation of evil. In this chapter we will deal first with the devil as institutional man and second with the process that produces him.

In order to appreciate Hogg's attitude towards institutions and their growth it is important to examine the Editor and his evil ancestors. The Editor is of prime importance because he effectively controls the novel and colours our opinion towards it. He is, however, the last of three and we must use that background as a kind of built-in archetypal bank to withdraw our analytical savings. In the metaphor of the Justified Sinner evil and institutionalism are synonymous. The Editor does not represent any institution but rampant institutionalism. He is institutional man and, in a profound sense, he does not require any parent organization to control him. An analysis of his character and his actions will confirm this interpretation of him.

When Hogg gave Gil-Martin the ability to imitate all men he drove right to the centre of the Editor's being and provided the middle-term between evil and the institution. The truth that Gil-Martin reveals is not that evil has many masks but that it is all mask: there is nothing beyond his immediate appearance but another appearance. Even in the deepest, darkest Hell-hole he could not reveal himself simply because there is nothing to reveal. If he had something behind his infinite number of masks, some true essence, he would no longer be the "father of lies" and therefore no longer evil. Gil-Martin's complete union between his appearance and his essence is shown in the conversation concerning the two souls of man

We are all subjected to two distinct natures in the same person. I myself have suffered grievously in that way. The spirit that now directs my energies is not that with which I was endowed at my creation. It is changed within me, and so is my whole nature.  
(p. 192)

As equivocal as usual, Gil-Martin does reveal his unitary composition when he points to his former suffering due to his two natures and the total harmony between his present directing spirit and "whole nature." Gil-Martin, except for his name, is mask qua mask and, as such, bears an uncommon resemblance to the institutional man. All men wear various masks in public and all men have an individuality that comments on or questions their public image. In the institutional man the difference between public role and private person is reduced to a point where the questioning individual disappears leaving behind the wholly public being.<sup>40</sup> Only Gil-Martin's name preserves his individuality and sepa-

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<sup>40</sup>Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967); Anchor Books, 1967), p. 91.

rates him from the ravages of total institutionalization. The Editor, however, has no name, not even an elliptical one, and all he offers us in terms of self revelation is his public function. It is the satirist who informs us of his evil, his uncaring God, and his historic connection with the Deil and Gil-Martin. The Editor, as the better perfected Gil-Martin, is all public image, the 19th century's version of the organization man.

The Editor shares three other qualities with the institutional man. Since the institutional man draws all of his essence from his parent organization, he must always act in its terms. If we reduce the institution to its most basic terms, it is possible to see what these actions are. Luckmann and Berger in the Social Construction of Reality provide such a reduction in their description of reification.

Reification is the apprehension of human phenomena as if they were things, that is, in non-human or possibly suprahuman terms. Another way of saying this is that reification is the apprehension of the products of human activity as if they were something else than human products--such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will. Reification implies that man is capable of forgetting his own authorship of the human world, and further, that the dialectic between man, the producer, and his products is lost to consciousness. The reified world is, by definition, a dehumanized world. It is experienced by man as a strange facticity, an opus alienum over which he has no control rather than as a opus proprium of his own productive activity.<sup>41</sup>

If, as these sociologists say, institutions and the society they collectively create are the only reifications extant, then we can deduce what the institutional man must do to remain in that state. He must at all costs preserve the illusion that his institutions are "facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will." And to do that, the institutional man must prevent any action that causes a return!

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 89.



to man the memory of his original stake in his own destiny. This implies that the institutional man is firmly anchored in his own status quo: a move to the past or to origins would constitute a reawakening of memory and a return to human control; and a move to the future or improvement would constitute an admission of fallibility, of human involvement in the present and again a return to human control. The Editor is certainly committed to his present existence as an analysis of his actions will show.

Although the Editor makes many asides confirming his allegiance to the status quo, the best expression of his satisfaction with his lot is seen in the affectation of his writing. The "Narrative" is his attempt to turn Robert's "Memoirs" into a Gothic novel and thereby assuage the contemporary public's taste for such literature.<sup>42</sup> That his attempt is as false as he is only confirms his evil and strengthens our suspicion of his motives in using such a vehicle. Gothic novelists, as Fiedler points out, are revolutionary in thought and literary action:

By and large, however, the writers of gothic novels looked on the "gothic" times with which they dealt (and by which, despite themselves, they were fascinated) as corrupt and detestable. Their vision of that past was bitterly critical, and they evoked the olden days not to sentimentalize but to condemn them. Most gothicists were not only avant-garde in their literary aspirations, but radical in their politics; they were, that is to say, anti-aristocratic, anti-Catholic, anti-nostalgic. They liked to think that if their work abounded in ghosts, omens, portents and signs, this was not because they themselves were superstitious, but because they were engaged in exposing "that superstition which debilitates the mind, that ignorance which propagates error, and that dread of invisible agency which makes inquiry criminal." Beneath the spectacular events of the tale of terror, the melodramatic psychology and theatrical horror, rings the cry, "Ecrasez l'infâme!" The

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<sup>42</sup>Walter Pache, "'Der Ettrickschafer Hoggs! A Scotsman's Literary Reputation in Germany," Studies in Scottish Literature 8(October 1970): 109-110.

spirit of Voltaire broods over the haunted castle; and ghosts squeak eerily that they do not exist.<sup>43</sup>

The Editor's "Narrative" has all the signs but none of the symptoms of the true Gothic novel. The patricide, the duel between brothers on a moonlit night, the petite bourgeoisie concern for genealogical succession, the Byronic black protagonist standing forth from the surrounding mob, the mysterious and mystifying stranger, the reincarnation of the dead brother, and even the Radcliffian attempt at a logical explanation of the events are all here with their attendant antiquated language, historical footnotery, and attempts at the sublime through descriptions of nature. The past is also condemned.

Were the relation at all consistent with reason, it corresponds so minutely with traditionary facts, that it could scarcely have missed to have been received as authentic; but in this day, and with the present generation, it will not go down, that a man should be daily tempted by the devil, in the semblance of a fellow-creature; and at length lured to self-destruction, in the hopes that this same fiend and tormentor was to suffer and fall along with him. It was a bold theme for an allegory, and would have suited that age well had it been taken up by one fully qualified for the task, which this writer was not. (p. 254)

Despite all of these signs, the Editor is no revolutionary. His preference for the Colwans, already seen, (see above p. 30) shows him to be pro-aristocratic, pro-Catholic in view of their Episcopal leanings, and pro-British, and his dislike of the Wringhims for their revolutionary actions confirm his antipathy towards change. He is among those writers who Shelley says ". . . possess the form, whilst they want the spirit of those whom, it is alleged, they imitate; because the former is the endorsement of the age in which they live, and the latter must be the uncon-

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<sup>43</sup> Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1966), pp. 137-138.

municated lightning of their own mind."<sup>44</sup> The Editor's condemnation of the past, his lack of the revolutionary's hope for the future, and his imitation of a popular form suggest a total commitment to the present.

Stuck like this in the present, the Editor, as institutional man, has, according to his preservation of the original illusion, to make other men as equally mired in the status quo as he is. He does this by blatantly flattering his readers' image of their sophistication over the earlier people in the novel. His principle is that people who are satisfied with their immediate condition are less likely to recall the control they originally had over their destiny and less likely to revolt against their reifications. By viciously denigrating the Scots and their institutions, he implies that his readers live in the best of all historic worlds and should be content with what they have.

The Editor's overall attitude towards Scotland has already been seen in his condemnation of history. (see above p. 39) According to this fairly explicit statement, the Scots are irrational because of their belief in the devil, easily fooled by "traditional facts", and allegorists, which, to his mind, seems a lower form of literature. The spirit of these remarks guides the "Narrative" and the "appendix."

The only two Scots-speaking characters in the two sections of the novel under the Editor's control are painted by him as travesties, especially when that treatment is compared to his handling of the English-speaking people; these two are the precursors of Lauder's burlesque and finally vulgar Scots that are so popular in our mass art.

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<sup>44</sup>Percy B. Shelley, "Preface to Prometheus Unbound," Selected Poetry and Prose ed. Kenneth Neill Cameron (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. 301.

Bessie Gilles before the courts in the trial of Arabella Calvert is reduced to a conveniently equivocating clown.

'Did you ever see this gown before, think you?'

'I hae seen ane very like it.'

'Could you not swear that gown was your mistress's once?'

'No, unless I saw her hae't on, an' kend that she had paid fo't. I am very scrupulous about an oath. Like is an ill mark. Sae ill indeed, that I wad hardly swear to ony thing.'

'But you say that gown is very like one your mistress used to wear.'

'I never said sic a thing. It is like one I hae seen her hae out airing on the hay raip i' the back green. It is very like ane I hae seen Mrs. Butler in the Grass Market wearing too; I rather think it is the same. Bless you, sir, I wadna swear to my ain fore finger, if it had been as lang out o' my sight, an' brought in an' laid on that table.' (p. 67)

The Editor tells us that "the auditors were much amused" by the simplistic obtuseness of this testimony and Mrs. Calvert is acquitted of a crime she had actually committed--possessor of stolen goods. Bessie's honesty is travestied to suit the Editor's sense of what is humorous and not in the cause of what is right.

James Hogg, the character, who speaks the most intense and consistent dialect in the novel, suffers a similar fate. The entire episode is as much designed to prove Hogg a liar as it is to find Robert's grave. The Blackwood's letter written by Hogg places the grave on Cowans-croft but the Editor pointedly discovers from another shepherd that it is really "on the top of a hill called the Faw-Law". Confronted by this evidence we can do little else but agree with Lockhart, the Editor's great friend, that Hogg is a liar. (pp. 246-247) The need for this defamation in the story of Robert's death and burial is so slight that it only points to the Editor's sneering attitude as far as Scots are concerned.

The Kirk and the Law fare no better. Despite the Editor's disclaimer that he is blameless of any discredit attached to Robert's zeal

in applying the principles of predestination and despite his use of the editorial "we" when referring to religion, he ridicules the Scottish religion. "The tenets of the great reformer . . . had taken a powerful hold of the hearts and affections of the people of Scotland," but "theirs was an unguent hard to be swallowed"(p. 2) is the Editor's true credo. His villains, the Wringhims, are his only representatives of the Scottish Kirk in the whole "Narrative." He pictures them as revolutionaries or incendiaries who tend to exhibit "unwonted fervour"(p. 12) in all religious and social matters. As the sole symbols of their faith their association with the Kirk taints it as an organization of revolution and insanity.

Old Scottish law, according to the Editor's version of it, is simply foolish. At the end of the Edinburgh riot scene the Scottish law officers form a tribunal to investigate its cause and its participants. This court is so completely puzzled by the evidence that their efforts are turned into a "joke" by the Duke of Queensbury (p. 31) and left at that. The Editor, too, in tone and description thinks this is a joke but he, one hundred and twenty years after the riot, has no trouble in blaming Robert as its main agent provocateur. The implication behind his tone and description is that the old courts were overseen by incompetents.

The implication is repeated in Arabella Calvert's two trials. Her first encounter with Scottish justice ends with the Sheriff failing to pursue a line of questioning vital to his case.(p. 64) And, we can only wonder at the second trial's presiding judge who would permit Bessie's pawky sophistry to stand as evidence. Arabella is finally and improbably set free in this trial because Mrs. Logan tells the court

that she thinks Arabella is "a tool or the dupe of an infernal set, who shall be nameless here"(p. 68) and that she prejudicially visited her before her first trial. The whole system of Scottish law is farcical to the Editor. His "Narrative" is aimed at Scottish folly, at past institutional incompetence. He would have us believe that our world is obviously much better than Robert's. The reaction of the novel's critics to the Editor as a fair judge of things is indicative of our ability to be flattered by his sycophantic pose.

This attack on the Editor could be considered biased if it were not for his method of approach and a similar use of flattery by his two predecessors. As we shall see the manifestations of evil assuage their victims suspicions by being exactly what they apparently want at that particular time. The Editor placates our doubts concerning him by relying on a convention of his medium. Before we even open the cover of the Justified Sinner, we have been preconditioned by, what Watt calls, "the authority of print--the impression that all that is printed is necessarily true. . . . We do not, instinctively at least and until experience has made us wise, question what has appeared in print."<sup>45</sup> The Editor, as we have seen, does all in his power to make us believe that his "Narrative" is the true version of actual events and that we are reading a history and not a fiction.(see above p. 27) Lulled by our faith in the medium's authority we are half-way to accepting the Editor as a just interpreter of the events. The satirist, however, makes "us wise."

Essentially the same technique of flattering a preconditioned

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<sup>45</sup>Watt, pp. 204-205.

victim is used by the Deil and Gil-Martin. The Deil certainly diverts the people of Auchtermuchty by being exactly what they apparently want. Before the Deil ever walks into Auchtermuchty, the townspeople think of themselves as the holiest of holies.

It was but the year afore the last, that the people o' the town o' Auchtermuchty grew so rigidly righteous, that the meanest hind among them became a shining light in ither towns an' parishes. There was nought to be heard, neither night nor day, but preaching, praying, argumentation, an' catechising in a' the famous town o' Auchtermuchty. The young men wooed their sweethearts out o' the Song o' Solomon, an' the girls returned answers in strings o' verses out o' the Psalms. At the lint-swinglins, they said questions round; auld and young prayed in their dreams, an' prophesied in their sleep, till the deils in the farrest nooks o' hell were alarmed, and moved to commotion. (p. 198)

The Deil as corby-crow realizes that in order to catch the people he must "do it with their own bait too" or confirm their unsubstantiated opinion of themselves. When he enters their kirk he does so as such a "sublime stranger" that the congregation "weened him an angel come to exhort them in disguise." Thus satisfied, the Auchtermuchties become putty in the Deil's hands and move closer to total reification.

A similar but more sophisticated pattern develops with Gil-Martin. Robert is a vile character before Gil-Martin makes his first appearance. He, like Saint Augustine, spends a great deal of time in his "Memoirs" describing the sins of his youth.<sup>46</sup> The firing of John Barnet from his job as beadle in Mr. Wringhim's church and the expulsion of McGill from school are the two incidents that indicate his lying and cheating without the aid of his "illustrious friend." He freely confesses that he "always despised her [his mother's] motley instructions, nor had I any great regard for her person." (p. 114) He regards his father and his brother as "unregenerated and impenitent sinners" who

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<sup>46</sup>Russel, p. 344.

have not responded to "the same calls, warnings, doctrines and re-proofs"(p. 98) as he has. He regards all men of a "moral caste" or all the non-elect beneath his contempt and hell-bound anyway.(p. 102)  
There is little wonder that he has no boyhood friends.

Robert's great desire is to create a world of the elect. At his consecration into the elect Mr. Wringhim donates him to the Lord:

. . . Not in words and form, learned by rote, and dictated by the limbs of the Antichrist, but, Lord, I give him into Thy hand as a captain putteth a sword into the hand of his sovereign, werewith to lay waste to his enemies. May he be a two edged weapon in Thy hand, and spear coming out of Thy mouth, to destroy, and overcome, and pass over; and may the enemies of Thy Church fall down before him and be as dung to fat the land.(p. 122)

Robert "rejoice[s] in this commission"

. . . finding it more congenial to my nature to be cutting sinners off with the sword, than to be haranguing them from the pulpit, striving to produce an effect, which God, by his act of absolute predestination, had forever rendered impracticable. . . . How much more wise would it be, thought I, to begin and cut sinners off with the sword! for till that is effected, the saints can never inherit the earth in peace. . . . O that I had an host at my command, then would I be as a devouring fire among the workers of iniquity.(p. 123)

Given Robert's tendency towards evil and the devil's desire to please, it is hardly surprising that, when Gil-Martin appears, he does so as Robert's exact mirror image.

What was my astonishment on preceiving that he was the same being as myself! The clothes were the same to the smallest item. The form was the same, the apparent age; the colour of the hair; the eyes; and as far as recollection could serve me from viewing my own features in a glass, the features were the very same.(p. 116)

The mirror is a membrane: Gil-Martin reflects not only everything that Robert is but also everything that Robert wants him to be at that moment. He believes in the same religion and God, "I am indeed your brother, not according to the flesh, but in my belief of the same truths, and my assurance in the same mode of redemption, than which, I hold nothing so great or so glorious on earth."(p. 117) Gil-Martin's Utopia or, at



least, the method of achieving that ideal world is the same as Robert's, "He had hinted as much already, as that it was more honourable, and of more avail to put down the wicked with the sword, than try to reform them . . ." He lets Robert think that he is the disguised Czar, Peter of Russia and that he, along with his "servants and subjects more than [he] can number," (p. 130) would provide the host required to cleanse the world for the saints.

The mirror is also the perfect image of Gil-Martin's diversionary technique. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery then the mirror is the ultimate in flattery, in self satisfaction. Robert tells us that his "spiritual pride" is greatly elevated by Gil-Martin's obsequious remarks about his "envied state," his ability to play master to Gil-Martin's disciple, "to be initiated to the true way of salvation." Gil-Martin "took care to dwell on the theme of the impossibility of those ever falling away . . . for he seemed to know, that in that confidence . . . my whole hopes were centered." (pp. 117-118) Gil-Martin's appearance and words all strive to praise Robert's present image of himself and his faith. While the Deil's and Gil-Martin's flattery and methods of approach may not be exact superficial copies of the Editor's, they show the same essentials and aim.

To understand the reason behind this aim we must examine another implication arising from the original reification myth. Reifications, to maintain their original illusion, have to reinforce the universal order credited with their creation--it is of no real importance what that order is just, as long as it implies a larger than human involvement. To do otherwise, to question the order, is tantamount to inviting dereification. Since evil's success in the Justified Sinner is totally

dependent on a fateful vision of the universe, its manifestations are bound to emphasize the propriety of that vision. Their victims must not apprehend any other order simply because such comparisons directly or indirectly question the initial illusion. Not only is the Hoggian Devil's existence dependent on God but he must also praise Him to stay alive. Seen in this light, the Editor's "Narrative" is nothing less than an attempt to censor Robert's "Memoirs" of its revolutionary contents and thus prevent a return to consciousness of human activity in the reification's birth.

From what we can gather of the Editor's true character it would be in his best interests not to publish Robert's "Memoirs" but circumstances force him to do so. He obviously hates Robert, calls him in his appendix a fool, a wretch and a maniac, but the Editor must publish the "Memoirs" because of his implied promise to do so to the grave-robbing party. (p. 253) He is further proscribed from altering the "pamphlet" by intrusive editing because of the bookseller's fear in Robert's curse upon "him that should alter or amend" it. (p. 253) Robert's printing and handwriting, of which the Editor is so proud, suggest that the bookseller read an entire and unedited manuscript before he printed it, before he could be assured that he was not breaking the curse. Checkmated in this way the Editor's only recourse is to nullify the value of the "Memoirs" by prefacing them with his own values. In other words, he reorganizes historical fact, as far as he is concerned, in order to hide or obscure its historical reality from his reader, his public. What the Editor seeks to hide is the spirit of free will that is rampant in the "Memoirs" and so damaging to his fateful God, the illusion's sustenance.

The spirit of free will is expressed in Robert's "Memoirs" by the stupidity involved in the idea of election and by the other saner characters' explicit expressions of choice. Robert's creed and actions are so grotesquely insane that any normal reader would in revulsion opt for its direct opposite. It is precisely this reaction that the Editor seeks to prevent with his gloss but cannot as we have explained above. If we look at Robert's faith as it is presented in the "Memoirs," we will see it as a preposterous paradox that only a madman or the devil could adhere to. Gil-Martin, of course, presents it in its most succinct form.

'Why, sir,' said he, 'by vending such an insinuation, you put discredit on the great atonement, in which you trust. Is there not enough of merit in the blood of Jesus to save thousands of worlds, if it was for these worlds that he died? Now, when you know, as you do, (and as every one of the elect may know of himself,) that this Saviour died for you, namely and particularly, dare you say that there is not enough of merit in his great atonement to annihilate all your sins, let them be as heinous and atrocious as they may? And, moreover, do you not acknowledge that God hath pre-ordained and decreed whatsoever comes to pass? Then, how is it that you should deem it in your power to eschew one action of your life, whether good or evil? Depend on it, the advice of the great preacher is genuine: 'What thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for none of us knows what a day may bring forth?' That is, none of us knows what is pre-ordained, but whatever is pre-ordained we must do, and none of these things will be laid to our charge'. (p. 126)

This dictum makes a farce of all theology and morality. If a man believed that he was saved from all time then it was needless for him to obey the church and state laws because they could not effect the final outcome and, conversely, if a man knew that he was committed to hell by the same doctrine then nothing he did or could do on this earth would have any effect on his eternal soul.<sup>47</sup> Any society that accepted

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<sup>47</sup> Daiches, p. 75.

this theory as final would virtually disintegrate because none of its citizens would have any fear of the law. This conclusion of chaos is clearly seen and pointed out by Mr. Blanchard in conversation with Robert.

. . . you . . . are carrying your ideas of absolute predestination and its concomitant appendages, to an extent that overthrows all religion and revelation together; or at least, jumbles them into a chaos, out of which human capacity can never select what is good. (pp. 131-132)

Scotland, instead of becoming Robert's theocratic Utopia, would burst at the seams, run riot, become a Sodom and Gomorrah with its criminal denizens prowling the land committing all kinds of sins and violence. The elect, instead of creating a heaven on earth by purging the land of the non-elect, would in effect create a hell where only the physically strong or the mentally agile would succeed.

Robert's thoughts and acts show him in agreement with the violence, the stealth and the cruelty inherent in his belief. Assured by Gil-Martin that no physical harm can come to him, Robert lives in a world untouched by sanity or ethics. He gives false evidence against his brother George for no other reason than to do him harm. He ambushes and kills Mr. Blanchard because their views on religion do not coincide. Iago-like, he leaps from the dark of an alley to stab George in the back, and then assumes George's title. He rapes, impregnates, and then kills Miss Keeler. He eventually kills his mother. He does all of this in the name of God and Christ.

The most repulsive facet of the elect's doctrine, however, is its denial of free will. According to Gil-Martin's interpretation of predestination, man is simply a cypher, a pawn on the cosmic chess board that moves only by a decree set from all eternity. His ability

to choose between good and evil, the one thing that marks him off from the beasts of the field, is reduced to nothing. Robert gladly surrenders the control of his thoughts to his "illustrious friend" Gil-Martin in exchange for his "solemn assurance and bond of blood" against all human harm. Once he does this, once he accepts someone as his master he loses his free will and consequently his humanity. Under Gil-Martin's domination, Robert is driven to murder, rape and chicanery. It finally dawns on him just exactly what he has done and he tries to escape from both the law and his new tormentor. But it is of no use. Gil-Martin haunts his steps and he, in his efforts to avoid "the great prince," is forced to become a beggar living in hovels. Eventually he is reduced to a thing living in terror of his own self:

My case was indeed a pitiable one. I was lame, hungry, fatigued, and my resources on the very eve of being exhausted. Yet these were but secondary miseries, and hardly worthy of a thought compared with those I suffered inwardly. I not only looked around me with terror at every one that approached, but I was become a terror to myself; or, rather, my body and soul were become terrors to each other; and, had it been possible, I felt as if they would have gone to war. I dared not look at my face in a glass, for I shuddered at my own image and likeness. I dreaded the dawning, and trembled at the approach of night, nor was there one thing in nature that afforded me the least delight. (p. 227)

At last he kills himself in a final and ineffectual effort to escape from his new condition. The way he dies is symbolic of his condition--he hangs himself with a grass rope that could not hang a collie dog. This action implies that he is not only less than human but less than animal. Robert's death is the last link in a chain of events that began with the loss of his free will.

Robert's aspirations for a utopia of the elect, his murders and violence, and the loss of his humanity through the loss of his free will, all militate against him and his faith. It is hard to imagine anybody,

even the most severe Scottish Presbyterian, who would even consider the doctrine of the predestined elect as presented in the "Memoirs" as anything but the wildest and most revolting of religions. Hogg's motive here is satirical. He expects our moral standards to reject Robert's God and all His implications in much the same way as Swift expects us to reject the modest proposer's solution to the mercantile policy of Great Britain in the "Modest Proposal."<sup>48</sup> Free will, the Editor's anathema, is the alternative that this rejection implies.

Robert's "Memoirs" also contain implicit comments and explicit statements compounding the sanity of choice as a mode of life, that the Editor must also attempt to exorcise or, at least, nullify in his version of events. In the Auchtermuchty episode, Robin Ruthven, in revealing the cloven foot, also reveals his freedom to participate in his society and universe. When he simply tells the congregation of the conversation between the corbies, "the whole multitude raised a cry of indignation against Robin, and dragged him from the tent, the elders rebuking him, and the multitude threatening to resort to stronger measures. . . ." Undeterred and convinced that "he could not be wrong" in "kenn[ing] the voice of his friend the corby-crow," he takes matters into his own hands and lifts the preacher's gown as high as his knee to show the devil's flaw. (p. 202) If he were a true Calvinist, Robin would have to accept the fate set out for him and Auchtermuchty from all time and praise that destiny as proof of God's omnipotence. His action rejects the whole concept of pre-ordination. Man has a right to act and an obligation to protect himself and his society from evil.

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<sup>48</sup>Frye, Anatomy, p. 224.

Robin's anti-determinist stand is repeated more explicitly in the confrontation between John Barnet and Mr. Wringhim. John, the beadle in Mr. Wringhim's church, accuses Robert of being Wringhim's son and, therefore, a bastard. When Wringhim hears this, he says that John "durst not for his soul's salvation, and for his daily bread, which he values more, say such a word . . ." In the ensuing argument, John refuses to accept the elect's idea of thought. His thoughts are free, "A body canna help his thoughts, sir." and, "Man's thoughts are a vanity, sir; they come unasked and gang away without a dismissal, an' he canna help them." He explicitly rejects the Protestant tenet of the "justification by faith an' awthegither." And, despite the spiritual and temporal threats by Wringhim, he refuses to accept the preordained conception of the world. "Auld, John," he says, "may die a beggar in the hay barn, or at the back of a dike, but he sall aye be master o' his ain thoughts, an' gie them vent or no, as he likes." (pp. 102-107) He determines his own destiny.

The condition of the institutions in Scotland of 1704 echo this position as they offer man a choice. Robert alludes to the freedom of the Kirk in the Blanchard murder. Mr. Blanchard not only believes "that it was every man's own blame if he was not saved" but is also a member of a group that subscribed to the same belief.

I did not understand their political differences; but it was easy to see that the true Gospel preachers joined all on one side, and the upholders of pure morality and a blameless life on the other, so that this division proved a test to us, and it was forthwith resolved, that we two should pick out some of the leading men of this, unsaintly and heterodox cabal, and cut them off one by one, as occasion should suit. (p. 143)

The law is equally dichotomous and equally open. There are judges who would argue for Robert's side of things and others who would oppose him.

One judge is "just and righteous . . . and saw things in their proper bearing, that is, he could discern between a righteous and a wicked man, and then there could be no doubt as to which of the two were acting right, and which wrong." (p. 163) Robert prefers this judge. Another judge, however, has "a fellow feeling of iniquity with the defenders, --my suit was cast, the graceless libertine [George Colwan] was absolved, and I incarcerated and bound over to keep the peace." (p. 164) Robert can choose which faction of the church and the law he wants. Despite his insanity and his prejudice Robert paints a picture of a fairly normal society and a far cry from the stupid one depicted by the Editor. In fact, his insanity and his society's normality so question the Editor's version of the universe and therefore endanger his status quo that he is forced to make them appear ridiculous.

The Deil and Gil-Martin exhibit, to a lesser degree, the Editor's desire for censorship. When the Deil proposes that Auchtermuchty is the "IT" referred to by Ezekiel, he really interprets the prophet to suit his particular aim at that moment. (see above p. 17) And Gil-Martin's interpretations of the golden weapons and the vanishing lady (see above p. 21) prevent Robert from exercising his free-will, and maintain a vise-like hold over his soul. The Editor as institutional man has to distort Robert's "Memoirs" in much the same way and for much the same reason. Robert's story, if left unedited, would have the opposite effect that the Editor has to have in order to survive.

In a sense, the Editor is Hogg's own bête noire. If the Justified Sinner is an unpopular novel, then much of the blame for this situation must rest with the Editor. As Hogg's final representative of evil and the institutional man, his ethos is directed towards discrediting Robert's "Memoirs" and, except for the efforts of the satirist,



he does his job all too well. Once the satirist does call "all in doubt," however, we must follow his advice and examine the motives behind the editor's actions. His perversion of an historic fact, as far as the fiction is concerned, is the sign of his fear of the truth which in turn betrays his institutional nature.

This association between evil and institutionalism is in the terms of the Justified Sinner an indication of the degree of reification within its several societies. As we have already seen, one of the great problems facing the characters in the Justified Sinner and its readers, if we accept its various critics as fair examples of its audience, is the increasing inability to distinguish evil incarnate from its human dimension. A major portion of that problem lies in the belief by all concerned that the role evil adopts is objective reality: the people of Auchtermuchty believe the Deil to be a minister; Robert is convinced that Gil-Martin is Czar Peter of Russia in disguise; and, the graverobbing party and a great deal of the Justified Sinner's readership assume the Editor to be an honest editor. Roles are ontologically the result of institutionalism--minister, Czar, and editor cannot exist without the concept of a parent organization behind them--and the extent to which they are accepted by a public is a measure of the institutionalization of a society.<sup>49</sup> The characters' progressive failure to see the difference between the role and the vice behind it is a reflection of their societies' progression into the reified world.

Auchtermuchty, the primal society of the novel, is initially blind to the Deil but Robin's act of revelation returns its vision, saves

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<sup>49</sup> Berger and Luckmann, p. 89.

it from Hell, and, most importantly creates the suspicion of institutions that prevents reification.

'A, the auld wives an' weavers o' Auchtermuchty fell down flat wi' affright, an' betook them to their prayers aince again, for they saw the dreadful danger they had escapit, an' frae that day to this it is a hard matter to gar an Auchtermuchty man listen to a sermon at a', an' a harder ane still to gar him applaud ane, for he thinks aye that he sees the cloven foot peeping out frae aneath ilka sentence. (p. 203)

Robin's action is symbolic of the return to consciousness. He in no manner attacks the institution of the Kirk but brings the people out of their state of forgetfulness and places them in a situation of control again. With their doubt of the clergy so firmly embedded in their minds, we are left with the idea that Auchtermuchtian society will remain free from further institutional aggrandizement.

The ability to see evil is reduced, not eradicated, in Robert's "Memoirs" and, thus, in terms of the metaphor, Scottish society is part humane and part inhumane or fairly normal. This reduction of sight is represented by a mingling of the sighted and the blind: by the people who appreciate the evil inherent in Gil-Martin and by those who allow their agreement with his fatalistic creed to overcome their suspicions of him.

Robert is twice warned by others. Mr. Blanchard, Robert's first victim, has no illusions about Gil-Martin and, equally important, has a prophetic awareness of the position of the institution in society.

When my companion the prince was gone, Mr. Blanchard asked me anent him, and I told him that he was a stranger in the city, but a very uncommon and great personage. Mr. Blanchard's answer to me was as follows: 'I never saw any body I disliked so much in my life, Mr. Robert; and if it be true that he is a stranger here, which I doubt, believe me he is come for no good.'

'Do you not perceive what mighty powers of mind he is possessed of?' said I, 'and also how clear and unhesitating he is on some of the most interesting points of divinity?'

'It is for his great mental faculties that I dread him,' said he. 'It is incalculable what evil such a person as he may do, if so disposed. There is a sublimity in his ideas, with which there is to me a mixture of terror; and when he talks of religion, he does it as one that rather dreads its truths than reverences them. He, indeed, pretends great strictness of orthodoxy regarding some of the points of doctrine embraced by the reformed church; but you do not seem to perceive, that both you and he are carrying these points to a dangerous extremity. Religion is a sublime and glorious thing, the bond of society on earth, and the connector of humanity with the Divine nature; but there is nothing so dangerous to man as the wrestling of any of its principles, of forcing them beyond their due bounds: this is of all others the readiest way to destruction. Neither is there any thing so easily done. There is not an error into which a man can fall, which he may not press Scripture into his service as proof of the probity of, and though your boasted theologian shunned the full discussion of the subject before me, while you pressed it, I can easily see that both you and he are carrying your ideas of absolute predestination, and its concomitant appendages, to an extent that overthrows all religion and revelation together; or, at least, jumbles them into a chaos, out of which human capacity can never select what is good. Believe me, Mr. Robert, the less you associate with that illustrious stranger the better, for it appears to me that your creed and his carries damnation on the very front of it.' (pp. 131-132)

Blanchard's analysis of Gil-Martin is correct and his comprehension of the evils of orthodoxy reveals a profounder analysis of institutions. Reification is part of the human condition and because of this, institutions, in this instance religion or the reformed church, are unavoidable. They are also paradoxical: they help man come to terms with his universe or in Blanchard's words "the connector[s] of humanity with the Divine nature," while they simultaneously dehumanize the same universe. In the fairly normal world that Blanchard inhabits, institutions retain much of the human involvement necessary at their birth and also the tendency to dehumanize man and his cosmos. The only "danger to man" in this situation is a movement away from the human content of an institution to a more institutional position, where the organization's needs supersede the human ones. Orthodoxy or pushing principles "beyond their due bounds" leads to destruction, to "a chaos, out of which human

capacity can never select what is good" or, in Marxist terms, alienation.<sup>50</sup> The institution instead of serving man enslaves him and the benign connection between him and the universe is severed leaving him in a chaos. The most ironic facet of Blanchard's insight is that man reifies, institutionalizes or alienates himself. The initial recipe for order, Blanchard's "Scriptures," is used as the foundation for greater orthodoxy which in turn leads to more dehumanization. Gil-Martin and his kind play on this all too human phenomenon.

Blanchard's warning has no lasting effect on Robert as he continues to befriend Gil-Martin but the truth of his warning is given symbolic emphasis later in the "Memoirs." After Robert's commitment to Gil-Martin's brand of orthodoxy, after discovery of him as a matricide, Robert is chased by the authorities from his baronial seat clothed symbolically in Gil-Martin's magical coat and turban. Dressed in this manner, he is taken in by the poor weaver and lodged in the loom chamber. When he awakes naked the next morning, Robert discovers that his normal clothes have been exchanged for Gil-Martin's. "Astonished" by this and caught between dream and consciousness Robert stumbles into the mesh of the loom where he is "jumble[d] . . . into a chaos"

My feet had slipped down through the double warpings of a web, and not being able to reach the ground with them, (there being a small pit below,) I rode upon a number of yielding threads, and there being nothing else that I could reach, to extricate myself was impossible. I was utterly powerless; and besides, the yarn and cords hurt me very much. . . . I had made a desperate effort to throw myself out of the entanglement I was in; for the weaver continued repeating his blows and cursing me so, that I determined to get out of his meshes at any risk. This effort made my case worse; for my feet being wrapt among the nether threads, as I threw myself from my saddle on the upper ones, my feet brought the others up through these, and I hung with my head down, and my feet as firm as they had been in a vice. (pp. 215-216)

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 201.

Robert is in the Hell of his own making. Without or, perhaps, with his friend's help he is caught in the intricacy of the chaos Blanchard told him about. The Hell-like or, in this novel's metaphor, institutional dimensions of his predicament are clearly underlined when the weaver says:

'What now, Mr. Satan? What for are ye roaring that gate? Are you fawn int<sup>h</sup> little hell, instead o' the big muckil ane? Deil be in your reistit trams! What for have ye abscondit yoursel into ma ledly's wab for?' (p. 215)

Blanchard's prophecy of damnation in the front of Robert's creed has a terrible result. Only the orthodox can become so entangled that they fail to differentiate up from down, or right from wrong.

The "auld wives" of Robert's village are more explicit in their warning than Blanchard as to Gil-Martin's origins. They tell Scrape that Robert has been often seen "gaun sidie for sidie" with the "deil" and that "he whiles takes your ain shape, or else enters into you, and then your [sic] turn a deil yoursel." (p. 195) Scrape's Digression is a parable pointing out Gil-Martin's demonic side to Robert. The apostrophic nature of its ending shows the "auld wife's" and Scrape's idea that its moral is immediately applicable and to whom it applies.

' Now, this is a true story, my man,' quo the auld wife; 'an' whenever you are doubtfu' of a man, take auld Robin Ruthven's plan, an' look for the cloven foot, for it's a thing that winna weel hide; an' it appears whiles where ane wadna think o't. It will keek outfrae aneath the parson's gown, the lawyer's wig, and the Cameronian's blue bannet; but still there is a gouden rule whereby to detect it, an' that never, never fails."--The auld witch didna gie me the rule, an' though I hae heard tell o't often an' often, shame fa' me an' I ken what it is! But ye will ken it well, an' it wad be nae the waur of a trial on some o' your friends, maybe; for they say there's a certain gentleman seen walking wi' you whiles, that, wherever he sets his foot, the grass withers as gin it war scoudered wi' a het ern. His presence be about us.' (p. 203)

The vehemence and the directness of both of these warnings are indications of their authors' awareness of the reality behind the appearance

and their lack of trust in roles.

The blind element in Scottish society is represented by those characters who accept the same God as Gil-Martin. Once a man accepts the idea that he is infallible then everything he sees and thinks must lend itself to perpetuating that one thought. Since he can do no wrong then all of nature must bend its ways in order to concur with his infallibility.<sup>51</sup> "To the wicked," Mr. Wringhim says, "all things are wicked; but to the just all things are just and right." This is the element in the predestinarian faith that permits the Wringhims to see what they believe rather than believe what they see: they are completely cut off from the facts of life. Mr. Wringhim believes that Robert looks like him because Lady Dalcastle was thinking a great deal about the reverend gentleman when she was pregnant with Robert. (p. 106) He also believes that Gil-Martin is not Satan simply because he agrees with "the doctrine that was made to overturn the principalities and powers, the might and the kingdom of darkness." (p. 121) Robert continually distorts the reality of his situation. He sees himself as a vanquisher marching on to tennis courts and cricket pitches in order to send the young players fleeing in fear before his powerful looks. He also imagines himself to be a gentleman and excellent swordsman. Robert, despite his scholastics and his background in sophistry, cannot for the life of him see that Gil-Martin equivocates when replying to his questions. Who but Satan has only one parent, no Christian name, servants without number and control over vast areas of the earth? Robert believes that the answer to this question is Peter, Czar of Russia. Even

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<sup>51</sup>Hume, p. IX.

Gil-Martin's ability to change his appearance at will does not upset the young bigot's equilibrium. Gil-Martin is "good" because he says he believes in the tenets of the predestined elect and therefore he can do no wrong. Robert clings to this idea until the very last day of his life.

Scottish society's position on the humane-inhumane scale is compounded by the characters' attitude towards charity. Robert, whose faith forbids him from accepting charity as a source of grace, has, as we have seen, very little kindness in him. He represents, because of his position as writer of the "Memoirs," the vicious side of the scale. He does, however, report many charitable acts in his autobiography. John Barnet, even after losing his job, is kind to Robert when he is taking his beating from McGill. John intervenes in the fight and protects Robert from McGill as they walk home. Robert feels "greatly indebted" for this act of charity on John's part. (p. 113) The jailer's advice to write a letter is also a charitable act but Robert sees no need to mention it as such. (p. 150) When Robert tries to escape from Gil-Martin and the law by running into the countryside, he is bathed in charity. His first night on the road sees him penniless, hungry, and tired at the door of a poor weaver's house. The weaver, apprehensive at first, gives Robert lodging and food at his wife's request: "Come awa, honest lad, in by here: sin it be sae that you belang to Him wha gies us a' that we hae, it is but right that you should share a part. You are a stranger, it is true, but them that winna entertain a stranger will never entertain an angel unawares." (pp. 210-211) This act becomes more noteworthy when we realize that the weaver is an old Covenanter and, therefore, supposedly opposed to any good works. Similar situations

occur at Ellanshaws, at Ancrum, at the poor hind's of Redesdale and Eltrive where he is fed, sheltered and clothed. It is only when Robert's demonic dimensions are sensed by these people that they reject him from their homes and presence. The Scottish people are humane: they help their fellow man in God's name and for his own sake too.

Robert's portrayal of Scotland in his "Memoirs" shows it to be a society on its way to total institutionalization. It is prevented from this fate by people who continue, like John Barnet, to "draw a' [their] conclusions frae the haill o' a man's character . . ." and pushed towards Hell by people who judge the whole from a part.

Except for James Hogg, the character, and the satirist, John Barnet's wholesome approach in judging men is not apparent in the Editor's North Britain or according to Sacks and the parenthetical structure of the novel, in contemporary society.

James Hogg, the shepherd selling his sheep in Thirlestane market, is the only character who does not take the Editor at face value. Lockhart and the Editor decide, for an unexplained reason, to inveigle themselves into James Hogg's trust by introducing the Editor to him as "a great wool-stapler, come to raise the price of that article." James Hogg will not be fooled: "he eyed me with distrust and turning his back on us answered, 'I hae seel'd mine.'" The Editor persists in the masquerade and then asks James Hogg about his Blackwood's letter and the grave. James Hogg tells him, "It was a queer fancy for a woo-stapler to tak." He refuses the coaxing of the graverobbing party and even his cousin William Laidlaw to accompany them. "I hae mair ado than I can manage the day, foreby ganging to houk up hunder-year-auld bones." (pp. 246-247) The shepherd is aware of the Editor's flattering



approach and deceit and will not be tricked by it. He is the last of Scottish characters who go beyond the superficial to the truth.

It is the presence of the satirist that suggests society is in the penultimate stage of reification and his essence proves it. This personality is the last perceiver of evil, the novel's final barrier preventing total Hell, and to accept the Editor as real despite this perception is equivalent to Robert befriending Gil-Martin after Mr. Blanchard's stern warning. As long as the satirist is recognized the Editor's ultimate objective will remain frustrated and the world one step from the abyss.

The satirist's essential quality confirms this view. If, as Quintana says, the satirist is the voice of reason, then the distance between his level of personality and the character level is a measure of irrationality present in the latter level. The visibility of this madness becomes in turn a measure of the reader's ability to apprehend the folly of his own situation. The Editor, in the satirist's view of him, is a fool and, according to our reasoning, his readers are verging close to intellectual blindness if they do not see his folly. That some critics accept the Editor as the voice of reason is no fault of the satirist's but rather an indication of their predisposition against Hogg as a public fool. They do not credit him with wit enough to create such a level of character. They continue to see the errors as faults of the Ettrick Shepherd rather than the manifestations of his creation's character even though Hogg provides them with another fictitious character, Robert, who writes fairly well, and with few, if any, of the Editor's blunders.

Critics aside, the Editor's blunders in mathematics, diction

and writing are so obvious that it is fearful to think of the state of institutionalization in our world. He adds five to eight to make twelve. (p. 12) This error is his and not the result of Hogg's slapdash method of writing.<sup>52</sup> Although Hogg's writing technique was, to say the least, careless, he was a jealous guardian of his products in print as seen in his continual battles with his editors over their emendations of his works.<sup>53</sup> If he thought that this mathematical lapse was indeed an error on his or the publisher's part, his jealousy suggests that he would have changed it in his re-editing of the Justified Sinner in 1828.<sup>54</sup> The Editor's prowess in simple addition and subtraction, already demonstrated in the matters of Robert's age and the date of his death, would suggest that Hogg, unlike his later editors, wished this error to remain as he wrote it. For a character out to convince his reader that he is a man of science, the Editor is a dunce in his handling of a tool basic to science--mathematics.

As a representative of his own profession, the Editor is a clown. He is not only disrespectful of his client-author, calling Robert the greatest wretch, madman, and maniac, but is also such a terrible writer that he has no right to be an editor. His "Narrative" has all the faults of a Gothic novel and none of its few virtues. He displays a Radcliffian penchant to create a mystery in order to "sand-bag it with reason"<sup>55</sup> but even that is a failure as he does not explain

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<sup>52</sup> Thomson, 1: xlviif.

<sup>53</sup> Hogg, Collected Works, 1: 441.

<sup>54</sup> Batho, p. 127.

<sup>55</sup> Northrop Frye, A Study of English Romanticism (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 29.

Gil-Martin's existence or Robert's behaviour. On three important-occasions he ruins the flow of his narrative technique with theatrical gestures and on multiple occasions he disrupts the objective stance with his highly opinionated interruptions. During two of Robert's dialogues, the Editor includes the ampersand abbreviation of etcetera and thereby ruins any sense of immediacy that dialogue confers. If we add to these mistakes the faults of overindulgence in pronouns, misplaced information, qualification of events and characters after they happen and appear, and dubious grammar, we can only wonder at his having the gall to edit anything. He obviously thinks that his readership is so ignorant that it will accept his competence as an editor. If it does, even after the satirist's manifest efforts, then it deserves him and his consequences.

In Hogg's scheme of things man is continually losing his power over his own products because of his failure to recognize his participation in them. Man could right this trend at one time, perhaps Robert could have done this, but that time has passed. The end, in Hogg's view, is unavoidable--we will make our own institutional Hell, our own "chaos out of which human capacity can never select what is good."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MEN

The problems inherent in the fateful universe and the inhumane society are minor when compared to those facing man in the Justified Sinner. External man, the reader, is a terror to himself. He cannot know his position in either the universe or society because he does not know himself. His failure of self-awareness prevents him from perceiving reality and dooms him to a perilous future. The novel's structure suggests that man had the ability to know himself and his environment but that capacity in him has deteriorated to almost nothing. Hogg uses two vehicles to express this degeneration--poetic sensibility and Scottishness. At each step down the parenthetical ladder both the poetic and the Scottish dimensions of each of the protagonists diminish until they are all but obliterated: Robin Ruthven is the poetic Scotsman; Robert, a semi-poet and semi-Scot; and the Editor, anti-poetic and anti-Scottish. We will examine the protagonists for both of their qualities and according to the regression of these qualities.

The key to understanding Hogg's metaphoric use of poetic sensibility and Scottishness lies in his portrayal of Robin Ruthven, his allegorical ambiance, and his actions. Robin Ruthven is a rural, dialect-speaking Scottish man and the Deil's opponent or, more properly, his vanquisher. The normally denotative adjectives used to describe this character become, through the allegorical process of personification,

connotative and, because of their context, highly moral ones. Allegories, almost by definition, tend to externalize everything: good and evil, virtues and vices, institutions and universal man are all given concrete existence by the technique of personification. Spenser's Redcrosse is not so much a man as he is a construction of his armour, the way he rides his horse, the company he keeps, and the heraldry upon his shield. There is nothing inside him--thoughts or psychology. Similarly in Hogg the evil of the devil is expressed in his original appearance as a corbie, in his ability to change his shape, and in his cloven feet. The same holds true for Robin except that in his case the externals express his virtue. Hogg uses these virtuous adjectives throughout the Justified Sinner in a similar manner to the way he uses the demonic ones in the story. To be rural and to speak Scots are, in the Justified Sinner, as sure signs of goodness as to be faulted is a certain sign of evil.

The association between moral goodness and Scottishness is reflected in the language of the Digression. It is written largely in dialect but, significantly, this breaks down into proper English when the devil as corbie reveals his plans for Auchtermuchty and continues almost exclusively in English until Robin decides to act. It is during this English hiatus that the townspeople are maddened by the Deil's demagogic sermons delivered in English. The linguistic change is indicative of Hogg's equating virtue with Scottishness and evil with all that is not Scottish.

In Scrape's tale Hogg extends this equation of Scottish signifying morally good to Scottish also meaning satiric. Lucky Shaw, the novel's innermost story teller and the Digression's ultimate one, reveals this trait in her Scottish introduction to her story.

"Ye silly, sauchless, Cameronian cuif!" quo she, is that a' that ye ken about the wiles and doings o' the prince o' the air, that rules an works in the bairns of disobedience? Gin he ever observes a proud professor, wha has mae than ordinary pretensions to a divine calling, and that reards and prays till the very howlets learn his preambles, that's the man Auld Simmie fixes on to mak a dishclout o'. He canna get rest in hell, if he sees a man, or a set of men o' this stamp, an' when he sets fairly to wark, it is seldom that he disna bring them round till his ain measures by hook or by crook. Then O it is a grand prize for him; an' a proud deil he is, when he gangs hame to his ain ha', wi' a batch o' the souls o' sic strenuous professors on his back. Ay, I trow, auld Ingleby, the Liverpool packman, never came up Glasco street wi' prouder pomp, when he had ten horselaid's afore him o' Flanders lace, an' Hollin lawn, an' silks an' satins frae the eastern Indians, than Satan wad stodge into hell with a pack-laid o' the souls o' proud professors on his braid shoulders. Ha, ha, ha! I think I see how the auld thief wad be gaun through his gized dominions, crying his wares, in derision, "Wha will buy a fresh, cauler divine, a bouzy bishop, a fasting zealot, or a piping priest? For a' their prayers an' their praises, their aumuses, an' their penances, their whinings, their rantings, an' their ravings, here they come at last! Behold the end. Here go the rare and precious wares! A fat professor for a bodle, an' a lean one for half a merk!" (pp. 197-198)

In this part of Lucky's tale and in Auchtermuchty the great sin is not so much pride as a presumption to be better in the eyes of God than other men are. In other words, God abandons to "Auld Simmie" those who attempt, like Robert, ~~like Burns'~~ "Holy Willie" and like the Pharisee of the Parable, to disrupt His equanimity towards all men. This sense of democracy is strengthened by Lucky's tone of voice and her dialect. Her naming of the Deil as "Auld Simmie" suggests a contemptuous familiarity rather than any great fear of her subject matter or of whom she is ultimately talking to--her laird, Robert Colwan, who is a revengeful man. Her reduction of the Deil from the "prince o' the air" to a mere tradesman calling his wares in hell, besides recalling his original fall from heaven for the same sin as the professors', also reflects the levelling facet of a democracy. In Scots this reductive element is expressed in the sardonic phrase "I kened his faither." Wittig maintains that this attitude is a characteristic of Scottish literature and expresses "a

free manliness, a saevo indignatio against oppression, a violent freedom, sometimes an aggressive spirit of independence or egalitarianism."<sup>56</sup>

Robin's denunciation of the Deil is this spirit put into action: the "sublime stranger," the great preacher, is reduced by the simple man to an ineffective clown who can only gnash his teeth. To the Scottish literary mind, to the satirist, and to Hogg, no one is above reproach and no one is beyond ridicule.

There is little doubt that this image of the Scot as virtuous and as the Reynard of a Caledonian version of the fabliaux is due in part to Hogg's nationalism and romantic nostalgia. He, however, escapes from such barren limitations by using this image as a part of a satiric metaphor that projects itself outwards as a measure of man's fall from perfection and by providing an ambiance that permits a more universal understanding of his metaphor.

The universality of this image is more apparent when we examine its poetic associations. Hogg's Robin is the quintessence of Romantic man." He has Wordsworth's, "more than the usual organic sensibility" or, as the Diggression describes him,

. . . a cunning man, an' had rather mae wits than his ain, for he had been in the hands o' the fairies when he was young, an' a' kinds o' spirits were visible to his een, an' their language as familiar to him as his ain mother tongue. (p. 198)

He is "humble and rustic," speaks a language free from the "influence of social vanity" and is occupied in rural pursuits.<sup>57</sup> His action of

<sup>56</sup> Kurt Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1958), pp. 95-96.

<sup>57</sup> William Wordsworth, "Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads", Selected Poems and Prefaces, ed. Jack Stillinger (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, Riverside Edition, 1965), pp. 446-447.

uncovering the Deil's foot is reminiscent of Shelley's function of poetry:

Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar; it reproduces all that it represents and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it coexists.<sup>58</sup>

Robin too lifts a veil, the preacher's gown, but instead of revealing the "hidden beauty of the world" he shows the ugliness of the universe. The Deil stands in the plain light of day and once the people of Auchtermuchty "contemplate" him, he never leaves their minds "thenceforward."

More importantly, Robin's action fulfils the eschatological function of poetry--to display the nature of man to man and in so doing save him. Auchtermuchty's presumption and its dependence on appearance as the only test of holiness are shown to be folly by Robin's act. When the people see the cloven feet, when they see the falsity behind the superficial, they realize their error and mend their ways by being suspicious of all clergymen and all sermons. (see above p. 55) The moral or theological overtones of the story suggest that the people are closer to unity with God while the poetic metaphor suggests that they are made aware of a fuller and truer reality and, because of this, are in a better union with the wholeness of the universe.

Hogg's overlapping of morality or Scottishness and poetic sensitivity is typically Romantic as the following passages from Shelley point out.

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<sup>58</sup> Percy B. Shelley, "A Defense of Poetry", Criticism: The Major Texts ed. Walter Jackson Bate (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1952), p. 432.



The great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action or person, not our own. A man to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of the moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause.

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the center and circumference of knowledge . . . It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; . . . and that which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed and withholds, from the barren world, the nourishment and succession of the scions of the tree of life . . . what were our aspirations beyond [the grave], if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar?<sup>59</sup>

In Shelley's eyes at least, poetry is another form of the bread and wine of religious communion: to partake of it is to unite with the whole universe and, in the inherent exercise of the imagination, to be morally good. Reason, his respecter of differences, is antithetical to poetry and, by implication, to virtue--it is the great disuniter. Hogg, in his portrayal of Robin, effectively agrees with Shelley's moral value for poetry and, as we shall see, has the same attitude towards reason.

Except for the fact that Robin Ruthven does not write, his social and linguistic description, his sensitivity to that side of nature beyond the phenomenal, his action and the results of his action, make him a model Romantic character--an angelic Byron thrusting through pretentious crowds to lay folly bare. As a device in the novel, he, his Scottishness, and his intuitive apprehension of another reality act as the measure for the other two writers in the novel.

Robert Wringhim, by being poetic and rationalistic, Scottish and English, falls short of Robin's example. His life, in the true sense of

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 432-433.

the word, is a metamorphosis from the rational to the poetic, from North Briton to Scot, a mixture of both except at the extreme ends of the process. He moves towards an awareness of his situation and reality but as his full poetic awakening and his nationalism are contemporaneous with his death it is too late for him to really change his life.

Robert's life, from his birth until "the 25th day of March 1704," is one given entirely to reason or the anti-poetic. He has two facets that reveal his rational orientation--his love of logic and his tendency to lie. Aside from damning nearly everybody to perdition, ratiocination is the only form of entertainment in the Wringhim household and one of Robert's few privileges.

I missed no opportunity of perfecting myself particularly in all the minute points of theology in which my reverend father and mother took great delight; but at length I acquired so much skill, that I astonished my teachers, and made them gaze at one another. I remember that it was the custom, in my patron's house, to ask the questions of the Single Catechism round every Sabbath night. He asked the first, my mother the second, and so on, every one saying the question asked, and then asking the next. It fell to my mother to ask Effectual Calling at me. I said the answer with propriety and emphasis. 'Now, madam,' added I, 'my question to you is, What is Ineffectual Calling?' 'Ineffectual Calling? There is no such thing, Robert,' said she. 'But there is, madam,' said I; 'and that answer proves how much you say these fundamental precepts by rote, and without any consideration . . . (p. 98)

He goes on to discuss "Ineffectual Calling" and is applauded for his logic by his mother, "What a wonderful boy he is." It is this love of logic that causes Robert problems when Gil-Martin enters his life.

Robert's propensity to lie, which is, according to him, his greatest boyhood sin, also shows his anti-poetic tendency on two counts. Firstly, to the Romantic poets, at least, and, perhaps, to poets in general, the concept of the untruth is the product of a rational mind. Since this mind perceives reality solely as object, that which does not

agree with the evidence as perceived is either not there or is a lie. The poetic mind, because it accepts a fuller and more mysterious reality and also because it accepts phenomena as symbols of that reality, can never be fooled by a lie. Frye's interpretation of the Kantian "riddle" implies support for this theory of "untruth."

The shadow of Kant's riddle falls across the whole Romantic movement. The world that we see and understand is not the noumenon, the world in itself, but only the world as phenomenon, as adapted to our categories of perception and reasoning. The inference is that reality, so to speak, cannot be known, at least not by the subject-object relationship. The proud boast of the subjective reason, that a perfect being must exist because the mind can conceive the possibility of its existence, no longer carries much conviction. The Romantic sense of something outside ordinary experience which nevertheless completes experience, symbolized by "nature" in Wordsworth and elsewhere, must be something mysterious, because it cannot be directly apprehended. It is obvious that the Kantian distinction affords a justification for imaginative, as distinct from rational, knowledge, and for symbolism. The phenomenon, which represents a reality that it does not exhaust, is a symbol of what is really there, but it is a fixed and invariable symbol, perceived involuntarily and unalterable as a perception. Poetry creates for the imagination a flexible language of symbols, and expands our range of experience accordingly, in a way that sense and reason cannot do.<sup>60</sup>

To poetry, truth or untruth are both manifestations of the noumenon and it is only interested in them as symbolic avenues to the more complete reality.

Secondly, a lie is antithetical to the function of literature. According to the Longinian division of language skills, a poet uses language to "transport" his listener to an esthetic end or to the "sublime" and a rhetorician uses language to persuade his hearer to a practical end or to take action.<sup>61</sup> A verbal untruth, in this theory's logic, is the ultimate of persuasive language in that it is entirely devoted to

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<sup>60</sup>Frye, Romanticism, p. 84.

<sup>61</sup>Longinus, "On the Sublime", Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 62.

utilitarian action. Where the poet seeks no useful end through his verbally deceptive metaphor, the liar seeks only to precipitate action in his audience by concealing or changing reality to suit his expedient end. Robert agrees with this extrapolation of Longinus when he points out that his more "heinous" lies "had generally some good effects in the way of punishing wicked men, forward boys, and deceitful women." In saying this, he confirms not only the utilitarian nature of a lie but also his own commitment to the ultimate utilitarian stance that the end justifies the means.

Of the two recorded lies in Robert's boyhood, the one he commits in the McGill episode emphasizes both of the anti-artistic points in falsity. In this instance, Robert substitutes for McGill's work his own vulgar drawings of his school-teacher, Mr. Wilson, and brings them "with all the ingenuity [he] was master of . . . before [his] dominie's eye." Mr. Wilson is enraged at "the obnoxious figures," but "hesitates to administer punishment because he is not sure of the culprit's identity. McGill, the only boy in school "ever known to draw a figure," is soon deduced as the prankster and is severely punished for doing nothing. (pp. 109-111) Here, art or artifact causes action by hiding the truth rather than revealing it. Art in this instance is strictly phenomenal and instead of uniting man with a greater sense of nature separates him from it. When this lie is added to the one used against John Barnet and when Robert simply states that he was particularly prone to lying, he consolidates his allegiance to reason.

On the morning of "the 25th day of March 1704," Robert's rational edifice begins to crumble. On that day he is "welcomed into the society of the just made perfect" and, on that same day, he has an emotional

experience that splits him in two.

I wept for joy to be thus assured of my freedom from all sin, and of the impossibility of my ever again falling away from my new state. I bounded away into the fields and the woods, to pour out my spirit in prayer before the Almighty for his kindness to me: my whole frame seemed to be renewed; every nerve was buoyant with new life; I felt as if I could have flown in the air, or leaped over the tops of the trees. An exaltation of spirit lifted me, as it were, far above the earth, and the sinful creatures crawling on its surface; and I deemed myself as an eagle among the children of men, soaring on high, and looking down with pity and contempt on the grovelling creatures below.

As I thus wended my way, I beheld a young man of a mysterious appearance coming towards me. I tried to shun him, being bent on my own contemplations; but he cast himself in my way, so that I could not well avoid him; and more than that, I felt a sort of invisible power that drew me towards him, something like the force of enchantment, which I could not resist. As we approached each other, our eyes met, and I can never describe the sensations that thrilled through my whole frame at that impressive moment; a moment to me fraught with the most tremendous consequences; the beginning of a series of adventures which has puzzled myself, and will puzzle the world when I am no more in it. That time will now soon arrive, sooner than any one can devise who knows not the tumult of my thoughts, and the labour of my spirit; and when it hath come and passed over, . . . when my flesh and my bones are decayed, and my soul has passed to its everlasting home, then shall the sons of men ponder on the events of my life, wonder and tremble, and tremble and wonder how such things should be.

What was my astonishment on perceiving that he was the same being as myself. (pp. 115-116)

Within this singular moment of joy and his first encounter with the astonishing Gil-Martin, Robert in religious terms enters into a mystical union with his God or, in Shelley's poetic terms, the "centre and circumference of knowledge." As one of the elect, as one who has met his spiritual potential, he symbolically rises above the chess-board of the earth to become one with the player and in that awesome position he has to experience the paradoxical totality of his God. Since this deity, as we have already seen, controls from all time all the actions of all things in the universe, He must also control His opponent chess player and, since He set the rules, the board and the final outcome, His oppo-

ment must ultimately be Himself. Robert's God is both good and evil. We can further conclude, from His omnipotence that He governs pain, insanity and death as much as He does pleasure, sanity and life. He is, because of His total powers, omnipresent or "omniambiguous" and to enter into communion with Him is, paradoxically, to divide oneself. When Robert descends from this experience, he does so as a duality. While His joy, his freedom, his new body, his exaltation and most importantly his imagination all herald the birth of his poetic potential, the fear, the strangeness, the decaying flesh, and the passing of the soul forebode his death.

Robert's life from that momentous day until his death is such a chaotic struggle between his two selves that he has great difficulty resolving the issue. We shall attempt to examine his problem by scrutinizing his rationalistic self personified in Gil-Martin and then returning to follow his poetic or imaginative self. From what we can gather of Gil-Martin as evil spirit and institutional man and his first mimetic appearance at such a crucial moment in Robert's life, it is possible to conclude that he is the symbolic representative of Robert's ideal of himself. That he is an extension of Robert is evident in the more than striking similarities between them. Gil-Martin believes in exactly the same God as Robert and agrees with Robert's method for purifying the world. He too loves logic as witnessed in his extrapolation of the Calvinist creed to its improbable extreme and, like Robert, he changes reality to generate action in others. Gil-Martin echoes Robert's utilitarian creed when he agrees that only good can come of the two murders--if the two victims are among the elect they will go the their rewards sooner and if they are non-elect the world would be better

off without them. The most conclusive evidence of Gil-Martin's communion with Robert is in his two admissions of it. At their second meeting Gil-Martin reveals his mimic ability and the reason for it to Robert who then says in a Faustian voice that he, "would give the world to possess it," because Gil-Martin can, "extract our most secret thoughts from our bosoms. You already knew my natural character?" Gil-Martin replies, "Yes and it is that which attaches me to you." (p. 125) The attachment revealed in this exchange becomes more explicit in another exchange between the two at a point much later in Robert's career. Robert begs Gil-Martin to leave him alone and Gil-Martin answers,

'Would that I could do so!' said he wofully. 'But to talk of that is to talk of an impossibility. I am wedded to you so closely, that I feel as if I were the same person. Our essences are one, our bodies and spirits being united, so, that I am drawn towards you as by magnetism, and wherever you are, there must my presence be with you.' (p. 229)

When we add Gil-Martin's "whole nature" (see above p. 36) to the list of his similarities with Robert and these two statements, it is almost impossible not to conclude that he is a metaphoric manifestation of a part of Robert's psyche.

An examination of Gil-Martin's favourite disguise and his role-playing will discover that he is Robert's self ambition or ego-ideal extrapolated to the extreme. After Robert kills his brother and assumes the title of Laird of Dalcastle on his father's death, Gil-Martin continually affects the likeness of the murdered George. In donning this disguise Gil-Martin expresses Robert's need to legitimize himself. George Colwan has all the prerequisites that Robert requires to fulfil this desire. George and Robert are the first and second sons of the rather peculiar marriage between George Colwan, Laird of Dalcastle, and Rabina Orde, daughter of a Glasgow baillie. According to Robert's

own account of events, their mother flees from their father's "embraces the first night after their marriage, and from that time forth, his iniquities so galled her upright heart, that she quitted his society altogether, keeping her own apartments in the same house with him." (pp. 97-98) If this is truly the case, then Robert, as second son of this match, must doubt his own legitimacy. The Laird certainly thinks it is the case as he rebuffs "all relation or connection save what the law compelled him to take" with Robert and goes so far as to refuse to take the vows for Robert at his baptism. This refusal makes Robert, as he says, a social and religious "outcast." Robert is apparently legitimized when Mr. Wringhim irregularly allows one sponsor, Lady Dalcastle, to take the vows and christens the child Robert Wringhim Colwan. Robert, an all but publicly pronounced bastard, can only be a suspect Colwan and, therefore, his odd christening is technically void and ecclesiastically questionable. In other words, he is not a member of the Reform Church of Scotland and, more importantly in his terms, he cannot in this state of limbo be one of the elect. He can only achieve these ends by erasing the doubt of his birth, by becoming the very public heir to the Laird of Dalcastle--his brother must die for Robert to succeed in social and spiritual senses. George Colwan, the younger, is, in effect, Robert's ideal: he even has the money that could be so helpful in creating the utopia of the elect. (p. 146) Robert's continual damning of his father and his brother is indicative of his desire to see the worst for them but, it is only after Gil-Martin's appearance and suggestion to murder them both, that Robert ever thinks of putting his prayers into action. It is Gil-Martin who sets off Robert's "longing desire to kill [his] brother." (p. 146) When this longing is fulfilled, Gil-Martin assumes



George's features and symbolically his role as ideal to Robert.

One incident before George's death lends credence to this concept of Gil-Martin as Robert's ideal self. Shortly after Robert encounters George for the first time in his life, he is "seized with a strange distemper" for nearly a month. During this time and illness he has hallucinations about himself, his brother and Gil-Martin.

When I lay in bed, I deemed there were two of us in it; when I sat up, I always beheld another person, and always in the same position from the place where I sat or stood, which was about three paces off me towards my left side. It mattered not how many or how few were present: this my second self was sure to be present in his place; and this occasioned a confusion in all my words and ideas that utterly astounded my friends, who all declared, that instead of being deranged in my intellect, they had never heard my conversation manifest so much energy or sublimity of conception; but for all that, over the singular delusion that I was two persons, my reasoning faculties had no power. The most perverse part of it was, that I rarely conceived myself to be any of the two persons. I thought for the most part that my companion was one of them, and my brother the other; and I found, that to be obliged to speak and answer in the character of another man, was a most awkward business at the long run. (p. 154)

Considering Gil-Martin's ability to change his appearance at will and so successfully that Robert is confused as to whom he is talking in some instances, it is hard to understand how he could tell that it was Gil-Martin and not himself appearing beside his brother or that Gil-Martin was imitating his brother and Robert was talking to a mask. This dream maze of characters is an image of Robert's confusing his brother with Gil-Martin and vice versa: the two ideals are interchangeable in Robert's unconscious. The "energy or sublimity of conception" of Robert's conversation as Gil-Martin or George signals their superiority over him and furthers the notion of them as his ideals.

Gil-Martin's role-playing complements this idea of him as ego-ideal. If we translate our remarks of him as a reification into more individualistic or psychological terms, it is possible to relate him to

the reality-principle and reason. His mask qua mask quality is, as we have noted, indicative of a total lack of the private and questioning self. (see above p. 36) Put in Freudian terms, Gil-Martin's amazing ability is an expression of his total consciousness or the complete absence of an unconscious. According to Brown, this state of affairs equates with the reality-principle:

The conscious self is the organ of adaptation to the environment and to the culture. The conscious self, therefore, is governed not by the pleasure-principle but by the principle of adjustment to reality, the reality-principle.<sup>62</sup>

In his chapter "Art and Eros," Brown further defines the world of the reality-principle as anti-poetic or one of materialism, utilitarian action, and reason. Man's neurosis is caused by this principle's repression of the unconscious self or "the forgotten child within us all."<sup>63</sup> Schilder, in Medical Psychology, clearly identifies the relationship between this principle and the ego-ideal.

This psychological ego, which we love even more than the bodily one, we can call the ego-ideal or super-ego, and we see in it the resultant of a series of identifications. That is, later on the child identifies not only with the father, but with other people who teach him and raise him; particularly in puberty these identifications with teachers and leaders play an extraordinarily great role. Man's goals and purposes; his striving after ideals, all have come about on the detour through identification. His strivings are not only toward positive goals, but toward the suppressing of drive-impulses which are not compatible with such goals. Here then is the censor, the repressing institution; and here too is the germinal form of conscience, because the ego-ideal reproaches us even for the past.<sup>64</sup>

A man who acts only in accordance with the reality-principle or his ego-

<sup>62</sup> Brown, p. 8.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 54-67.

<sup>64</sup> Paul Schilder, Medical Psychology, trans. David Rapaport (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Science Editions, 1965), p. 315.

ideal becomes his own reality-principle, his own ego-ideal or represses himself. The relationship between Robert and Gil-Martin is Hogg's metaphoric expression of such a man.

The moment Robert acts out his ego-ideal's or Gil-Martin's suggestion to kill his brother, he in effect reifies himself, achieves the goal of his ego-ideal, or becomes George and/or Gil-Martin. The interchangeability of characters that he experienced during his hallucinatory illness is realized.

I was a being incomprehensible to myself. Either I had a second self, who transacted business in my likeness, or else my body was at times possessed by a spirit over which it had no control, and of whose actions my own soul was wholly unconscious. This was an anomaly not to be accounted for by any philosophy of mine, and I was many times, in contemplating it, excited to terrors and mental torments hardly describable. To be in a state of consciousness and unconsciousness, at the same time, in the same body and same spirit, was impossible. I was under the greatest anxiety, dreading some change would take place momentarily in my nature; for of days I could make nothing: one-half, or two-thirds of my time, seemed to me to be totally lost. I often, about this time, prayed with great fervour, and lamented my hopeless condition, especially in being liable to the commission of crimes, which I was not sensible of, and could not eschew. (p. 182)

The actions Robert refers to are the actions of his Tom Jones-like (see above p. 30) brother. When Robert eventually takes "undisputed possession of the houses, lands, and effects that had been my father's" his mode of living is an imitation of George's or what he thinks George's lifestyle was. Mrs. Keeler tells Robert, as Laird Dalcastle, that he is "an accomplished vagabond, hypocrite, and sensualist." (p. 174) This description of Robert is similar to the one he applies to George when he was alive. Robert thinks that George is "wallowing in a sink of sin" when he plays tennis. He and his associates are "graceless habitués" of "den[s] of voluptuousness and sin" or taverns. George on the night of his death is engaged in the "wine and debauchery" of a bagnio.

Robert as Laird acts as he saw George act. He drinks himself into several oblivions. He wears "gaudy and glaring" clothes and he rapes Miss Keeler. Lord Robert is George, his ideal, realized and Gil-Martin's George-like appearance at this time is again the mirror reflecting Robert's idealized image of himself, but instead of flattering it is, as he admits, terrifying.

. . . but when he [Gil-Martin] approached, a pang went to my heart, and, in his company, I moved and acted as if under a load that I could hardly endure. What a state to be in! And yet to shake him off was impossible--we were incorporated together--identified with one another, as it were, and the power was not in me to separate myself from him. (p. 183)

The element of himself that does separate Robert from Gil-Martin is the new one released "on the 25th day of March 1704." Robert's new dimension, his imaginative or poetic self, is expressed in his doubting his reality or "the eternal decree never to be annulled." For the first time in his life he doubts his God and this occurs significantly after his first parting from Gil-Martin.

We parted with expressions of mutual regret, and when I left him I felt a deliverance, but at the same time a certain consciousness that I was not thus to get free of him, but that he was like to be an acquaintance that was to stick to me for good or for evil . . . I had been greatly flattered, and greatly interested by his conversation; whether I had been the better for it or the worse, I could not tell. I had been diverted from returning thanks to my gracious Maker for his great kindness to me, and came home as I went away, but not with the same buoyancy and lightness of heart. . . . Whether it behoves me to bless God for the events of that day, or to deplore them, has been hid from my discernment, though I have inquired into it with fear and trembling; and I have now lost all hopes of ever discovering the true import of these events until that day when my accounts are to make up and reckon for in another world. (pp. 118-119)

Robert's convictions about the controller of the universe, the justified end to life, and his special relationship with God are no longer the certainties they once were.

The doubts always appear just before he commits a crime and

increase in intensity with each succeeding crime. It happens before the murder of Mr. Blanchard but it is more graphically seen when Gil-Martin suggests that he make an attempt on his brother's life.

I had a desire to slay him, it is true, and such a desire too as a thirsty man has to drink; but, at the same time, this longing desire was mingled with a certain terror, as if I had dreaded that the drink for which I longed was mixed with deadly poison. My mind was so much weakened, or rather softened about this time, that my faith began a little to give way, and I doubted most presumptuously of the least tangible of all Christian tenets, namely, of the infallibility of the elect. I hardly comprehended the great work I had begun, and doubted of my own infallibility, or that of any created being. But I was brought over again by the unwearied diligence of my friend to repent of my blacksliding, and view once more the superiority of the Almighty's counsels in its fullest latitude. Amen. (p. 147)

These doubts pass when his adopted father consigns the Colwans to hell fire and damnation but they return when he sets out to throw his brother off Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh's mountain. They return with such power that Robert for the first time in his life actually sympathizes with another human being.

I could not help my thoughts, and there are certain trains and classes of thoughts that have great power in enervating the mind. I thought of the awful thing of plunging a fellow creature from the top of a cliff into the dark and misty void below, of his being dashed to pieces on the protruding rocks, and of hearing his shrieks as he descended the cloud, and beheld the shagged points on which he was to alight. Then I thought of plunging a soul so abruptly into hell, or, at the best, sending it to hover on the confines of that burning abyss . . . of its appearance at the bar of the Almighty to receive its sentence. And then I thought, "Will there not be a sentence pronounced against me there, by a jury of the just made perfect, and written down in the registers of heaven?" . . . These thoughts, I say, came upon me unasked, and instead of being able to dispel them, they mustered, upon the summit of my imagination, in thicker and stronger array:

Robert, summoning all his "zeal" for the faith, manages to creep close enough to his unsuspecting brother to hear "him breathe." He readies himself for the final push but

I could not for my life accomplish it! I do not think it was that I durst not, for I have always felt my courage equal to any thing in a good cause. But I had not the heart, or something that I ought

to have had. In short, it was not done in time, as it easily might have been. These THOUGHTS are hard enemies wherewith to combat! And I was so grieved that I laid me down on my face and shed tears. (p. 160-161)

The totality of this experience reveals Robert's poetic side. By projecting himself into his brother's situation he exercises his imagination and all but duplicates Shelley's connection between poetry, imagination and morality. (see above p. 70) There is in Robert's "intense and comprehensive" imagining an allusion to his poetic sensitivity but it is his refusal to act in the utilitarian terms of his philosophy that makes him truly poetic. Practical inactivity caused by the imagination is a poetic act. The man, who can "put himself in the place of another and many others" through his love and imagination must, because of this ability to see the human motivation behind the actions of men, be static. To be active in this case is to deny humanity to men and not to love them.

Robert falls on this occasion to kill George but succeeds on the next when he is accompanied by Gil-Martin. His doubts continue to plague him at the height of his success and in the depths of his despair but he always subdues them by returning to his dogma. It is only in his last act that Robert completely overcomes his rational self. He not only commits suicide and thereby destroys Gil-Martin, but also rejects the phenomenal world and thereby achieves a kind of poetic potential.

Farewell, world, with all thy miseries; for comforts and enjoyments hast thou none! Farewell, woman, whom I have despised and shunned; and man, whom I have hated; whom, nevertheless, I desire to leave in charity! (p. 29)

Only in death does Robert realize that the "comforts and enjoyments" of the earth are the momentary matters of perception and, therefore, unreal. And, only in death, does he see that love of his fellowman is his only bequest, the only thing of real value.

Robert's dual personality is also seen in his Scottishness: he is both Scottish and not Scottish or British. Robert's British and, in Hogg's metaphor, non-virtuous or anti-poetic side is reflected in his ideal of George, who is pro-unionist and Episcopalian, and in his adoption of George's lifestyle. This aspect of his character is dramatized in the Keeler episode. Robert, now the Laird of Dalcastle, in one of his ego-ideal deleriums embarks on a campaign to win, by hook and by crook, one of Mrs. Keeler's daughters.

. . . that I had not only been assiduous in my endeavours to seduce a young lady of great beauty, which it seemed I had effected, but that I had taken counsel, and got this supposed, old, false and forged grant, raked up and new signed, to ruin the young lady's family quite, so as to throw her entirely on myself for protection, and be wholly at my will. (p. 181)

The notable thing about the grant is that it comes not from Edinburgh but from the court of James II in London. Robert, acting as George, seeks the aid of a questionable British monarch to accomplish his desires.

Robert's Scottish fraction lies in the part he plays in satirizing the Editor. Much of the satirist's attack on the Editor is contained in Robert's "Memoirs." It is Robert's dates that question the Editor's much vaunted history and show him as a liar. It is his writing, however, that finally shows the Editor's incompetence as one of the litterati. Robert is a better writer than the Editor. He adopts the autobiographical point of view and never wavers from it. He never interrupts, never misleads us by misplacing information, and never uses an abbreviation in dialogue. When the "Narrative" is compared to the "Memoirs," it is the Editor's work that suffers. Robert, as part of the satirist personality, is also a part of Robin Routhven and a literary tradition.

If we dispense with the histrionics of Robert's life, we can see it as a metaphor of the problems facing most men. His dichotomy is a human one. We are all split between our rationalist goals and our poetic love: we could hardly be otherwise.

Hogg, through his Editor, however, rejects this normal vision of man and suggests a different ending. In the Editor and his characters we see the reduction of Robert's duality to the single rationalist and British self. The Editor stands for empirical man. The three characters "of whom he obviously approves" betray his willingness to accept only the phenomenal as reality. His hero, George Colwan, (see above p. 30) is the only character in the "Narrative" who intuits Gil-Martin's demonic nature. He comes to this conclusion after being followed by Gil-Martin as Robert for days and after the Arthur's Seat scene when he sees Robert's likeness blown up to gigantic proportions on the misty clouds.

George sat himself down on the top of the hill, and pondered deeply on the unaccountable incident that had befallen to him that morning. He would in nowise comprehend it; but, taking it with other previous circumstances, he could not get quit of a conviction that he was haunted by some evil genius in the shape of his brother, as well as by that dark and mysterious wretch himself. In no other way could he account for the apparition he saw that morning on the face of the rock, nor for several sudden appearances of the same being, in places where there was no possibility of any foreknowledge that he himself was to be there, and as little that the same being, if he were flesh and blood like other men, could always start up in the same position with regard to him. (pp. 45-46)

His intuition is correct but when he is offered a more scientific rationalization he apparently accepts it:

Gordon said, if he would go with him to a mountain of his father's, which he named, in Aberdeenshire, he would show him a giant spirit of the same dimensions, any morning at the rising of the sun, provided he shone on that spot. This statement excited George's curiosity exceedingly; and he consented to go with Gordon to the Highlands for a space. (p. 47)



George's imagination is repressed by his common sense. He, like a poet, can see beyond objective reality but he, like the Editor, rejects anything beyond that as real reality.

The two other characters that the Editor obviously likes show his preference for the empirical in people. Mrs. Logan and Mrs. Calvert both share the Editor's belief in a predestined universe. Immediately after his piece on "rockets" and "gems"(see above p. 31) he reveals that:

Miss Logan [she later becomes Mrs.] had never lost the thought of her late master's prediction, that Heaven would bring to light the truth concerning the untimely death of his son.(p. 56)

And, when Mrs. Calvert utters her vision of the universe, there is a sentimental ring to her words similar to the Editor's.

" . . . Murder will out, though the Almighty should lend hearing to the ears of the willow, and speech to the seven tongues of the woodruff.(p. 89)

These two ladies also hate Robert and are confirmed empiricists accepting, as the Editor implies he does in his appendix,(p. 254) only the sensual perception of the world. Mrs. Calvert, after seeing Gil-Martin disguised as Drummond and knowing that it could not be Drummond, refuses to accept the irrational explanation for an irrational situation.

We have nothing on earth but our senses to depend upon: if these deceive us, what are we to do. I own I cannot account for it; nor ever shall be able to account for it as long as I live.(p. 80)

When Mrs. Logan sees Gil-Martin as George her beloved boy, she too cannot explain his existence in empirical terms and simply leaves it at that to go off hunting Robert down.

'It cannot be in nature, that, is quite clear,' said Mrs. Logan; 'yet how it should be that I should think so . . . I who knew and nursed him from his infancy . . . there lies the paradox. As you said once before, we have nothing but our senses to depend on, and if you and I believe that we see a person, why, we do see him. Whose word, or whose reasoning can convince us against our own senses?(p. 85)

This love of sensory perception is folly according to Romantic poetry:

the empiricist cannot see evil because evil, like Shelley's beauty, lies behind appearance, behind the three dimensional world.

The Editor's own actions are equally rational. His "Narrative" is nothing more than the presentation of evidence from "history and tradition" that will prove Robert a liar, "that there is . . . a good deal [of doubt] . . . that this wretch slew [George]." (p. 254) In his appendix, he shows this trait again when he proves that James Hogg, the character, is a liar. He does not understand, even after he is told that this James Hogg knows the location of Robert's grave quite well, that the Ettrick Shepherd does not want him to discover and desecrate Robert's last resting place.<sup>65</sup> More importantly in the sense of his editorial intimacy with Robert, he admits that he lacks the sensitivity required to understand the "drift" of Robert's "Memoirs" (p. 253) and posits a rational explanation for them.

In short, we must either conceive him not only the greatest fool, but the greatest wretch, on whom was ever stamped the form of humanity; or, that he was a religious maniac, who wrote and wrote about a deluded creature, till he arrived at that height of madness, that he believed himself the very object whom he had been all along describing. And in order to escape from an ideal tormentor, committed that act for which, according to the tenets he embraced, there was no remission, and which consigned his memory and his name to everlasting detestation. (pp. 254-255)

All of Robert's traumatic experiences and his poetic death are reduced to a pseudo-scientific platitude.

When the Editor opts for the common sense interpretation of Robert's autobiography rather than a poetic or even a humane one, he not only duplicates the actions of his hero and his two "gems" but also reveals the nature of his rationalism and its chaotic implications. He

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<sup>65</sup>Carey, p. xiv.

does not represent that inquiring branch of reason that investigates the irrational or the unknown in search of truth and wisdom but rather the more placid one that limits "the range of our experience"<sup>66</sup> to the phenomenal and to the cliché--common sense. Hogg consciously or intuitively provides us with the insight and the examples to see the relativity of common sense and the chaos it causes. Robert points to the subjectivity of the Editor's type of thinking in the aftermath of the Blanchard murder. Gil-Martin, immediately following the murder, affects the appearance of a young preacher and parades himself in front of witnesses in this disguise. The young preacher is arrested, tried, and condemned to death on the strength of Gil-Martin's performance and not because of the truth. At this point in the "Memoirs," Robert, in an uncharacteristic burst of clarity, states, "If once a man is prejudiced on one side, he will swear anything in support of such prejudice." (p. 142) Phenomenal reality, according to Robert's experience and also according to Berger and Luckmann's theory, is relative to its perceiver's state of mind at the moment of perception and therefore subject to continual change.<sup>67</sup> To trust a mode of thinking based on such a variable as this reality is to invite intellectual or spiritual turmoil.

The Justified Sinner gives us three examples of such trust in relativity and the muddle it brings. The people of Auchtermuchty believe the Deil's "IT" to be the gospel truth because it coincides precisely with their own prejudices. To their minds, at least, their

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<sup>66</sup> Frye, Romanticism, p. 84.

<sup>67</sup> Berger and Luckmann, p. 20.

behaviour is perfectly normal. Robin Ruthven's action provides them with another set of values that reveals the perversion behind their momentary reality. During their lapse into the phenomenal world, they become a frenzied mob that inhumanely beats Robin for his apparent irrationality. Robert too accepts Gil-Martin, his "astonishing appearance" and his theological rigmarole because they too fit in exactly with what Robert's prejudices tell him is real at that auspicious moment in his life. His subsequent actions, when viewed from that side of him, are the exemplars of common sense. His poetic side tells him otherwise. The resultant chaos and inhumanity in Robert's example are plain: loss of self control and four people murdered.

Our third example is really a fictional extrapolation but Hogg's satiric game forces this kind of analysis and his other examples give it credibility. What happened to Auchtermuchty and to Robert could happen to us in our relationship with the Editor. We have already seen how the Editor tries to prejudice us against Robert before we even read the "Memoirs." If we succumb to his charms, if we accept his distortions of a truth, we would tacitly strengthen the plausibility of Robert's statement regarding the impermanence of phenomenal reality and the deceit of common sense. We would become the fanatics who overlook the Editor's lies, mistakes and mechanical ends in much the same fashion as Robert ignored the allegorical signs of Gil-Martin's evil. Because of our intellectual malleability, we would live in the phenomenal world only half aware of the universe and of ourselves. We would be Hogg's last man.

The satirist tends to prevent this anticipatory fate. He is our poet, our Robin or our Scot. Although he does not present a

specific alternative, his revelation of the Editor as a fool suggests that a move in any direction other than the Editor's would be a wise one. His behind-the-scenes nature refutes the phenomenal and in doing so posits a larger and more permanent reality. And he creates a sense of order out of the chaos caused by the Editor's common sense. In doing this he, according to Frye, places his creator in rare company:

In the riotous chaos of Rabelais, Petronius and Apuleius satire plunges through to its final victory over common sense. When we have finished with their weirdly logical fantasies of debauch, dream, and delirium we wake up wondering if Paracelsus' suggestion is right that things seen in delirium are really there, like the stars in daytime, and invisible for the same reason. Lucius becomes initiated and slips evasively out of our grasp, whether he lied or told the truth, as St. Augustine says with a touch of exasperation; Rabelais promises us a final oracle and leaves us staring at an empty bottle; Joyce's HCE struggles for pages toward waking, but just as we seem on the point of grasping something tangible we are swung around to the first page of the book again. The Satyricon is a torn fragment from what seems like a history of some monstrous Atlantean race that vanished in the sea, still drunk.<sup>68</sup>

Hogg, too, fashions a heavy Scotch mist in the Justified Sinner. We run into two brothers, two fathers, two mothers, two story tellers, four murders, one suicide, one natural death, a riot, a rape, countless devils, two languages, delirium, debauch, apparitions, a character who defies description and an author who includes himself as a character in his own work. It is only when we bump into the satirist that the fog begins to clear and we see that most of the cloud is caused by the Editor's attempt to give us the rational facts. The satirist makes us wise with his poetic values, with the irrational.

Our distrust of the Editor is completed in Hogg's Scottish metaphor. The Editor is also not a Scot. Having already dealt with his

<sup>68</sup> Frye, Anatomy, pp. 235-236.

anti-Scottish leanings in the previous chapter, we will only deal with the incidentals that complete this picture. His heroes, the Colwans are politically and theologically British: the Laird is a member of the "cavalier party" or the unionists and, from the allusive evidence of the Editor, an Episcopalian. (p. 27) The Editor himself cannot speak Scots, or, at least, not well enough to fool James Hogg. These small failings and his attack of the Scots are, in terms of this novel, further indications of the Editor's evil and rationalism.

Hogg's progression suggests a sorry future for his external man. His great aid, his imagination, the perceiver of the totality of things, is dying and his great hindrance, limiting reason, the promoter of the phenomenal as all, is triumphant. He can not see his position in the enormous and uncaring universe, he cannot comprehend the inhumanity in his institutions, and he cannot admit his own evil because he is no longer poetic--"the disease called man."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Brown, p. 10.

## APPENDIX

Frye's classification of "specific forms" is relatively unimportant when compared to the theory it came from. He attempts to do for satire, comedy and romance what Aristotle did for tragedy by using the same inductive process to arrive at plausible definitions for all three. Whatever our distaste for his eventual classifications, his reading of Aristotle appears credible and his primary arguments seem to be axiomatic in Western terms. His definition of satire frees the Justified Sinner not only from his own classification but also from the peripheral position allotted to it by its other critics and provides a background for a critical analysis of it. Frye bases all of his theories on his extrapolation of Aristotle's requirements for the proper hero for a particular type of tragedy.

Fictions, therefore, may be classified, not morally, but by the hero's power of action, which may be greater than ours, less, or roughly the same. Thus:

1. If superior in kind both to other men and to the environment of other men, the hero is a divine being, and the story about him will be a myth in the common sense of a story about a god. Such stories have an important place in literature, but are as a rule found outside the normal literary categories.
2. If superior in degree to other men and to his environment, the hero is the typical hero of romance, whose actions are marvelous but who is himself identified as a human being. The hero of romance moves in a world in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended . . .
3. If superior in degree to other men but not to his natural environment, the hero is a leader. He has authority, passions, and powers of expression far greater than ours, but what he does is subject both to social criticism and to the order of nature.

This is the hero of the high mimetic mode, of most epic and tragedy, and is primarily the kind of hero Aristotle had in mind.

4. If superior neither to other men nor to his environment, the hero is one of us: we respond to a sense of common humanity, and demand from the poet the same canons of probability that we find in experience. This gives us the hero of the low mimetic mode, of most comedy and realistic fiction . . .
5. If inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration or absurdity, the hero belongs to the ironic mode . . .<sup>70</sup>

Subtracting the first mode, as Frye suggests, it is possible to arrange the other four in a circle with one axis running from romance to irony or myth to reality and the other axis running from tragedy to comedy or high to low mimetic. Frye implies that satire lies between irony and comedy.<sup>71</sup> Each of these axes controls the circle whenever Frye is discussing the hero and his society or the poet and his readers.<sup>72</sup> The crucial axis concerning the hero and his society is the one connecting myth and reality and it is this one that governs the heroic and social qualities of tragedy and comedy. The other axis, joining the high and low mimetic modes, controls the poet-reader facet of the circle and, therefore, the ambience in which romance and irony are presented.

By superimposing the circles the axes control, it is possible to extract an image of satire. The satiric protagonist--he is rarely a hero--has qualities similar to the "undeveloped" comic hero's but, because he lives in a real environment and not "a golden age,"<sup>73</sup> his

<sup>70</sup> Frye, Anatomy, pp. 33-34

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., pp. 169-171.



actions are totally ineffectual. He moves in a universe of selfish and retributive gods and a society more interested in the mechanics of its institutions than it is in the individual.<sup>74</sup> His author tends to present him or his environment as absurd or grotesque<sup>75</sup> but this fantasy has all the conventions associated with realism. His audience, fearing his presumptions and ridiculing his actions, is never quite sure if it is laughing at him or itself.

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., pp. 147-148.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

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