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UTOPIA vs. HISTORY: JONATHAN SWIFT AND THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my mother
and the memory of my father.

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SUMMARY of THESIS

This thesis as a whole seeks to rehabilitate Swift's major satires, especially Gulliver's Travels, as essential texts for a modern readership, both in the light of recent critical work and in the light of later twentieth-century historical experience. The argument throughout is fundamentally concerned with this task, and its importance is stressed at many points in the thesis.

Chapter One is a survey of criticism of Gulliver's Travels from Swift's day to our own, and the justification for undertaking what must seem to many a work of supererogation, given the number of such surveys over the years, is to be found in the fact that the task of re-instating Swift's works, though greatly advanced, is far from complete. Given the large number of widely-divergent views on the meaning of Gulliver's Travels, the author believes it to be both helpful and necessary to provide an interpretation of the history of the criticism of the book in order to clear the ground, and lay the foundations for a different hypothesis, one based, as the Chapter argues, as accurately as possible on the actual text itself. The problems of biography, though not the chief concern of the thesis, are touched upon where it is felt they impinge upon a clear interpretation of the works, for in Swift, perhaps above all writers, the biography has become so intimately, and shamefully, interwoven with the literature as to make it a primary requirement on the part of any critic to attempt to disentangle them at such points as they prevent clear and proper

understanding of the books' message.

Chapter Two seeks to provide the historical background to the general argument about Swift and our own age. In order to say what Swift is today, it seems only proper to establish what he was, and was not, in his own day. His roots are found to be in the seventeenth rather than the eighteenth century, especially in the political, religious and moral dilemmas posed by the events surrounding the Civil War. In order to substantiate this contention, a comparison is made between Swift and Locke and between Swift and Hobbes. The crucial questions of human nature and the role of law in society are discussed, and Swift is found to be nearer to Hobbes on the vital moral issues, closer to Locke on the political issues. The former association is argued to be more important, since the question of human motivation necessarily underlies all else. The argument that Swift is a Hobbesian is not pursued too far, given Swift's fierce independence and his loyalty to the Church of England, which is seen as his primary loyalty, for both political and religious reasons.

Chapter Three explores the background to the utopianism of Gulliver's Travel, traces it to its origins, and finally establishes its limitations. The origins of the utopian elements of Houyhnhnmland are traced to Plato via Sir Thomas More, whose Utopia forms an important bridge between the utopias of classical antiquity and that of Swift. Utopia and Gulliver's Travels are then compared and studied at length in order to demonstrate that they belong to a nonliteral utopian tradition, one that does not believe in the possibility of the realisation of utopia, but

which presents it as an absolute, unattainable ideal. The mentality behind creating such utopias is found to be a shared attitude towards history, an attitude which interprets history as wicked, senseless, and something to be feared. The good life could only be achieved by escape from history, according to this tradition, except for the fact that history cannot be evaded. Consequently, such utopias are not programmes of action, something towards which we may work, but presentations of abstract ideals. The other utopian tradition - the literal - is found to be the enemy of such a view, since it believes that history can be overcome and utopia established on earth. Swift's attitude towards this other utopian mentality is discovered in Gulliver's Travels, where its proponents are excoriated as evil, deluded, and mad dreamers who can only bring about chaos and disaster. In this attack on the Modern utopists Swift's true forte is discovered, for his pallid description of utopia is as nothing compared to the genius of his satiric onslaught on his opponents. The fullest expression of this attack is argued to be in A Tale of a Tub, a wide-ranging satire on the Modern mentality which begins as an exposé of fraudulence and ends as an unremitting and disturbing exploration of the human condition itself.

Chapter Four advances the argument, and also attempts to pull it together in a final synthesis. George Orwell is proposed as a kind of modern counterpart to Swift, a writer whose infamy Orwell also partly inherited. A study of his relationship to Swift via his essay on Swift cements the bond discovered between the two writers. A study of Orwell's last two novels, Animal

Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four, follows, and a comparison between the pessimism found there and that found in Gulliver's Travels is drawn. The vital link between Swift and Orwell is argued to be their assessment of the crucial need for man to strip himself of his illusions about himself, as a prelude to reform. The fact that both appear, at times, to state more than this is also noted, and also the potentially nihilistic vision of their major satires. A brief glimpse of twentieth-century literary and philosophical trends substantiates the view that the optimistic vision of man and of his future possibilities is rapidly becoming discredited, and suggests that a major reassessment of who (and what) we truly are is now widely recognised as important, even mandatory.

The thesis concludes with the contention that in exposing this moral Achilles heel in man, Swift (like Orwell) deserves to be counted among his benefactors, for its exposure, and the importance of facing up to the task of remedying it, are argued to be essential for our survival.

CHAPTER ONE
GULLIVER'S TRAVAILS: THE REHABILITATION
OF A CLASSIC

The task of rehabilitating Swift has been a major critical concern throughout our century, and most critics have undertaken some part of this work in their writings on the great Dean. The biographical scandals, misapplication of life to the works, banishment of the acceptable parts to the nursery and the unacceptable parts to damnation, the charges of madness, misanthropy and vicious spleen - all these aspects of past criticism have been re-examined, and largely dispelled in our time.

And yet, despite the obvious debt owed to past critics by critics of the second half of the twentieth century, the controversy over Swift's beliefs, the kind of man he was, the essential meaning of the great satires and the true relationship between life and works remains very much alive. It would appear that the man who wrote a treatise whose purpose was to "wonderfully mend the world",¹ and who read each passage to a servant to ensure simplicity and intelligibility,² has left as a legacy to mankind one of the eternal enigmas of literature: what is Gulliver's Travels saying to us?

If the work of our own age has removed certain obvious obstructions to arriving at conclusions about the Travels, it has equally left many more intact and, I will argue, added certain other obstructions, perhaps even more vital to remove if any advance in Swift-studies is to be possible.

That Swift was a madman, a misanthrope, an atheist priest, as the nineteenth century claimed, no one would, I believe, now attempt to claim. The truth of his ailments, his generosity to friends, his humour and his devotion to the Anglican Church are now more-or-less universally accepted premises upon which to base any judgment or evaluation of our greatest satirist.

But what has been the cost of such advances? For that some cost is involved forms a central pillar in the fabric of my argument that somehow Swift scholarship has gone awry - and fundamentally so. I contend that the mistakes - and such I believe them to be - of more recent writers on Swift constitute a perversion of the great satires - and in particular Gulliver's Travels - which one should be anxious to correct. In this introductory Chapter it will be my aim to assess the major strains of Swift-study, discover where they are mistaken, and propose what I hope will be a more accurate and faithful hypothesis. My prime concern will be to rescue Swift from the charge that he is somehow a sheep in wolf's clothing. As Patrick Reilly has suggested: the task of rehabilitating Swift having been achieved, our purpose is now to attempt the rehabilitation of Lemuel Gulliver.³

It must be stated from the outset that the purpose of this introductory Chapter is not to destroy in toto the fabric of Swift criticism in our age. The contentions will always be tempered by a candid admission that most of the critics mentioned contribute something positive, necessary and helpful to the study of Swift in our time. I believe only that, in correcting the nineteenth-century view of Swift, they have gone too far to the

opposite extreme, and my objections are primarily concerned with the ultimate emasculation of Swift's great book and its message which their criticism produces.

In order to understand why it was necessary to undergo a process of reclamation at all, we must first appreciate the legacy of Swift criticism as it existed at the start of the twentieth century.

On its publication Gulliver's Travels was an immediate popular success. The buzz and hubbub surrounding the event are well enough documented for there to be no doubt about this. His friend Gay wrote that "From the highest to the lowest it is universally read, from the Cabinet-council to the Nursery",⁴ a fact confirmed by a letter from Arbuthnot: "Gulliver is in Every body's Hands".⁵ As to the actual reactions to the book itself, one will search in vain for a recorded vilification which would have justified the extreme caution which Swift employed in the matter of the book's publication.⁶ "I find no considerable man very angry at the book", wrote Pope, adding only that "some indeed think it rather too bold".⁷

But by and large the reports of the time are either complimentary or humorous: the Dublin bishop who declared that the book was "full of improbable lies, and for his part, he hardly believed a word of it";⁸ the old gentleman who, having read the book, immediately consulted his map, in order to locate Lilliput; the sea-captain who claimed to have known Gulliver - these are the almost-legendary, good-humoured anecdotes which were proper indications of the book's general reception.⁹

Even so, the root of the great debate which has since

surrounded the Travels is evident, if subdued, even this early.¹⁰ The origin of the book's essential epithet - 'controversial' - can be fairly ascribed to Bolingbroke's remark, quoted by Gay, that it was "a design of evil consequence to depreciate human nature."¹¹ In this remark, not greatly regarded at the time, lies, of course, the origin of the ensuing struggle over the book. Taken side-by-side with Arbuthnot's famous statement that "Gulliver is a happy man that at his age can write such a merry work",¹² we have in précis the two 'angels' which have contended for domination over Swift's great masterwork. I mention this fact here in the hope that it will be remembered when I come to deal with the twentieth-century critics, because I believe it to be a fundamental, crucial dichotomy.

The eighteenth century produced a critical balance in favour of Bolingbroke's view. It was, however, always accepted that Swift was a supreme stylist and his writing merited the highest praise, even from detractors. His conciseness of style, said Boyle, "has never been equalled by any other writer".¹³ Even Dr. Johnson, who on Boswell's testimony did not like Swift and used to attack him "upon all occasions",¹⁴ concluded his unenthusiastic appraisal of the Dean with the following tribute: "perhaps no writer can easily be found that has borrowed so little, or that in all his excellences and his defects has so well maintained his claim to be considered as original."¹⁵

Nonetheless, the prospect of the Fourth Voyage was a different matter entirely, the general consensus being that the book was a bad idea, and an even worse execution. "In painting

Yahoos he becomes one himself,"¹⁶ said Boyle. Delaney judged the Travels to be ill-advised, ill-considered and badly executed and asserted the following: "Who would not wish rather to be author of one Arcadia than fifty Laputas, Lilliputs and Houyhnhnms?"¹⁷ Other critics described the Travels variously as "this unnatural filth", (1781)¹⁸ "very unsatisfactory reasoning", (1822)¹⁹ and "disease, deformity and filth", (1779-81)²⁰ and the overall picture was of a man and a book preoccupied by, if not obsessed with, humanity and life in its most debased, brutal and nasty lights. This is not to say that Swift was without defenders of his Travels. Godwin claimed Swift as a friend to humanity and saw the Travels as displaying "an ardent love of everything that is excellent and honourable to the human heart",²¹ and even into the nineteenth century we may still find Hazlitt's exuberant celebration of the book's message: "It is an attempt to tear off the mask of imposture from the world; and nothing but imposture has a right to complain of it."²²

Thereafter, until the twentieth century, we find a critical field largely held by detractors, and a growing concern over the Fourth Voyage. Swift's death in unfortunate circumstances became the source of numerous and injurious myths, all of which were fostered and nurtured in this critical period. A painful ailment and a bitterly painful exile combined to make Swift's last words and actions reflect a cruel twilight before a longed-for night. The significance of this would not have been so great, had it not been for the undue, and unfounded, emphasis placed upon the Dean's completely misunderstood illness. For it

was to cast a giant shadow not only over the period of his life to which it pertains, but backwards over his entire life and career. The diagnosis of 'madness' by persons not in the least qualified to judge the matter was to prove disastrous.

It must be noted in passing that what this period represents must be viewed from a broader perspective than simply that of literary criticism. The late eighteenth and, to a much greater extent, the nineteenth century were marked by a growing optimism about man, society and the future.²³ The philosophes, the French Revolution, the rise of humanism, industrialization, social and political reform: these are the indicators of the philosophical and political perspectives of the times. The proper study of philosophical concepts of man and human destiny, and Swift's place in that scheme of things, will be the subject of the succeeding Chapter to this, and detailed examination of such matters will be found there. For the purposes of this discussion, however, it must be noted simply that the period in the 'history of ideas' to which Swift belonged, namely the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, was the age which least bore the mark of optimism and was therefore unlikely to be favoured by the thoroughgoing, complacent positivism of the nineteenth century. Swift's age was regarded as an intellectual and moral 'dark age', satire its most odious expression, and he and Pope its most obvious proponents.²⁴

By the time the Victorians came to have their say, the Fourth Voyage had already been singled out as the thoroughly pernicious item in Swift's oeuvre, a tragic appendage to a book which was otherwise largely praiseworthy.

The most famous - or perhaps infamous - of the Victorian critics was of course Thackeray, whose essay on Swift in The English Humourists (the irony is inescapable) contains a torrent of abuse heaped upon a "madman" in what is perhaps the greatest age of optimism and self-satisfaction in the history of English letters. The attack centred upon the Fourth Voyage, and the Yahoo in particular. Thackeray's suggestion that those who had not read the last Voyage of the book should spare themselves the degradation of so doing,²⁵ amply demonstrates the effect which this satire, written, Swift would have us believe, to "wonderfully mend the world",²⁶ had on the sensibilities of the adult Victorian reader.²⁷ Finding it impossible to dissociate Swift from his work, and finding the work impossible to accept and odious to contemplate, Thackeray sought to upbraid the book's author on grounds not restricted to the field of literary criticism. Since the man believed his fellow-creatures to be Yahoos, he could not have been a decent human being, and Thackeray took up the cudgels to some extent from Johnson here in turning the biography against the man in order to prove the veracity of his claims about the Travels.

Two important assertions made by Thackeray were: firstly, that the message of the book was incompatible with a Christian view of man, and consequently Swift could not have been a Christian; and secondly, that - association between Swift and Gulliver unswervingly assumed - the man who produced such a misanthropic, warped and bitter view of mankind could not in fact have been sane. In upholding the first assertion Thackeray scoured the life of the Dean in order to find evidence, which he

believed he did. Evidence of Swift's expediency in matters of religion was found in his advice to his friend Gay, an unlikely candidate indeed for the Church, to take holy orders.²⁸ His religion was "hypocrisy", a complete sham, and Thackeray concludes of Swift's religion that "he had bent his pride so far down as to put his apostasy out to hire."²⁹ But even the demolition of Swift's beliefs was not enough. Such an outrage was the Travels to Thackeray that it could not be explained even by its author's being a time-serving, self-seeking hypocrite, or by the absence of religious doctrine in the book itself. Hence the second assertion that Swift was a madman. The intention to imply it seems obvious in the following diatribe against the 'hero' of the Travels:

a monster gibbering shrieks, and gnashing imprecations against mankind - tearing down all shreds of modesty, past all sense of manliness and shame; filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene.³⁰

In any event, the connection between such misanthropy and madness was soon made, and, indeed, after Scott's assertion that such a vicious and brutally degraded vision of man constituted "the first impressions of ... incipient mental disease",³¹ Lecky and many others took up the idea and it became more-or-less a commonplace to speak of "madness" in connection with Swift.³²

A hypocritical clergyman, an exposed misanthrope, and a fully-diagnosed madman were the three dimensions which constituted the Swift which critics of our century were presented with and consequently a Gulliver's Travels debased, distorted,

disdained and discarded.

Faced with such a legacy, the twentieth century has seen it as its proper duty to undertake the rehabilitation of Swift and his great satire from the critical and biographical dungeon into which the nineteenth century had cast them. Patrick Reilly has perceived two 'schools' of criticism involved in the task, which he has denominated 'Christian' and 'formalist' and, since I believe both his perception and his classification to be correct, I will henceforth use his terms to denote these critics.³³

The first 'school' - the 'Christian' critics - employs the same techniques as Thackeray and co. to defeat his view of Swift. Thackeray had used the biography to denigrate the life and thence the work, and so these critics re-examined the life in order to reinstate the man and the work. It will be observed that such critics show no greater tendency than the Victorians to separate man and work. It is purely the results achieved which constitute the reinstatement of Swift. Since Thackeray had concluded that Swift was a diseased writer who believed men incapable of goodness, he was not a Christian; which led the Victorian to scour the life of the Dean in order to find the instances already noted above which upheld his contention. All contradictory evidence, or ambivalent incidents, were not mentioned. The modern critics are, however, able to contradict such a view and easily find in the biography ample evidence that Swift quite definitely was a Christian, committed to his Church and his calling.³⁴ Thus the ground has been cleared for the building of a new structure of Swift-criticism which stands against the irreligious madman proposed by Thackeray.

It is when one considers the object of such an approach that one fully realises the similarity with Thackeray. In proving that Swift was a good Anglican, these critics suggest that the real meaning of the Travels will become evident. If Swift was a Christian, then the Travels cannot be the rantings of an irreligious lunatic; they cannot represent black despair. This is an exact reversal of the Thackeray view, and yet one which employs identical means to achieve opposite ends. The interpretation of the Travels depends as much for them as for their predecessor upon the crucial question of Swift's religion. The results may differ, but the underlying assumption is the same. In declaring for Swift the Christian, these critics are validating Thackeray's approach, and attacking only his results. The biography remains the key. As one critic has expressed it, in connection with the meaning of the Fourth Voyage:

"We can, I believe, clarify these matters if we consider the relation of Swift's theological views to his satire, bringing together the two sides of the man which tradition has separated: Jonathan Swift, satirist, and Dr. Swift the Dean."³⁵

Where Thackeray had gone wrong was not in seeking an explanation of the Travels in Swift's life, but in seeking it in the wrong places in that life, and a new generation of critics has set about the task of correctly relating the religious life of the Dean to the works of the satirist.

To begin with, one must surely question such an approach on the basis of its methodology. For instance, when Kathleen Williams - who has written the most thoroughgoing and convincing book from this point of view - chides past critics for their

failure to include Swift's other writings in their discussions on the Travels, and includes the sermons as an essential concomitant to reading the major satires, one wonders whether this approach is in fact an advance from that of Thackeray.³⁶ After all, as has been pointed out, "they would be very odd sermons indeed that were not compatible with Christianity",³⁷ and one cannot help asking the obvious questions which such a coupling of texts begs. Is it not true to say that the suggestion that Swift's sermons may be used as a key to the Travels is in fact to have already made one's mind up about the meaning of the satire? Might one not - equally legitimately - take Thackeray's reading of the Travels to the sermons and consider them symptomatic of religious hypocrisy? For, after all, these critics who read the Travels as Christian doctrine are imposing their own reinterpreted biography upon the work, declaring that the book is Christian not so much because of its contents, as because Swift was a Christian. The process involves importation of foreign material which is to be presented as domestic produce and, just as Thackeray's invented "madman" was used to condemn the work, so Tuveson's (quite correctly) reinstated sound Anglican Dean is used (quite incorrectly) to tame the Travels.

We are being asked to believe that because Swift was a Christian, the correct interpretation must embody this fact or be condemned with the Victorians. Discussion of the book's meaning is thus severely restricted, and conjecture or assessment must take place within a framework of selected biography regarding religious orthodoxy. To understand Swift's religion is to decipher his satire, and literary criticism as such must take

second place to biography. However well such an approach may work with other authors, I do not believe it can be allowed to apply to Swift. It may be that to know that Sartre is an existentialist is the vital key to understanding his Roads to Freedom trilogy, since it is clearly the literary embodiment of a philosophy of life expressed elsewhere by the author. But does it prove as useful with such a complex, varied and multi-faceted writer as Swift? However much the reinstatement of Swift as a clergyman by these critics is to be admired, it still remains to say that this is not by any means the final word on the satires. To demand that one should read the satires through a pair of Anglican-tinted spectacles is not really legitimate. We should rather simply bear in mind that the hypocrite preacher is no longer a credible portrait and then read the work for what we find it to say.

The 'Christian' viewpoint is important to discuss because it has been asserted that it is "the now dominant interpretation of the Fourth Voyage"³⁸ and a closer look at the claims of these critics is therefore not only desirable but necessary. The most important contention of the 'Christian' critics is that Swift's religion is crucial to the Fourth Voyage, and that this book represents some kind of defence of the Christian faith, and in particular the Anglicanism of its creator. Kathleen Williams, prominent among these critics, assumes in her book a clear connection between the sermons and the Travels, suggesting that the ideas and motivation behind the major satires are identical to those behind the Anglican sermons. Yet, beyond the statement that Swift was a sincere churchman, no positive proof of such an

assertion is provided. But is this really as unexceptionable a claim as its proponents suggest? Is it so self-evident that one may accept it more-or-less as a truism that a Christian's book will - indeed must - be Christian? The answer must lie in a study of the text: this alone must be the acid test of such assumptions.

It is when we do examine Gulliver's Travels that we feel the ground beneath these critics tremble and give way. For, instead of supporting religion, the book, insofar as it mentions the subject at all, seems to undermine the spiritual life of man every bit as much as the physical aspects of his nature. The references have been assessed as follows:

Aside from the Third Book's transient assault on the 'Christianity' of the Dutch, religion only appears twice: in the first book as a preposterous source of schism among the Lilliputians ... and, in the Fourth Book as a cause of modern warfare. In both instances Swift points out the trivial grounds and evil consequences of religious controversy itself.³⁹

There seems little evidence of even a concealed attempt to uphold Christian values in these passages, and when the doctrine of the resurrection of the body appears to be mentioned in Book One, we find Gulliver stating that "the Learned among them confess the Absurdity of this Doctrine; but the Practice still continues, in Compliance to the Vulgar."⁴⁰ One begins to wonder whether Tuveson's description of the Travels as one of "the defenses of religion" of that day can be justified.⁴¹

Despite the fact that Gulliver refers to religious doctrine as "things indifferent" in the Fourth Voyage,⁴² it is

argued that this book is a defence of Christianity against modern humanism and other fashionable theories of human nature. Williams states that Swift places humanity not only above the Yahoos by virtue of possessing a rational intellect, but even above the Houyhnhnms by virtue of being granted the possibility of Christian salvation.⁴³ But even if it is true that Swift believed this himself, it must be substantiated from the book itself if we are to accept it. The notion that man is superior to beasts because of his reason is the primary satirical object of the whole book. The Houyhnhnm master declares that

when a Creature pretending to Reason, could be capable of such Enormities [Gulliver has been describing modern warfare] he dreaded lest the Corruption of that Faculty might be worse than Brutality itself. He seemed therefore confident, that instead of Reason, we were only possessed of some Quality fitted to increase our natural Vices; as the Reflection from a troubled Stream returns the Image of an ill-shapen Body, not only larger, but more distorted.⁴⁴

This tallies with his final judgment on man when he supposes "what Qualities a Yahoo of their Country, with a Small Proportion of Reason, might be capable of exerting: And concluded, with too much Probability, how vile as well as miserable such a Creature must be".⁴⁵

These passages seem to me to undermine the notion that the Yahoos are not intended as a satire on man, or that we are superior to them because of our ratiocinative capacity. It is surely part of the whole attack on human pride to suggest that the attribute which we most value - and of which we are most proud - is neither a benefit to us nor indicative of superiority

over any beast. As one critic has expressed it:

The notion that men use their reason to make themselves worse rather than better was not invented by Swift, but it disturbingly weakens the contrary assurance that it is after all by virtue of our reason that we are better than the Yahoos.⁴⁶

And yet the 'Christian' critics suggest not only that man is superior to the Yahoos, but that he is superior to the Houyhnhnms themselves, because he is capable of Christian redemption. Is it not the case that those who suggest such a reading of the Travels "are simply leaping into a void, supplying the links between horses and the Kingdom of Heaven out of such airy materials as they discover in their own predispositions."?⁴⁷

Having offered a definition of Swift, they proceed to extend this definition to the Travels without evidence or indeed any substantial indicative material drawn from within the book itself. This amounts to a literary equivalent of the magician's sleight of hand: the implications which they put into the Travels are presented as inferences drawn from the book.

From their point of view, the statement that man is superior to the horses is backed up by the supposed presentation of "deism" in the Houyhnhnm ethics.⁴⁸ This 'fact' discredits Gulliver in his admiration for the horses and distances Swift both from his hero and the Houyhnhnms. As an Anglican who steadfastly opposes deism in his pamphlets and tracts, he quite clearly cannot present as unambiguous Utopia a country dominated by deist principles. It is undeniable that Swift would never have credited a system governed by deists; but are the horses of

that persuasion? The vote is very far from unanimous on the issue, and such an eminent scholar as Herbert Davis has dismissed the notion,⁴⁹ while others have called it an "impossible notion" among other things.⁵⁰ It is surely, then, a matter which requires verification of some sort; yet none is offered. The statement that "Swift has not failed in his task of making his meaning clear to the candid reader"⁵¹ would be a dangerous one in almost any context of discussion of the great Dean; but in the present case seems presumptuous to the point of arrogance. The idea that in the Fourth Voyage Swift is satirising deism at all belongs with the great inventions of the present century: it had occurred to no critic (to my knowledge) of any previous age.

Again one looks at the secondary literature on Swift to find no lack of voices prepared to back one's instinctive opposition to such a proposition. It has been said that the notion is not "one that most common readers, past or present, have spontaneously arrived at,"⁵² and this can easily be verified by a study of the history of Swift criticism. Furthermore, since the true lesson of the book was evidently so subtly and imperceptibly presented, we may feel it legitimate to say that:

there needs to be very good reasons for supposing that he concealed his satirical point not only from the Vulgar but also from the Learned for more than two centuries.⁵³

As Anglican apologetics opposing deist principles the book has markedly failed to advertise itself. Unless we are to infer that virtually everyone who has read the book, apart from Professor

Williams and friends, is a good deal less "candid" than proponents of this view, one is led to the conclusion that the failure on the part of critics to interpret the book as a defence of Swift's religion and an attack on that of the deists for almost two hundred years is a twenty-four carat conundrum. That our age alone should have discovered such an intention in the Travels is remarkable; but that Swift should have chosen to conceal such an intention is extraordinary.

However, one of the proponents of this reading perhaps gives himself away in the following blunt assertion:

That Swift fought deism as a subversive force is well known. What is not so well known, however, is that he carried on the same struggle against such religious heresy through the symbolic Houyhnhnms in his most famous work.⁵⁴

Indeed, one feels, it is not well known! If one compares understanding of the main allegory of the Tale with that of Gulliver's Travels at the time of publication and beyond, one finds that the modern reading of the Tale as a satire on abuses of three branches of religion - the Catholic, Anglican, and Presbyterian Churches - is the same as has been professed by men of all ages. But when one regards the new vision of Houyhnhnmland as a land of deists, one looks in vain for a critic prophetic or even perceptive enough to have discovered it before our time. The question, then, still remains to be answered: why should Swift have shrouded his 'true' meaning? One critic has assessed the case thus:

Only two reasons can be conjectured: either he was insufficiently skilled as a writer to make his real purpose clear or he had motives for keeping it dark. The first possibility can be dismissed at once; and as for the second, it is hard to see what reason for concealment he could have had.⁵⁵

When all is said and done, the reason which strikes the reader with most conviction is that the attack on the deists is invisible to most readers because it is not there. In concluding that Swift had no such intention in the Travels, one states only what one finds in the text, and must settle for such a conclusion as being consistent with the text, even if it explodes a pet thesis about the book's provenance.

The discussion at present is really about methodology, about ways in which one ought to approach a subject in order to achieve the best, and therefore most honest, conclusions. Karl Popper, eminent philosopher and scientist, has asserted that "every genuine test of a theory is an attempt to falsify it, or to refute it", and points out that one does not formulate a theory and seek confirmatory evidence; but rather one tries every method possible to disprove it. If at the end of exhaustive experiment one's theory proves to be the least disprovable, then the theory can fairly claim to hold the field until a superior hypothesis appears on the scene.⁵⁶ Popper adds the important comment that "it is easy to obtain confirmations, or verifications, for nearly every theory - if we look for confirmations",⁵⁷ which strikes one as a just assessment of the matter. R.S. Crane, in an excellent refutation of the 'Christian' approach, says the same: we can regard a theory as

fact "only when, having impartially considered all the counter-possibilities we can think of, we find disbelief in it more difficult to maintain than belief."⁵⁸ Crane attacks Williams's reference to the "age of compromise" in which Swift supposedly wrote, and under whose influence he gave a particular meaning to the Travels. The message is really that we should use more of our reason and less of our brute instincts to achieve a via media of Anglican Christianity.

But Crane objects to the whole process, which Patrick Reilly has described as "hypostatization of methodological categories", of giving concrete life to abstract concepts.⁵⁹ To carry forward such an approach, to regard a period in the history of ideas "as the age of something or other, where the something or other is designated by an abstract term like 'compromise'", is to give ideas a kind of historical substance which abstract terminology should not be able - or allowed - to possess.⁶⁰ It is not by any means enough, Crane concludes, for a critic to assert "that the work makes sense when it is 'read' as the hypothesis dictates", for a multiplicity of 'readings' can be argued which do not emanate from the text.⁶¹ When one 'Christian' critic says that "Swift the clergyman repeats himself in Gulliver's Travels," he is guilty of the sin we have been discussing: assuming the truth of a hypothesis and applying it uncritically to a work of literature.⁶² In the hypothesis he proposes, Swift the Dean and Swift the satirist are one man, and when he turns to the text it is no surprise that he finds the evidence which is implicit in the original assumption. In saying how he will read the text, he is in fact predisposing himself to

find what he is looking for. In reference to two 'Christian' works by Kallich and Winton which adopt a similar stance, Crane observes a similar effect: "The ground is thus laid, in both essays, for a confirmatory argument in which the use of textual evidence is wholly dominated by the exigencies of the thesis to be proved."⁶³

It is not the 'history of ideas' approach per se which one opposes, but its misuse to prove a hypothesis. Crane himself uses the approach to suggest an interpretation of the Fourth Voyage based upon the philosophical background of Swift's learning. The idea that the horse is the exemplary beast above whom man towers by virtue of his reason is reversed to disprove the thesis - which Swift opposed in a letter to Pope - that man is animal rationale. Swift's modification to "only rationis capax" suggests that the reversal in Book IV of the Travels is meant to be clear to his fellows.⁶⁴ The reversal and the book are a challenge to man's self-perception, a challenge which would be null were the Houyhnhnms to be objects of satire. It seems clear that Swift would not have given man such an easy loophole through which to escape from his invective, if it was to be at all effective. His declared intention in his writing - that he wrote "to vex the world rather than divert it"⁶⁵ - would be inappropriate to the Travels unless the horses were an ideal of something which man pretends to possess himself. As another critic has put it:

We may replace the equine symbol by what ideal we please: Swift's reproach is not alone that our conduct falls short of the mark within our reach, but as well that we regard the ultimate mark as

attainable. We fail to approach the Brobdingnagians, and we suppose we can be Houyhnhnms.⁶⁶

This strikes one, I believe, with the force of truth. Swift's work is an assault upon human pride, which fact has struck most readers on first reading the Travels. The force of the invective has always been acknowledged; the energy, the single-mindedness and the inclusiveness of the attack readily accepted by most readers. The challenge to man, not merely to prove himself rational, but to say how he is better than the beasts, has been recognised even by later poets. Goldsmith copies Swift in a poem of similar intention: "Reason, they say, belongs to man,/ But let them prove it if they can."⁶⁷ The Swiftian impulse behind this poem parallels the charge behind the Travels: prove that you are what you say you are. The implication behind the statement "brute beasts are far before 'em" is also the same as the Fourth Voyage.⁶⁸ The whole satire is self-evidently both an attack on pride and a challenge to prove a long-held self-perception, and when the 'Christian' critics attempt to divert the implicit attack in the book from themselves and their fellow-men and to infer that Swift's message for man is, in fact, a palliatory one, they are conspicuously guilty of the kind of reaction which Swift knew satire always arouses: self-defence. In the Tale he acknowledges the hopelessness of trying to amend men through the medium of satire: "Tis but a Ball bandied to and fro, and every Man carries a Racket about Him to strike it from himself among the rest of the Company."⁶⁹

The 'Christian' critics, then, fail in a similar way to

the Victorians. They protected themselves by creating a monster whose challenging words were therefore allowed to be disregarded; while the new critics who create a message of Anglican 'compromise' in the book reduce the monster to such a size that his words can easily be swallowed without pain, and he may be safely restored to the nursery from which Thackeray excluded him. But if the present writer declares that he cannot accept the 'Christian' view, where Gulliver is deluded, the Yahoos unreal, the Houyhnhnms satirised Shaftesburians, and Swift there beside us with a pocketful of cosy platitudes, he does so because he does not see such components within the book itself. To save Swift from Thackeray's denomination of "shrieking madman" at the expense of turning him into a quiet church-mouse is, surely, too exorbitant a price to pay.

The second strain of modern critics who have attempted the rescue of Swift from the excesses of previous ages are the 'formalist' critics, who have taken as their primary concern the valuable study of the techniques used by Swift to achieve his satirical purposes. Maynard Mack has argued that "in the case of satire, at any rate, what is desperately needed today is inquiry that deals neither with origins nor effects, but with artifice", and upbraids the kind of criticism which, when faced with satire, cannot separate the man from the work, and reads the contents of each satire as the personal opinion and spleen of the author,⁷⁰ a fact also noted by Louis A. Landa, who emphasises the unwillingness of critics to detach Swift from his writings.⁷¹ The 'formalists' are one with the 'Christians' at this point, asserting that the origins of the misunderstanding of Swift's

great satires are to be found in this failure to read the text correctly. Emphasis on method leads to a proper evaluation of the rhetoric of satire, exposing simple author-character equations as absurd and inappropriate. As one critic has expressed it: "We find it hardest of all to admit of any distinction between a satirist and his satiric composition - and this despite the fact that satire is much more obviously a form of rhetoric than is lyric poetry."⁷²

This crucial distinction provides the springboard for a critique of Swift's work which will not fall into the trap which Thackeray and friends failed to avoid - the failure to appreciate satire as an art-form. They had regarded satire as a brutal form of literature, the expression of savage instincts and feelings. But the 'formalists' argue that satire had always been an exuberant, spontaneous explosion of strong emotions which must, necessarily, deal in extremes according to its nature. In looking at the author as a satiric poet, we must go against the Victorian discussion of the man; but this is all to the good. It is all to the good primarily because such an approach provides an escape-tunnel through which Swift the "ogre" may be helped to escape.

The chief advantage of such an approach lies in the fact that it enables these critics to rehabilitate Swift, both as artist and man, the former being implied by the latter. These critics, then, correct the Victorians' foolish Gulliver-Swift equation by showing that "the incidents of the book show the author to be studiously undercutting his hero-gull".⁷³ Thus the problem of explaining the undoubted misanthropy of the Travels is

solved in a different way from the 'Christians'. They argued that the book was in reality expressive of a Christian solution to man's dilemma. The 'formalists', however, claim that the book was misanthropic, but that the guilt for such misanthropy has been attached to the innocent party, and that Swift, far from identifying with Gulliver's views, regarded them as absurd, and in fact proved this by undercutting the credibility of his 'hero' at crucial moments throughout the book.

The similarity with Thackeray still exists, though the "monster gibbering shrieks" is now Gulliver, a fact clearly proved by Swift in the book. Swift, instead of being at one with Gulliver at the crucial moments - such as in the Houyhnhnms - is in truth "above him in the realm of comic satire, still indignant at the Yahoo in man, but at the same time smiling at the absurdity of the view that can see only the Yahoo in man".⁷⁴ The mistake in Thackeray's interpretation, caused by his failure to appreciate satire as literary form, is thus rectified, and the Travels reinterpreted in such a way as to make Gulliver the object of ridicule in his own Voyages. Consequently, the charges brought against Swift by previous critics could be fielded easily by this process. The 'pride' which Thackeray was so adamant was Swift's most dominant - and damnable - characteristic, is now transferred to Gulliver, "the supreme instance of a creature smitten with pride", and the genuine misanthrope of the Travels.⁷⁵

Although these studies do not come to identical conclusions, and conclusions of course range from Gulliver as buffoon to Gulliver as monster, the fundamental approach remains

identifiably the same. This approach has been described as one in which these critics "distinguish sharply between Swift and Gulliver as a preliminary to showing that Gulliver's view of his fellow-men as Yahoos is not shared by his creator."⁷⁶ This open, uncritical admiration for the rational horses is cited as evidence of Gulliver's insanity, since such a view is supposedly untenable if attributed to Swift. Under the assumption that Swift could not have shared the beliefs of his hippophile hero, the 'formalists' conclude that "the last words of Gulliver's memoir are part of the complex process of discrediting his vision of the world";⁷⁷ and, as a result of this interpretation, the long passage at the end of the book in which Gulliver denounces the pride of his fellow-men and declares that "I here intreat those who have any Tincture of this absurd Vice, that they will not presume to appear in my Sight",⁷⁸ becomes part of what Robert C. Elliott calls the "satirist-satirized theme".⁷⁹ Swift is giving Gulliver enough rope here to hang himself since pride is "a sin of which he himself is conspicuously guilty."⁸⁰

The obvious purpose of such studies is to suggest much the same as Thackeray and co.: namely, that the vision of mankind embodied in the Travels, and especially the Fourth Voyage, is incompatible with a balanced, sane view of human nature. If Swift was not a misanthropic madman, then Gulliver must be, because the book is representative of such a world-view, and requires a madman to whom its insanity may be properly attributed. The crucial connection with Victorian diatribes consists in the fact that these twentieth-century men, as much as their nineteenth-century predecessors, are anxious to "exonerate

mankind from the charge of being Yahoos" , and aim to prove that Swift did not think so either.⁸¹ The obvious differences from Victorian criticism do not conceal a genuine similarity in intention.

In acknowledging the importance of their contribution to a fairer and more realistic appraisal of the man and his work, it must be said that these people too are guilty of the sin of over-correction. Instead of the simplified moral gargoyle spewing forth misanthropic bile upon the heads of his fellow-men, we see before us an immensely complex, even obscure, if consummate, stylist, whose achievements and presentiment of ambiguous character foreshadow the work of twentieth-century writers, and in particular, it has been suggested, the Henry James of The Turn of the Screw.⁸² But again the question already applied to the 'Christian' argument seems relevant. Why should Swift, who on his own admission wrote "To the Vulgar more than to the Learned",⁸³ have failed in his intention in what is, despite recent claims for the Tale, generally regarded as his magnum opus? Why, in other words, should the meaning of the Travels be so obscure that it has required the intricate, sophisticated methods of such critics to uncover it?

Indeed it seems that the subject of the discussion must be some other Gulliver's Travels. How otherwise are we to explain the gross disparity between Thackeray's conclusions about the Travels, and those of the 'formalists'? Thackeray thought the book "filthy in thought, filthy in word, furious, raging, obscene",⁸⁴ and Gosse referred to "the horrible foulness of this satire on the Yahoos".⁸⁵ The reaction of a modern critic

to this same book is that the book is not representative of misanthropy at all. Gulliver "does not rail, as the misanthrope does, on the imperfections of men".⁸⁶ Another claims "Swift never meant the Yahoos to be identified closely with humans" and cites as proof the fact that "they walk on all fours and are also amphibious".⁸⁷ The reader will easily deduce from this that, since neither applies to him, the Yahoo cannot be a satire on man. QED. Further evidence is to be found in the fact that the capacities of the Yahoos are limited to those appertaining to beasts of burden, since they are "the most unteachable of brutes".⁸⁸ The reason for Gulliver's being duped into believing that they are ostensibly of human kind is explained as being due to Gulliver's "comic lack of understanding"⁸⁹ and his gullibility in the face of Houyhnhnm insistence to the contrary: "despite the insistence of the Houyhnhnms, he is not at all like the beastly Yahoos."⁹⁰

The Victorian diatribes and the anxiety to exonerate man from the charges levelled against him at the end of the Travels were, after all, unnecessary. The controversy was merely a storm in a critical teacup, and the true nature of the book's meaning was now laid bare. In a classic reversal of Swift's famous statement, the book was indeed written to divert the world rather than to vex it, with the chief diversion being none other than Gulliver the madman. Thackeray and co. had misunderstood the intention of the Fourth Voyage, and in believing it to be an attempt to portray their own society and their fellow-Europeans in a bestial, depraved and anarchic condition, consequently had expended great amounts of energy in a futile cause. They had

made a fundamental error in reading the book. Harold Kelling reveals the following:

Gulliver's account to his European master in chapters V and VI of a European society made up of wholly vicious people is clearly the result of his eyes being blinded and his understanding perverted by the perfection of the Houyhnhnms ... it is clear that Swift did not present chapters V and VI as an accurate picture of European society.⁹¹

But surely this is the same picture of European society which Gulliver witnesses in Lilliput, and the identical conclusion of the King of Brobdingnag: that Gulliver's fellows were "the most pernicious race of odious little vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the Earth."⁹² Are we then to believe that the apparent truth, not only of the Fourth Voyage, but also of the first two, is in effect a clever trick to deceive us into accepting at face value what are actually comic lies? We will return to this issue later, since it is patently a crucial one to clear up.

What we are really dealing with in such interpretations is an attempt - similar in intention, though different in form, to that of the 'Christian' critics - to treat Gulliver as entirely separate from his creator. He is, in fact, according to such a view, the central character in a novel and, as has been suggested above, more precisely a Henry James novel. As Patrick Reilly has suggested: "It would be difficult to think of another error more guaranteed to produce confusion in the interpretation of the Travels",⁹³ and when one considers the following explication of the book's meaning, the importance of refuting such

interpretation becomes obvious: "the meaning of the book is wholly distorted if we identify the Gulliver of the last voyage with his creator and lay Gulliver's misanthropy at Swift's door."⁹⁴ The reason for this suggestion is that Gulliver

is a fully rendered, objective, dramatic character, no more to be identified with Swift than Shylock is to be identified with Shakespeare. This character acts and is acted upon; he changes, he grows in the course of his adventures. Like King Lear, he begins in simplicity, grows into sophistication and ends in madness.⁹⁵ Unlike King Lear, he is never cured.

It seems unthinkable to believe such a claim, since Gulliver is quite patently not a character at all. In this context Kliger's perpetual and infuriating habit of referring to the Travels as a "novel", without explanation or definition, is typical of this presumption.⁹⁶ To claim so much without proper proof is illicit in literary criticism. The evidence against it is overwhelming, and the voices of opposition have not remained silent on the issue. As one critic has put it: "The voice throughout is that of Swift. He employs Gulliver and the other persons as either straightforward or ironical mouthpieces: and they have neither the consistency, nor the life of characters in a novel."⁹⁷ Their only relevance consists in their relationship to Swift; the nature of their words and actions must be weighed against the voice of their creator. Each 'character' is in fact "a device in Swift's hands for achieving one single consistent aim - the systematic attack upon human pride."⁹⁸

Yet another opponent of this view describes Gulliver's

Travels as "a work of fiction but not a novel", and adds that "Swift could never have been a novelist. Satire can only be part of the novelist's make-up; in Swift's it was everything."⁹⁹ Herbert Davis defines such creations as "puppets" rather than dramatic characters, and argues that Swift "could never have trusted anyone to speak for him".¹⁰⁰ He remains constantly in control of all situations in his fiction. A roving-licence given to any of his creations, the ability of any of them to develop or move in directions of their own, is clearly antithetical to the satiric intention.

The ultimate blind-alley up which these critics lead themselves can be demonstrated easily enough. Patrick Reilly has convincingly refuted Robert C. Elliott's attempt at the 'Jamesian' approach, "Gulliver as Literary Artist".¹⁰¹ In this article, Elliott argues that Gulliver is "an accomplished artist, capable of self-insight, objectivity and perhaps even irony."¹⁰² In order to make such a reading tenable, the author distinguishes between Gulliver-author and Gulliver-character, the former able to recreate the latter with objectivity, humour and accuracy. His ability is permeated by a remarkable restraint, since the misanthrope can write of the ingénu without, apparently, displaying a single trace of the contempt which he must feel towards his former self. But, of course, such a rendering of Gulliver as a complete, fully-rounded character, leads Elliott into troubled waters. Why, to quote one example, should Gulliver be a magnanimous giant in the First Voyage and a contemptible midget in the Second? Why should the "liberty-loving Gulliver of Book I" suddenly become "the

Machiavellian schemer of Book II"?¹⁰³ Again, why should the Gulliver who stops his nose with rue to keep away the smell of his Yahoo-kin, and who would "never suffer them to eat in the same room"¹⁰⁴ (who is, we have to remember, the Gulliver who eventually writes his memoirs), say at the outset of the Fourth Voyage, the voyage which leads him to his present condition of self-knowledge and misanthropy: "I continued at home with my wife and children about five months in a very happy condition, if I could have learned the lesson of knowing when I was well."¹⁰⁵ Why, in other words, does a book written by a convinced misanthrope conceal its message of misanthropy for the final few pages?

The answer, of course, lies in Gulliver's artistic accomplishment and literary restraint. The accepted fact of the Travels being the work of a masterly English fiction-writer is given a sudden twist. In rejecting Thackeray's total integration of man and work, Elliott goes to the other extreme. Swift has been rescued from the charges levelled against him by jettisoning work from author. Quite apart from inconsistencies in the text which Elliott is unsatisfactory in explaining, the crucial issue ought to be development of character. As his voyage to the Houyhnhnms progresses, Gulliver-character ought to be merging into Gulliver-author. Yet, in the midst of his vital renaissance, we find Gulliver describing the following scene to his Houyhnhnm master:

And, to set forth the Valour of my own dear Countrymen, I assured him that I had seen them blow up a Hundred Enemies at once in a Siege, and as many in a Ship; and beheld the dead Bodies

drop down in Pieces from the Clouds, to the great
Diversion of all the Spectators.¹⁰⁶

In its context this passage proves a stumbling-block to the Jamesian approach, since Gulliver-character should (being now almost wholly Gulliver-author), as Elliott himself admits, "be incapable of such moral obtuseness."¹⁰⁷ The futility of irony towards the horses is obvious: as it is a form of lying, they could not understand it. In any case, the underlined clause seems meaningless in any ironic context conceivable within this approach.

Another critic opposing the Jamesian approach remarks that

we are not, I think, very actively horrified at Gulliver's feelings, as we should have been if they had been Winston Smith's. In a novel, or in life, we should be revolted by his callousness. But we cannot, here or elsewhere, respond to him as a 'character'. He is too absurd and two-dimensional.¹⁰⁸

Elliott implicitly accepts this, though regretfully. He tentatively suggests that "a case might be made out for the view that in this section of the work Gulliver is in the last throes of his struggle to cling to what has been for him the real world",¹⁰⁹ but immediately admits that he is treading thin ice. Reluctantly he accepts that "we must conclude that Gulliver is here not a consistent character".¹¹⁰ But, incredibly, Elliott turns this admission of failure on the part of his own critique against Swift, whose book is therefore an "artistic failure", and Gulliver's attack on pride itself an epitome of that particular human trait.¹¹¹ Gulliver is absurd, not least

in his admiration for the Houyhnhnms, who are objects of satire themselves, and the ultimate effect on the Travels is the creation of a stage of characters whom we are not to accept, narrated by a fool whom we are not to trust, and whose essential message amounts to milk-and-water Christian platitudes about 'compromise'.

The purpose of such suggestions about the nature of the Travels is obvious. An attempt is being made to discredit what the Victorians believed to be the message of the book by means of distancing Gulliver from his creator, and subsequently attributing the misanthropy of the book to him alone. We will notice that the technique and the motivation behind it are the same as used by Professor Williams and co. The assumption that misanthropy is the keynote of the Fourth Voyage is not disputed, but the guilt is removed from Swift, and placed firmly on the shoulders of Lemuel Gulliver, literary artist supreme. The reason given for such a shift is that the 'new' Swift - the reinstated sound Anglican divine - could not have shared such a view of man; Swift "could not accept the total Yahoodom of man".¹¹² Supposed justification for this lies in the following statement, made again without evidence being cited: "Swift the divine and Swift the artist are one and the same as to opinions."¹¹³ The result of such bold assertions is to discredit Gulliver and to cast a pervasive shadow over what he tells us. This can be achieved by the creation of two personae: Gulliver the ogre, and Gulliver the buffoon.

We owe a debt to those critics who have rehabilitated the Travels as a great comic work, and who have sought to

re-emphasize the wit and humour which have for so long been suppressed by writers anxious to discredit Swift both as man and writer. But if the humour is to be accentuated to the exclusion, or worse, the distortion of the satiric message, then, we might legitimately ask, what has become of the book which has proved to be so controversial for three centuries? Is it not true that in, justifiably, correcting the excesses of the Victorians, these critics have gone to the opposite pole of response? If the melodramatic, hellish monstrosity of Thackeray does not strike the modern reader as a true representation of the meaning of the Travels, does it not at least - when opposed to the watered-down, tepid and innocuous knockabout version of the 'formalists' - suggest that in this book there is an implicit gauntlet thrown down before man. If Thackeray's failure to credit Swift's message for man seems serious, then the failure of these critics seems calamitous. On their advice we are led to read Swift's daunting and challenging images of man as "only the clever hyperboles of a rhetorician who wishes, really, to recommend perfectly orthodox pieties".¹¹⁴ It is, surely, at this juncture that the reader who has brought no a priori assumptions to the book, who has no fixed notions or theories about Swift and who is prepared to state what he finds in the text itself, revolts and cries: "Enough!" What metamorphosis has taken place in the meaning of the book described by T.S. Eliot as "one of the greatest triumphs that the human soul has ever achieved"?¹¹⁵

But if we are to reject both schools of criticism, both on the basis of dubious methodology and damaging results, and denounce with Norman Brown "the poverty of criticism designed to

domesticate and housebreak this tiger of English literature";¹¹⁶ if we are to agree with John Traugott that "the common reader ... in his simple moments has always sensed, with Thackeray, Yeats and Orwell, Swift's outlawry",¹¹⁷ and have no wish to impose a pattern upon a difficult and challenging work, or to restrict to the orthodoxy or mundanity of Anglican apologetics the great genius of Swift: what then should we believe of the Fourth Voyage, remembering that we have rejected the two most popular approaches to the work in our time?

Several recent books and articles have articulated other possible interpretations of the Travels, and a fair number of review articles and synopses of criticism have appeared, some of which uphold the basic premises of the two schools of criticism we have noted, some of which do not. James L. Clifford brings the debate one step forward when he splits Swift criticism into two different schools, "hard" and "soft".¹¹⁸ Both the 'Christian' and 'formalist' approaches fall within the "soft" school, whilst the argument offered in the present work is defined as "hard". To use Clifford's own descriptions: "By 'hard' I mean an interpretation which stresses the shock and difficulty of the work, with almost tragic overtones, while by 'soft' I mean the tendency to find comic passages and compromise solutions."¹¹⁹ The major figures in the "hard" school are seen to be R.S. Crane, Edward Rosenheim Jr., Charles Peake, Louis A. Landa, Conrad Suits, and Donald Greene.¹²⁰ To this number one might fairly add Claude Rawson, David Ward, Peter Steele, and Patrick Reilly,¹²¹ all of whom have, in various ways and to varying degrees, asserted the essential seriousness of the

message of Swift's great satire. Pat Rogers has described the latter group as the "Anglo-Australian" school,¹²² more a geographical than a critical distinction. Such terminology, it need hardly be said, does not denote a school in any strict definition of the term, but it does usefully pool together a number of figures whose reading of Swift is, in many essentials, consistent, particularly with regard to their reaction to the two approaches comprising the "soft" school we have already encountered, and provides the foundation for the following interpretation of the Fourth Voyage.

Our final option is to offer a different hypothesis, one which cheats neither Swift nor Gulliver, and is consistent with the book as it stands. Gulliver's dilemma is that he has seen in the Houyhnhnms the embodiment of all that he has been led to believe is desirable in a reasonable being. The idea that he has been brainwashed into believing this is no doubt substantiated when one considers the ease with which Gulliver has adopted the manners, customs, and behaviour of the inhabitants of his previously visited "remote nations": a fact comically underlined on his return from his first two voyages.¹²³ But that what he has been led to believe in Houyhnhnmland is not altogether foreign is of course vital. That the Houyhnhnms should embody the ideals of humanity is central to Swift's purpose. Gulliver is to see in the horses all that he has been taught to believe is the final ideal of mankind.¹²⁴ That the name given to the horses translates as "the perfection of Nature"¹²⁵ is meant to be a bitter blow to the pride of humanity. How dare Swift give the reason to brute beasts! That Thackeray and co. should have

reacted as they did to the Yahoos is central to the purpose of the book too. The juxtaposition is, however, much more than comic. The comedy, even when directed against the needle-threading horses, does not at all weaken the impact of the satire.

For the satire does not concern the Houyhnhnms at all.¹²⁶ The Houyhnhnms, as so often has been pointed out, are "dreary beasts";¹²⁷ "we would not wish to emulate them if we could",¹²⁸ and so forth. That they "are no more than mental abstractions"¹²⁹ is not to the point. Swift knew only too well that there is no such thing as a rational horse.¹³⁰ It seems an obvious point, and yet is so little emphasized as to lead one to the conclusion that it rarely has been appreciated. The key to this may be seen in Leavis's quote: "The Houyhnhnms may have all the reason, but the Yahoos have all the life."¹³¹ Exactly! The crux of the reader's dilemma is that all the reality belongs to the Yahoos, and none at all to the horses. The reader thinks he must choose between an impossible ideal and an only-too-real reality. Gulliver's perplexity lies in the fact that he cannot be a horse, and he has recognised that he is a Yahoo. When the Yahoo-girl attempts to mate with Gulliver, he recognises the vicious truth at the heart of his travels - he is of their kind.

In this cataclysmic, catastrophic recognition of kinship with the Yahoo, Gulliver has achieved what he never had before: self-knowledge. The suggestion that Gulliver is ridiculous in his eventual choice is arguable, but the idea that this solution to the dilemma destroys the essential credibility of that dilemma

is, I think, not.¹³² Traugott describes this as "the ironic disjunction between the impossible truth, Utopia, which cannot be ignored, and the shadowy actuality, England, which cannot be got rid of",¹³³ and this, I believe, is just.

Gulliver is an alienated figure at the end of the Travels, but his alienation from mankind cannot be presumed to prove alienation from his author. Gulliver is alienated for precisely the reason that he is at last a "true seer".¹³⁴ He is lost to mankind at precisely the moment when we can be sure, if ever, that he is voicing the opinions of his puppet-master:

I am not in the least provoked at the sight of a Lawyer, a Pick-Pocket, a Colonel, a Fool, a Lord, a Gamester, a Politician, a Whoremonger, a Physician, an Evidence, a Suborner, an Attorney, a Traytor, or the Like: This is all according to the due course of things: But, when I behold a Lump of Deformity, and Diseases both in Body and Mind, smitten with Pride, it immediately breaks all the measures of my Patience: neither shall I be ever able to comprehend how such an Animal and such a Vice could tally together.¹³⁵

Pride. Human pride is the object of the whole satire. How can we suggest that Gulliver is a "lunatic", or that he is completely isolated from Swift, when it is perfectly obvious that he has had his eyes opened to "what Swift's rhetoric during the first three voyages has presented as the truth about society"?¹³⁶ We cannot dissociate Gulliver from Swift at this point because he is enunciating the lesson of the book as a whole. At no point in Gulliver's Travels is the hero more allied to his author than here: only at this point does Gulliver join the Giant King, the Houyhnhnm Master, and the God of "The Day of Judgement" among the

gallery of Olympians who express Swift's crucial message for man: see the ridiculousness and injustice of your pride in human nature.¹³⁷ That Gulliver's solution is ridiculous may be debatable, but that the motive behind his action is wholly justified is not. Gulliver has made the mistake of believing he can really imitate a rational horse, however honest his intention, but he has made no mistake whatsoever in believing in his kinship with the Yahoo. The fact that the Yahoos in his country wear clothes and speak "a kind of jabber"¹³⁸ called language is neither here nor there, and Gulliver knows it.

As in the Tale, the choice is between being a Fool or a Knave, because, textually, that is all there is on offer. But secretly Gulliver knows that the choice is no choice at all: there is only the vicious reality of the Yahoos. His only option, then, is misanthropy: if he cannot achieve the good, he must turn his back on the evil. This is not the pride of Gulliver, but his ultimate humility in the face of appalling revelation.

It is fundamental to my case that the renunciation of the 'Christian' critics is far more important for us than dismissal of Thackeray and his ilk, and for the the following reason. Swift's conclusion to the Travels is open-ended; it quite deliberately avoids catharsis. Fuller evidence of Swift's views on such a subject in his other writings will follow in succeeding Chapters, but for the moment we must at least point out that it is incomplete for a vital reason. The reason is this: that the lesson of Gulliver's Travels is the Yahoo and the Yahoo alone. We are to read the Travels, I would contend, in order that we

should achieve the kind of self-knowledge to which Gulliver is so shockingly exposed. Like Brecht, Swift refuses us an answer in his text: the answer is to be sought in life itself.¹³⁹

Furthermore, I would add, we must realise that Swift never contended that truth should, or would, be a comfort - for this presupposes the kind of truth which we shall find.¹⁴⁰ If we find the Yahoo intolerable, and shrink from him in disgust, then this is our problem, not Swift's.¹⁴¹ That we consider the explosive charge in the Yahoo a dud is our own folly, nay, our own pride. The case remains unaltered. Upon this hypothesis, which, I believe, is faithful to the text, I shall base my further evaluations of the Travels. The rehabilitation of Lemuel Gulliver is the starting-point for a study of Jonathan Swift which will attempt to prove that in his most radical scepticism, he is the writer most relevant to our age.

In dealing with such concerns, we immediately think of the devastating world-view - or 'man-view' - of such as T.S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley, Samuel Beckett, Joseph Conrad, William Golding, and the late George Orwell.¹⁴² The considerations of these authors' works produce far-reaching effects in terms of our own self-perception. To whatever extent they or we believe their truth as perceived is problematical. What is sure, however, is that their works present us with a buck of veritably explosive power, which we, as readers, must deal with as we see fit. I propose to suggest that in his evaluation of human nature, Swift asks the questions which most perplex our own age; that in his vision of history and politics he suggests enquiries and remedies which we cannot afford to ignore; and that in his great satires

he displays himself as a writer who, as much as Shakespeare, deserves to be read and re-read by a twentieth-century audience.

CHAPTER TWO

LIBERTY vs. LICENCE

To take Swift at his word is one of the two most hazardous responses to his writings. The other is, of course, not to take him at his word. Nowhere can this be more clearly illustrated than in the attempts of critics over the years to place Swift's politics firmly in one camp. The results of such enterprises, confidently embarked upon, illustrate the point perfectly. He has been aligned with liberals,¹ absolutists² and communists;³ has been praised for his services to liberty,⁴ denounced for his worship of authoritarianism,⁵ and described as both a proponent and an opponent of freedom.⁶ The society of his most famous creations the Houyhnhnms has been seen as an example of both anarchism⁷ and totalitarianism,⁸ and his political affinity has been shown to belong to both Hobbes⁹ and Locke,¹⁰ and practically every standpoint in between. The real difficulty, then, lies not merely in knowing that one must take him at his word at some point, but in knowing when, and which word.

The issue is a crucial one, for progress towards any understanding of the major satires depends upon reaching an acceptable starting-point from which to begin a coherent exegesis. But this in itself becomes a difficult operation, given Swift's habit of treating the reader as anything but an ally.¹¹ Thus the oldest game amongst Swift critics begins. Since we cannot interpret the works without knowing what kind of man wrote them, we turn to the biography as a crutch.¹² The

question then ceases to be "What is Gulliver's Travels saying to us?", and becomes "Who is Swift?" But since the bewildering variety of answers to the latter question has already been illustrated, and since this adds little of ultimate help in answering the first question, we are forced to concede defeat, and offer approximations instead of definitions. With this caveat sounding in our ears, we must tentatively pick our way through the evidence of Swift's writings, accepting that the most we can do is try to unravel a few of the threads of the author's designs.¹³

By far the most popular description of Swift's politics is that of a moderate man, a compromiser between extremes which he hopes to balance by means of a strong, secure centre.¹⁴ The evidence for such an interpretation is scattered throughout his writings, and finds its fullest expression in the Contests and Dissentions and the main narrative of the Tale. In both these works the appeal is to common sense and reasonable mediation between extremes. Martin, in the Tale, eschews both the authoritarian demagogue Peter, with his idolatry and worldliness, and the violent and fanatical Jack, with his excessive zeal. We are clearly meant to approve his sensible compromise and see his dislike both of tyranny and fanaticism as the positive message of the book. Similarly, the Contests and Dissentions sets before us the evils of extremes, as they found political expression in classical antiquity, and the author advocates mixed or "Gothick" government as the best model for any society to follow. The recurring theme is that of balance, of choosing a middle way, of resisting the seductive pull of the absolute.

Thus far, one can see little at first glance which could be called contentious in Swift's politics or religion, and if this were all the evidence, one could be forgiven for thinking the controversy over his allegiance wholly illusory. But this is nowhere near to being the whole of the matter and, as with so much else in Swift, one need only scratch the surface lightly to see the underlying contradictions show up. The man who wrote "How inconsistent is man with himself!"¹⁵ seems to be determined to prove the point in his own writings.

That Swift was a man immersed in the waters of seventeenth-century politics has been convincingly shown many times. "His belief in mixed government, his opposing of the old, well-born, country families to the nouveau-riche moneylenders and tradesmen, his resentment of the rabble, and his loathing for oppression were all typical of the late seventeenth century."¹⁶ His ever-present obsession was the Civil War, and the realities and possibilities thrown up by that conflict;¹⁷ and, for all that the Contests and Dissentions opposes both tyrant and fanatic, and the Tale ridicules both Roman prelate and dissenter, it is clear that Swift really fears Crazy Jack and the Rabble:¹⁸ and it was in the Civil War that they finally achieved their majority:

The Pope would of our faith bereave us,
But, still our monarchy would leave us,
Not so, the vile fanatic crew,
That ruined church and monarch too.¹⁹

Peter is presented only as a clever rogue, a schemer, a smooth-operator with an eye on supreme power. But the

obviousness of the challenge from Rome, and the fact that it had been effectively defeated in the securing of the Protestant succession, caused Swift to be less anxious about its likely success. The same was far from true of Jack and his kind, who had already brought down Church and King and who - in Swift's view - still threatened to destroy every belief and institution that was dear to him. Such was his hatred of these men that he was prepared to deliver a sermon on the martyrdom of Charles I - at a time when such a sermon was bound to be seen in certain influential quarters as alarmingly Jacobite - in order to attack them.²⁰ To denounce such regicide and yet profess support for the Revolution of 1688 was to sail dangerously close to the wind.²¹ It remains significant that Swift thought it worth the attempt. Even the attack on the hapless Partridge was, suggests one critic, an act of revenge for the events of the Civil War: a retaliatory kick long after the final whistle had been blown on the game.²²

Behind, between and all around the events of the seventeenth century stalked the spirit of liberty, and in particular religious toleration. The entire structure of modern society took its first significant shape in that period which held Swift's abiding interest, which makes it essential that we scrutinize the precise relation between Swift and its chief proponents and opponents. We shall want to find out precisely where he stood on all the vital issues. If we take as examples the two most famous seventeenth-century writers on this crucial question of liberty - Hobbes and Locke - we should be able to get a clearer picture of Swift's place on the political map. Since

these two stood at opposite poles of response to the dilemma of freedom and toleration, Hobbes advocating absolute government and a strong state-Church axis, where Locke sets forth the virtue of political democracy separated from a tolerant Church, their respective coordinates in relation to Swift ought to prove, if not conclusive, then at least useful.

To link Swift with Hobbes might quite properly be considered an unlikely interpretation of his works, since his comments on Hobbes and his general attitude towards the Hobbesian monolith are consistently ones of scorn.²³ He derides the very idea of arbitrary power which "notwithstanding all that Hobbes, Filmer and others have said to its Advantage, I look upon as a greater Evil than Anarchy itself; as much as a Savage is in a happier State of Life, than a Slave at the Oar".²⁴ To Swift, the idea that a sane man would voluntarily surrender his liberty to live under the metaphorical guillotine of an absolute monarch's whim seemed laughably naive. Far from preserving man from the chaos of nature, it subverts his autonomy and places him at the whim of one evil authority over whose power there is no control. This is why Swift draws a sharp distinction between the executive and the legislative power, proposing obedience only to the latter. He says this confusion of powers is a common error and one "which deceived Hobbes himself so far, as to be the foundation of all the political Mistakes in his Book".²⁵

To make the legislative power supreme guaranteed, according to Swift, that the governed could only be ruled with their own consent, unlike those under Leviathan who give up all pretensions to a say in the running of things in return for the

security offered by the monolithic power. Swift thought this a nonsense, and vigorously denies the necessity or desirability of so extreme a surrender. An all-powerful legislature would guarantee security, and a say in the election of the administration would guarantee freedom. This power, this Leviathan, is precisely the monster whose coming to power Swift was attempting to pre-empt in the argument contained in the Contests and Dissentions, where Swift seeks a balance among King, Nobles and Commons which will forestall any attempt by one of these to obtain overall supremacy.

But when one looks at Gulliver in Lilliput and Houyhnhnmland, and compares his flight from the former with his reluctant expulsion from the latter, the dissimilarities between Swift and Hobbes seem less clear-cut than before. Gulliver subjects himself willingly to the local power, whether it be midget, giant or horse and his comic obeisance to the six inch King makes the point perfectly. Gulliver gives up all his claims to liberty in order to move from being outsider to member of society: a good Hobbesian bargain. Even his flight is a Hobbesian choice. His flight is occasioned by his perception that the king to whom he has surrendered his liberty has begun to act in a manner incompatible with Gulliver's own well-being. He therefore takes the appropriate action, refusing to stand trial, because "having perused many State-Tryals, which I ever observed to terminate as the Judges thought fit to direct; I durst not rely on so dangerous a Decision, in so critical a Juncture, and against such powerful Enemies".²⁶ Since the initial bond was voluntary, its dissolution is perfectly explicable and

justifiable within the terms of the original bargain: an escape clause implicit in the contract between the free man and Leviathan. Hobbes's premise is, after all, that man is primarily selfish rather than foolish, savant rather than naif.

And if we object that Swift's overtly political writings are antagonistic to such a contract, we will find it hard to deny that his religious writings tend rather to give it substance. Religious worship for Swift is not to be made a matter for the individual conscience, for his diagnosis of the human condition is sufficiently close to Hobbes's for him to understand perfectly what such a tolerance would mean for the Church. Could Swift have been an optimist, he might have regarded such a choice as desirable, since under a theory of the natural goodness of man - given belief in the truth of one's Church - there could be nothing to fear. But Swift was never close to being an optimist, and his reasons for rejecting religious toleration betray his analysis of his fellow-men. Men must be made to be good, because they naturally tend the other way; and, if they cannot be made to be good, they must at least be obliged to seem so. Swift is quite prepared to accept the hypocrite, and stands in stark contrast to Milton in his moderate demands of the faithful. They are to be obliged to wear the correct mask, whatever the true face beneath. Assuming the selfish nature of man, and his similarity to beasts, he says "human nature is so constituted, that we can never pursue anything heartily but upon hopes of reward",²⁷ and pursues this theme repeatedly in his religious writings.²⁸ If the promise of heaven was not enough - and Swift was well aware of the value of rewards beside punishments

in both ecclesiastical and civil affairs - there is the threat of hell.²⁹ The significant thing here is that Swift shares with Hobbes a fundamental premise regarding human nature. Almost all men are motivated by fear or greed only.³⁰ Despite the fact that the advocacy of rewards in civil matters is often regarded as progressive and positive, it cannot cloud the central issue: Swift was Augustinian in his view of human nature. If he has little else in common with Hobbes, we shall still feel that this is a fundamental link between the two.

Accepting the definition of man as selfish, the only problem is how to oblige him to deny his nature in his behaviour. It is useless to believe that, left to its own devices, a man's virtue will blossom forth, and that in any event it is not permissible to introduce a code which will enforce an approved course of behaviour. For pragmatists like Swift the problem is in reality that of devising "a new force-field compelling changes of direction".³¹ One must attempt to make certain undesirable areas of the field of human experience out of bounds, and not simply trust the judgment of the individual to persuade him not to walk there. For Swift, the 'good man' thesis of Aristotle (and now of Locke, Tindal and co.) is a fallacious doctrine, the myth of those who will not see man as he truly is. Swift has written of such a view with contempt, claiming that pagan philosophers failed because they did not appeal to the selfishness in man.³² Self-interest is the key to Swift's analysis. The 'virtuous' man will endeavour to be so just so long as it is in his interests; but let it be in his interests to go against virtue, and see then how the secular virtue stands.

For Swift argues that, although it is, in the eyes of the world, injurious to one's prospects to appear outwardly dishonest, this will check a man only so long as he can be seen. Let him believe that he can get away with it, and his self-interest will carry his conscience in its pocket:

For, if he hath nothing to govern himself by, but the Opinion of the World, as long as he can conceal his Injustice from the World, he thinks he is safe.³³

Swift sets up the thesis of his Project directly against the Pelagian heresy as it found expression in his own time.³⁴ He sneers at the naïveté of the view which was to result in Fielding's characters, naïve men led astray by events, but never losing their essential innocence. In Swift, there is no choice involved in human behaviour, no intellectual or moral self-debate, but only the presence or absence of opportunity, the possession of, or lack of, power to act. Given power to act, the results will always be the same, for human behaviour is as predictable as the motion of planets and stars, and all that can prevent the pursuit of vice is when "the Temptation was not properly offered, or the Profit was too small, or the Danger too great".³⁵ This is the very raison d'être of his Project, which aims to reform men's manners by direct appeal to their self-interest. Just as in Lilliput the King is astonished that Europeans believe only in punishing the wrong, and neglect to reward the right,³⁶ so in the Project Swift seeks to establish a parallel to heaven, here on earth, for those who will not be motivated by the greater prospect of eternal bliss; and also a

civic hell, to appeal to men's fear of not being well thought-of.³⁷

Hell is important for Swift, when he talks of those who do believe. It is the cork on the poison bottle which is held in place by belief. So long as the people believe in eternal punishment, they cannot loose the murky liquids of free-thinking, sacrilege or dissent. They will not believe it to be in their long-term interests. Only let the Church falter on this matter, and the result will be disaster for the social and political order, and, of course, the Church. Swift, here, anticipates Orwell, seeing the dissenter - or 'freedom fighter' - as a power-worshipper who can only exist by manifesting opposition to the existing order.³⁸ Such a view of dissenters will readily accede to the proposition that, since these men's power exists in direct proportion to their attack on the Church, it is conversely in the Church's interests to keep hold on its power by weakening that of the dissenters, operating on the same principle. Thus Swift threatens the masses with "double stripes", and promises them "The Kingdom of Heaven",³⁹ aware that the Church must offer them a protection from the evils of life, but aware also that they must believe in those evils. The protective umbrella offered by the Church is valid only for so long as the people believe that it is raining.

Thus far, we have observed a similarity between Swift and Hobbes on the vital question of human motivation, because, while all the evidence shows Swift to be against the Hobbesian monolith, there is evidence aplenty that he accepts the reason for Leviathan's being brought into existence. But where should

we look for the oft-stated similarity between Swift and Locke, the other protagonist in the great seventeenth-century debate on liberty?⁴⁰ Since Swift seems to have little politically in common with Hobbes, perhaps we should try to see whether his affinities are more in the camp of the liberals.⁴¹

Swift's liberal credentials are most clearly represented in his loathing of tyranny and his advocacy of mixed government. His support for the idea of annual parliaments and his preference for the "landed" interest before the "monied", which he suggests will be better for the community since the Members will then have strong local ties and an obvious interest in the welfare of the locality, also link him strongly with the camp of Locke.⁴² In addition, he also suggests that, in the interests of liberty, it is better that "ten guilty men should escape, than one innocent suffer", which places him at some distance from the Hobbesian summum bonum of the stable society bought at any cost, an end towards which any means are acceptable.⁴³ Moreover, and more important, there is the legendary fact of his constant defence of Irish liberty, a cause which he supported throughout his bitter exile in that unhappy kingdom, and which still justifies his inclusion among the great Irish patriots.⁴⁴ His persistent fight for the underdog, and his heroic stand against English misrule and arrogant colonialism, taken alongside the above factors, have ensured that very few people have attempted to contradict Swift's own famous claim in his epitaph - in the poetic tribute by Yeats - that "he served human liberty".⁴⁵

Is Swift, then, really a liberal? If so, what does he mean by liberal, and what kind of liberal is he? These are the

questions which most perplex the critic of Swift, for no sooner has one pointed out what seem to be the distinctive characteristics of his politics and religion, than contradictions, irritating and often peripheral though they seem at first, begin to appear; no sooner do they begin to appear, than they multiply, until one is obliged to return to one's original assumptions and modify them. Trying to place the island of Swift's true political leanings firmly on the map, one discovers that the longitude and latitude contained in his works are unreliable. Apparently determined to prevent the critic from locating, docketing and dismissing his intentions, he gleefully - or so it often appears - issues a stream of false coordinates until the reader is so disoriented that he faces a terrible dilemma. He must either become like a Laputan, attempting to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, or, like Pope Peter, pass off bread as mutton, and present his projecting as truth; or, faced with the knowledge that the first critic is simply plumping for one set of coordinates no more reliable than another, he must admit to bafflement, and settle for recording as many coordinates as he finds. Agonising as this is for critics, it is the only responsible course of action. "Who is Swift?" has become "How many Swifts are there?", and, short of nudging the evidence in favoured directions or ignoring it where it seems to lead into unwanted terrain in order to answer the first question, we have no choice but to accept the second question as the more realistic, and settle for an inconclusive and open-ended discussion of tendencies within the works.⁴⁶

Patrick Reilly suggests that often - especially where

questions of religion are concerned - Swift's "latent authoritarianism ignites", going on to say that this is not "hypocrisy or dissimulation" but "a species of unawareness, which, pushed to an extreme, becomes doublethink".⁴⁷ When one reads the chapters on politics and religion in the Fourth Voyage,⁴⁸ or observes the, largely unspoken, critical commentary running parallel to the Lilliputian Court, one presumes that Swift is expressing a heartfelt contempt not for individuals or parties, but for the whole degrading, disgusting charade; a midnight world of gangster ethics and roulette-wheel justice. One could not honestly say that one feels a moral superiority evident between high-heels or low-heels, big-endians or little-endians. They are all contemptible and tiny, and one feels, moreover, that they are tiny because contemptible and not vice-versa.

But one has to face up to the fact that Swift was easily the best, undoubtedly the most influential and - for a time at least - indubitably the most sought-after propagandist of his day.⁴⁹ So that when one looks at the religious-political controversy in Lilliput, it seems incredible that the author of such passages actually belonged to one of the derisively-presented factions, or at least to its counterpart in England. The chief effect of such writings, especially when taken in tandem with the Tale, is to discredit the activity concerned, not merely the participants, and the natural reaction of the reader is to regard politics and religion per se as contemptible.⁵⁰ This is one of the most notable aspects of Swiftian satire: the satire, while setting out to mock what is

foppish, hypocritical or morally debased in belief, ends up by mocking belief itself.⁵¹ The Tale, so Swift claims, is a defence of Anglicanism, and yet, though Martin comes out rather better than others, he is subjected to some scathing satire nonetheless.⁵² Swift's honesty, it seems, obliges him to paint portraits warts and all: but, as a defensive measure, the claim that Martin has fewer warts than Jack or Peter is ineffective. It is not hard to see why Queen Anne was appalled by the book. There is a danger, of which Swift seemed unaware, of going too far, of defending the Church to death.

However, in closer perspective we find at least some of the contradictory evidence making sense. We discover that, for Swift, party meant the Whigs, because the Tories represented the nation whereas the Whigs stood for new money and rising business.⁵³ The birth of moneyed power is epitomised for Swift by the birth of the National Debt and the collapse of the South Sea Company. He is of the view that speculation and the pursuit of such ethereals as profit-margins inevitably leads to disaster; they have root in nothing concrete, and can therefore only threaten, not establish, peace and prosperity.⁵⁴ This leads to his familiar political credo: "Law in a free country is, or ought to be the Determination of the Majority of those who have Property in Land",⁵⁵ a point which he makes repeatedly in his works.⁵⁶ This is why, when he uses words such as "party" and "faction", he is referring only to the Whigs and their attempts to seize power. Since the Tories are the natural defenders of the (unwritten) Constitution, this attitude seemed, to Swift, accurate and completely unhyocritical, and explains

his ambivalence towards censorship. The Whigs are simply squatters who occasionally seize control of the house, and it is perfectly permissible to silence their voices because of this. The Tories are the legal tenants, and it is, therefore, scandalous that any attempt should be made to keep them from protecting their rights. The plethora of statements on the need to suppress the squatters' scribblings⁵⁷ - culminating perhaps in the question "Why not restrain the Press to those who would confound Religion, as in Civil Matters?"⁵⁸ - sits ill with the Letter to Pope, where censorship is designated as a dangerous tool of tyrants.⁵⁹ But in the above context, it may be seen as an attempt to differentiate between tenant and squatter, and hence as a legitimate distinction. As Ehrenpreis says: "In his own light Swift was not inconsistent - the others were".⁶⁰

Herein lies the key to Swift's apparent paranoia. If we are to find constants, we must look beneath the surface, for Swift is a master of masks, a supreme artist whose greatest skill is to evade detection behind innumerable disguises and trick the reader into thinking each persona is the author.⁶¹ But - as we shall discover in the next Chapter - though this game took its most disconcerting forms in the satiric works, it is used in some of the 'straighter' tracts, where its rules are clearer and its object more intelligible. Behind the political and religious writings one can detect what can only be called a siege-mentality. Swift himself puts it thus: "I look upon myself in the capacity of a clergyman, to be one appointed by providence for defending a post assigned me, and for gaining over as many enemies as I can."⁶²

Taken by itself, this may seem straightforward, even innocuous, but, taken alongside the politico-religious writings, it provides a vital backdrop to a scene which we would otherwise misunderstand. It explains the oft-lamented unintellectual nature of much of his writing,⁶³ and the urgency and fire-in-the-belly ferocity of so much elsewhere in his oeuvre. This urgency arises from a belief that the barbarians are at the gate, and that he occupies "a threatened city fearfully awaiting assault".⁶⁴ Hobbes lived through the only Civil War that this country has ever witnessed, and constructed his theory of absolutism according to his perception of events he saw happening around him. Swift, immersed in the same waters as Hobbes, mentally if not historically, sets out to build his protective politics from the same assumptions. He sees the overthrow of his citadel as imminent, and uses his pen as a means both of defence and attack in order to preserve his precious capital. But in order to appreciate fully why Swift was gripped by such fear, fear which seems a world away from the quiet moderation so many have seen as the characteristic trademark of his politics and religion, we must look more closely at the two central issues at the heart of the debate on liberty: the state of nature and the role of law.

When Locke asserts, in the Second Treatise on Government, that "In the beginning all the World was America",⁶⁵ he describes a situation with which Hobbes would have had no quarrel, and posits a condition of being, prior to organised society, one which describes man as he truly is, stripped of the accretions of civilisation. This, however, is the beginning and

end of any agreement between Locke and Hobbes on the subject of the state of nature.

Natural law, for Hobbes, is what equates man with the rest of the animal kingdom, whilst for Locke it is what raises him above it. Hobbes means by it lawlessness, Locke lawfulness, and thus the two interpretations of 'America' are clear. For Hobbes, the state of nature equates men with predator and prey. The predator may do all that he cannot be prevented from doing, so that the potential prey must be faster or more cunning to escape, for there is no other option in nature. Right belongs to the predator if he catches his prey, freedom to his prey if he escapes. Morality can exist only if the predator decides, because all choice belongs to the strong. Even worse is the fact that men are hunters of their own kind, and often for reasons which have little to do with necessity, and much to do with cruelty. The condition of living in Hobbes's state of nature, therefore, is one of "continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short."⁶⁶ The only escape for Hobbesian man is into a society which will protect him from the brutality of life in nature, a society which must be ruled absolutely in order to provide maximum security. The weak have only one defence against the strong and that is to create their own powerful sovereign who will protect them from their competitors, and to whom they will resign all independence in return for this protection. Locke, however, interprets the state of nature in a radically different fashion: "Men living together according to reason without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them,

is properly the state of nature."⁶⁷ Locke is for a pluralistic society, and diversity, not authoritarian unity, is to be the safeguard against evils in society. Thus, the Hobbesian dilemma - chaos or tyranny - is rejected by Locke, who interprets the state of nature as not at all one representing war. He will not be railroaded into acceptance of Hobbes's definition of political necessity, because he views the matter from a completely different angle.

Consequent upon one's definition of the nature of man comes one's assessment of the proper duties of law and government. One can see that the respective views of these two writers on what is to be required of government will contain little in the way of common ground. The law of natural reason is the keynote of Locke's America, the rule of self-interest and fear that of Hobbes's. Both states are anarchic, but where Locke takes this at its simple literal level - a society without laws as such, but capable of a large degree of self-regulation - Hobbes takes it at its most suggestive and fearsome level: a no-holds-barred free-for-all without security for any but the strongest and most vicious. The choice is between a free association of essentially decent, rational men attempting to come together and improve a tolerable enough lot by mutual cooperation; and a desperate escape from a brutal nightmare. The origins of human society must stem either from a spirit of cooperation, or a fear of competition and a longing for security at any price.

Swift, although he ostensibly rejects Hobbes, accepts his descriptions, definitions and choices, and thus reveals the true

nature of his allegiance.⁶⁸ He uses the language of Locke, but he feels Hobbes in his bones. His pessimistic view of history, and his acceptance of the Augustinian stance on original sin - he asks at one point "For, why do men love Darkness rather than Light?"⁶⁹ in an assumption of natural depravity - are connected. European society is organised, according to the Houyhnhnms, by creatures worse than their Yahoos: there is no room for optimism in such a house of sin.⁷⁰ He condemns arbitrary power,⁷¹ but describes humanity as a republic of dogs, where peace occurs only after a good meal, and disruption when one or a few only have been satisfied, while every other dog fights to snatch a scrap of the prize.⁷² If Swift accepts this, he accepts Hobbes's premise for bringing Leviathan into being. And even if the contextual metaphor is amusing, it does not disguise a vision of man as ruthless, egocentric and competitive, in a direct rebuttal of Locke's contention that the tendency in the state of nature is towards co-operation, not competition. Swift's persistent assumption of the correctness of the state-of-war view undercuts any attempt to place him firmly in the liberal camp. He notes at one point the similarity between games and fighting,⁷³ and specifies elsewhere: "Quadrille in particular, bears some Resemblance to a State of Nature, which we are told, is a State of War, wherein every Woman is against every Woman."⁷⁴ He seems unaware that a rival interpretation even exists. He rebukes Tindal for using the term "state of nature" wrongly, apparently oblivious to the fact that Tindal, as a disciple of Locke, is referring to the increasingly accepted definition by Locke.⁷⁵ As has been stated, this

surely is a "measure of his immersion in Hobbesian ideology",⁷⁶ and it is of profound importance that Swift should agree with Hobbes, not Locke, on such a vital question.

Swift offers a legislature with the power of Leviathan, while rejecting Hobbes's model of absolutism. Despite the seeming liberalism of his advocacy of mixed government between the Three Estates, he soon makes it plain that, once elected, the government is beyond reproach: "The supreme power in the state can do no wrong; because, whatever that doth, is the Action of all."⁷⁷ He goes further, intimating that this body is above impeachment and cannot break the law, because the law is what the government says it is. The liberal Swift is a dot in the distance, when the authoritarian Swift declares: "In short, they may do any Thing within the Compass of human power."⁷⁸ He is up there with Hobbes on the question of sovereignty, even if he disagrees with the precise constitution of the sovereign.⁷⁹ If he opposes one form of absolutism, while advocating one with a different face but identical power, how then can we call him Lockean? Hobbes's model of monarchy was for the times: an absolute legislature will do equally well, so long as its powers are the same. Leviathan is about a degree of power, not a particular kind, and the adjective 'absolute' can be applied to whichever noun you please, for it is the thing and not the title he is concerned about. It is the absolute obedience owed to this power by all people which truly matters. And if this is the criterion for the definition of authoritarian - and what better? - then Swift is authoritarian, in opposition to Locke's liberalism. Freedom here is the freedom to obey the law, or else

one makes oneself a rebel.⁸⁰

This is the crux of the matter. Just because Swift used the word 'liberal' freely does not prove that he invested it with the same meaning that Locke undoubtedly did, but shows that he recognises the new age of advocacy of the open society. He realises the emotional force of the words used by his opponents, and employs them to gain the same effect for his own propositions. He taunts the Whigs with 'freedom of the press', parries the tolerationists with 'liberty of conscience' and so on, while all the time he is - or ought to be - aware that he means something not only different from, but opposite to, what the liberal spokesmen intend the words to convey. His concept of freedom is in no wise consistent with the Lockean one, and his idea of what toleration ought to consist of would have been anathema to the liberal philosopher.

Freedom is itself a notoriously indefinable term, as Owen Chadwick has pointed out. In its simplest form, it simply means without restraint, and this is the definition used by Hobbes, who specifies it as the condition of being unhindered by external impediments.⁸¹ But its later meaning is one suggestive of undesirable tendencies (for authoritarians): "licentious, or anarchic; tending, anyway, towards licence and anarchy".⁸² The problem for Swift (and Hobbes) is to limit the application of the word to the first meaning, and prevent the second from becoming reality. He is like a zoo-keeper who wants his animals to recognize freedom as freedom from physical chains, whilst persuading them to accept the walls of the zoo as sensible restrictions. The difficulty, of course, is one of definition,

and the difference between wall and chain essentially one of degree or kind. Swift argues the case for kind, the tolerationists for degree; the former arguing for preservation of restrictions on human behaviour, the latter for their removal. Swift is the zoo-keeper where Locke is the animal liberationist, and the chief divergence of opinion concerns the assumed behaviour of the animals when freed.

And, despite his denunciations of tyranny, it is the Rabble he fears.⁸³ In the Contests and Dissentions, it is the rule of the Many which represents the greatest threat, and to oppose this threat he accepts a theory of sovereignty which excludes almost no human activity from the magistrate's jurisdiction. He puts forward the argument that within all actions capable of execution by force the legislature is supreme.⁸⁴ Thus, thought is the only activity excluded; but, given what government can do, why bother about the trifling, if ranklesome, island within its domain but beyond its authority? And given also the view of human nature held by Swift, the toleration of this impregnable domain is ten times better than a complete break-out: a return to the state of natural war.

But Locke counters all this by reference to a law of nature, an unwritten code which exists outside that of society, and is in fact superior to it, an idea which can be traced from Cicero via Aquinas to Hooker and Locke.⁸⁵ Natural law, for Locke, prevents tyranny, for rulers' laws must be judged by this pre-existent law, and their actions can be seen to be just or unjust under its spotlight. This sense of justice is permanent and unchangeable, all the more binding for not having been passed

by any legislature. It is to this sense of law that men must look before deciding on the morality of human institutional laws. This alone provides a bulwark against tyrannical government, a court of appeal within the reach of every man, and superior in authority to any court of law. Natural law is what the Nuremburg judges invoked against the Third Reich. A law providing for the extermination of European Jewry is an abomination against natural justice, and is therefore illegal, and ought to have been disobeyed. Evil human laws, whether enforced by bayonet, bomb or Mme. la Guillotine, have no authority in this court. Brute force, even when backed by legislation, is illegitimate.

Swift thinks this a nonsense. His vision of natural lawlessness precludes any possible agreement with Locke on what is required of law. The implicit appeal in Locke's argument is to a sense of justice within men which will direct them to behave in accordance with its edicts. But Swift sees no such sense in men. On the contrary, he says, men are driven by the irrational passions, and it is these passions which must be checked by law. Law is for binding men to obedience, and is not to be assessed by those who are subject to its authority: "we are commanded to obey our Governors, because Disobedience would breed seditions in the State."⁸⁶ The common man is not animal rationale and his political actions must be watched by the government as closely as a deadly virus.⁸⁷

Both Hobbes and Swift argue that natural justice is a logical absurdity, since laws exist to regulate the fierce competitive nature of man. Laws which exist only in men's minds

have no validity in reality against those inscribed in the statute-book. The absolute sovereign institutes law to impose order on the chaos of nature, for, if natural law existed, why would we need such a sovereign? Prior to his existence there is no justice, and words like 'right' and 'wrong' are meaningless. Justice is not something by which one assesses the sovereign's doings; it is what the sovereign says it is, no more and no less. Discrimination between subjects is the sovereign's prerogative, not his responsibility, for right is what he decrees it to be and nothing more.

Thus, both Swift and Hobbes put the sovereign above reproach of any kind: his power is his legitimacy. Rousseau, for instance, complains that power is not a moral force, nor capable of producing morality by its actions:

If force compels obedience, there is no need to invoke a duty to obey, and if force ceases to compel obedience, there is no longer any obligation. Thus the word 'right' adds nothing to what is said by 'force'; it is meaningless.⁸⁸

Force, he says, is not the same as right, and he uses the example of a robber who steals his purse. But this is itself meaningless to those who advocate absolutism. They are not concerned about the meaning, or even the existence, of a concept of right. It is to escape the robbers that Leviathan was brought into being, and to complain thereafter that Leviathan is no better is futile. The sovereign protects you from the robbers, but your rights against another man are not the same as your obligations to the sovereign. For Rousseau as for Locke, society is something added

to an already existent morality, and property-rights are to be guaranteed by society: why else would men organise themselves thus? For Hobbes, there is no morality without society, and property-rights must be given to the sovereign along with the rest. Swift, agreeing with Hobbes, would simply say that Rousseau was confusing the issue, misunderstanding the point of legitimacy. Rousseau is, of course, referring to the sense of natural justice in which Swift does not believe. Swift puts necessity to the fore, not desirability or idealism. Leviathan is power, not right, for it is power that is required.⁸⁹ Swift would take one look at Rousseau's concluding reductio ad absurdum and agree with its sentiments; but Rousseau rejects the concept of naked force because it is immoral, where Swift rejects the concept of natural right because it is irrelevant and nonsensical.

This becomes a 'tyranny of law', because there are no restrictions on what the lawgivers may do, either in religious or civil matters. The decrees of the legislature "may be against Equity, Truth, Reason, and Religion, but they are not against the Law",⁹⁰ because, of course, law is determined by its collective will. This echoes Hobbes almost to the letter, because his legislature hands down tablets of stone which all must obey, and is no more answerable to men than is God. Hobbes puts it thus: "by a good law I mean not a just law: for no law can be unjust",⁹¹ and Swift shows no sign of baulking at such absolutism, and seems prepared to accept this authoritarian maxim as the final word on natural justice.

But perhaps, one feels, this is slightly unfair to Swift.

He was, as previously noted, a famous defender of the liberties of the oppressed, and to lump him unreservedly in the camp of the absolutists will seem to many critics to be to ignore a very large body of writings which suggests something entirely different. Orwell's description of Swift as a "Tory-anarchist",⁹² someone who applied the rules unbendingly to everyone but himself, is possibly nearer the mark, and yet reveals more about Orwell's interest in politics than about Swift's. It is not enough to study Swift's politics in semi-isolation, since *they are* so clearly and closely bound up with his religion. The real reason why Swift advocated an absolute legislature was not simply that he was an authoritarian by nature, but that he had a clear interest-group, as it were, which he wished to preserve: the Church of England. Having already detected the siege-mentality, one must attempt to explain and define it. The importance of the concept of 'America' is crucial and underlies all else, but it is not in itself enough. One must go further into the religious writings to understand the true identity of the besieged and the besiegers.

Again it is the seventeenth century which provides the truly vital clues. It was then that the great intellectual debate began to be voiced by the forces for and against liberty. This debate centred upon the precise relationship between Church and state, with the two sides at the opposite poles of orthodoxy on the one hand and heterodoxy on the other. By the time Swift came to write on the subject, the latter view was in the ascendancy, so that he was defending a position which was all but overrun. The older, Erastian idea of a Church was being

challenged forcefully by the new liberals, who sought to achieve religious toleration and a separation of Church and state. Since the most prominent among the liberals was Locke, a closer look at how Swift's views compare with Locke on this issue will go a long way towards establishing the limits of Swift's moderation and tolerance.

The central test for such a discussion comes from the "Voyage to Brobdingnag", where the Giant King - who is presented as an exemplary leader throughout - makes the following observation when told by Gulliver about the number of sects in religion and politics in his country:

he knew no Reason, why those who entertain Opinions Prejudicial to the Public, should be obliged to change, or would not be obliged to conceal them. And, as it was Tyranny in any Government to require the first, so it was Weakness not to enforce the second: For, a Man may be allowed to keep Poisons in his closet, but not to vend them about as Cordials.⁹³

This, in a nutshell, is precisely what the debate on toleration centred upon. Poisons and cordials are terms loaded with controversy, for who is to say what religion will save a man? And precisely what is prejudicial to the public? What is the true relationship between Church and state?

Swift opts for a state-religion, where Locke argues emphatically against any such dangerous alliance: "He jumbles heaven and earth together, the things most remote and opposite, who mixes these societies",⁹⁴ says Locke, declaring it of vital importance to "settle the just bounds" which exist between Church and state.⁹⁵ The courts have no jurisdiction over spiritual

concerns, nor the Church over temporal, so that the two powers are sent to different corners of life, each with its own clearly-defined sphere of influence over the lives of men. Swift will have none of this. Christianity is our religion, and the job of the magistrate is to uphold its precepts and ensure adherence to its tenets wherever he can. He quotes the dictum of Tiberius - Deorum offensa Diis curae - twice with obvious contempt,⁹⁶ and invokes the right to punish offences against God in the here and now.⁹⁷ This is one of Locke's mainstay arguments. Let the gods look to their own interests in matters where they might be considered slighted.⁹⁸ Since they are capable of punishing hubris with nemesis, why should we interfere, or make ourselves God's judiciary?

But Swift will not allow this. Let the gods punish as they will, we need not consider that the end of the matter, and will feel free to punish temporal hubris with temporal nemesis, refusing to be hoodwinked into denying the constitution of Church and state its full right of retribution against transgressors of its laws. Swift argues politics before theology, and considers the judgments of earthly courts both valid and important, whether or not a more important judgment is to come. He will not allow men to slip from a secular noose because a divine one awaits them later.

This is perhaps the most crucial dichotomy between Swift and Locke on the question of religious practice. Hobbes scorned the differentiation between the religious and the secular as a red herring: they are both under the jurisdiction of the sovereign.⁹⁹ Despite Swift's acceptance of the toleration

contained in the 1688 Settlement, he makes it plain that he concedes it grudgingly and, like Martin in the Tale, acknowledges it only as a stitch in the coat, impossible to remove without further upheaval and disturbance of the precious public peace. The Revolution of 1688, he cannot forbear saying, "produced some very bad effects, which are likely to stick long enough by us."¹⁰⁰ All his remarks about sects regret their existence, long for their dissolution, and seek to freeze their development as the best that can be done for the time being.¹⁰¹

Like Hobbes, Swift's perpetual plea is that the public peace is what really matters, so that right belongs to the existing order. It is the dissenters who threaten this peace,¹⁰² and Swift accepts that religion as a whole must be subject to the law in order to prevent small groups who fall within the category of religion from carrying out their desires.¹⁰³ State control of religion may alter the basis of his own Church, but this, he says, is better than the alternative. It is far better to be fettered by the state than torn to shreds by the fanatics. The crucial link for Swift is between religious dissent and political disobedience, and he assumes without hesitation that these men want not religious freedom, but political power.¹⁰⁴

Swift makes the point several times that thoughts are actions in the making, a pregnancy of dissent which must result in a child of actual disobedience.¹⁰⁵ Liberty must be closely defined by the government in order to prevent it from becoming licence: it must mean "that which one is allowed to do" or else becomes "that which one wishes to do." He thus arrives at a

concept of right thinking, not of free-thinking, the latter becoming precisely the opposite of real freedom. Surprisingly, Swift echoes, almost to the letter, the argument given by Bolgolam for executing Gulliver: that, since he has cause to believe that Gulliver is a traitor at heart, it is only a matter of time before "it appears in Overt Acts".¹⁰⁶ And despite the fact that he is clearly attacking Bolgolam's brand of cynical Realpolitik in the Travels, he offers it straight-faced in the religious tracts. He perpetually puts forward the argument that people who ask for a little liberty want the whole thing, so that every concession today is a bomb through the window tomorrow. This surely scuppers the arguments of those who would have Swift as an Anglican compromiser. The moderate Martin and the gentle Giant King provide a smokescreen for a doctrine that is totally incompatible with any idea of compromise, their appearance serving to belie their absolute authority. Martin rejects extremes and preaches commonsense and prudence, and the Giant King is horrified by the suggestion that he should use gunpowder against his subjects. But is this important if their authority is unquestionable, their power limitless except over activities within men's skulls? Is Leviathan's power diminished any because he is a pleasant fellow?

Locke argues against this adamant intolerance, but his claim that the real danger lies in the suppression of dissent¹⁰⁷ gets short shrift from Swift. Swift looks longingly back to an age of enforced authority and a static society, Locke forward to an age of toleration between men, with conscience, not law, the supreme concern. In diversity Locke sees salvation,

Swift damnation, but both recognise the importance of the relationship between Church and state. Swift says that each state must have its own national religion. It is the power, not the name, which matters, and thus it is the schismatic who is dangerous, not one particular brand of schism. He relates this easily enough to human nature, and is unsurprised by dissenters' scheming. But because something is natural, that is no excuse, in Swift's view, for allowing it to happen. The parable of the farmer and the kite excludes any conception of morality. Swift does not blame the dissenters for being rampaging kites, but does not see this as any reason to hand in the licence on his shotgun.¹⁰⁸ It is the 'gun-control' lobby within his own ranks - those who are "answering Fools in their Folly" - for whom his greatest scorn is reserved. His attitude towards toleration betrays his deepest sympathies in the Hobbes-Locke controversy, because it is clear that he regards it as a curse and not an achievement: far better not to have had it, but, notwithstanding its legal presence in the Settlement, let us keep it at the minimum level the letter of the law will permit. This is surely why he sees no difference between a "bare" tolerance and a "full" one; because to him they mean the same.

He is utterly adamant in his refusal to listen to the other point of view. Those who uphold the principle of toleration have mistaken the nature of dissent, because they have misunderstood the nature of man. Dissenters have no arguments; they simply want power. They request access to Swift's citadel on the grounds of liberty of conscience, while in their hearts they seek to blow it sky-high. At best it is perverseness, the

desire to be different, sneering at clubs because one has not been allowed to join. To Swift, it would be absurd to grant them membership, since they would then find some other pretext for their "spirit of opposition", and keep on finding them until they ran the club itself.¹¹⁰ He will not hear of amelioration, for how can one hope to satisfy those whose very existence on the political map depends upon not being satisfied? He defines dissent as a malady of the mind, not as an expression of political disappointment or of principled opposition. This disease requires proselytes in order to spread. Swift refers again to human nature, not political justice, and cites Milton as the exemplar of the selfish spite at work in dissenters.¹¹¹ Their 'principles' originate in the misfortune of their lives and can safely be dismissed as verbal tantrums disguised as rational argument. Dissent is the sickness of the born malcontent, and the job of the Church is to prevent the orthodox from catching it.

Thus, in the Sermon on the Trinity, he suggests that those who oppose the doctrine are enemies of religion. They hate Christianity because it impedes their lusts and desires.¹¹² He never gives column-space to their supposed reasons, but comments simply that the revival of the Arian heresy has stirred doubts in men's minds again, and he is more concerned that men should believe than that what they believe should be credible. If the doctrine of the Trinity is part of the course prescribed by the Church for the cure of men's souls, this is enough.¹¹³ If the patient is encouraged to question individual elements of the course, he might be stirred to question others, perhaps all, and

he may be moved to seek another doctor or, which is worst of all, conclude that he is not ill at all: "Why, if it be as you say, I may safely whore and drink on, and defy the Parson".¹¹⁴ The maintenance of orthodoxy is vital, since orthodoxy is the mortar between the bricks of Swift's citadel.

Locke, on the other hand, scathingly observes that orthodoxy is a nonsense, since it is a notoriously indefinable term. Since every church is orthodox by its own lights, what meaning can the word be said to possess, and, as a consequence, what possible usefulness in the debate on toleration?¹¹⁵ This reductio ad absurdum would only be acceptable if one accepted right as a viable entity, and Swift deals only in power. Whether he has a right given by God to call his Church the orthodox one is academic; he has the magistrate on his side. He is not offering spiritual authority, so that the absurd - to Locke - notion of orthodoxy is easily settled. The orthodox church is that established by law; the unorthodox any church not so established. Swift constantly refers to the possibility of any religion being instituted as the national form of worship. Again it is the thing and not the name which matters. The Mahometan religion will do, so long as it is the will of the legislature, and he says that he is prepared to offer up his own Church as sacrifice to the maintenance of order.¹¹⁶ In this light we read the statement "That all true Believers shall break their Eggs at the convenient End" as meaning convenient solely to the Magistrate.¹¹⁷

The question of salvation gets not a mention in the discourse, and the parameters of Swift's concern on the subject

do not seem to include anything which could specifically be termed religious at all.¹¹⁸ And it is, after all, the specifically religious aspects of the discussion which ought to be in dispute. Hence the importance of faith for Locke precedes any other consideration, and his assessment of the politics of religion necessarily places faith before all else.¹¹⁹ Believing in natural right, there is no question of any other course of action but toleration, for the conscience of each man is uniquely valid, and denial of it not only unthinkable, but blasphemous. But Locke assumes an area of concern outside the purview of the state, an area which Swift refuses to discuss or even acknowledge. If schism is a grey-coloured term - no matter: the law is admirably black and white, and the law is to be the arbiter.

But what makes the matter so much worse is that the origins of dissent are interwoven with the faith itself, and the first advocate of such dissent was the founder of the faith himself. "Christianity had never been content merely to enforce an external performance of public ceremonies", says Chadwick, pointing out that a religion which sought to reach men's hearts was bound to result in passive resistance,¹²⁰ which in turn must lead inexorably to active resistance. Luther's famous statement "Here stand I, I can do no other" so resembled the founder of Christianity that "it must in time destroy the ideal of conformity to rites or to faith by social pressure or by law".¹²¹ The church which had met in the catacombs of Rome, and which was prepared to assert its beliefs to the point of martyrdom, could provide little ammunition for reactionary

politicians who, in denying toleration to dissenters, must resemble the Romans rather than the early Christians, thus exposing themselves to the charge of hypocrisy or heresy. Where Swift can invoke the law of the land, Locke can call upon the authority of no less a figure than Jesus Christ Himself, the founder of the faith, or even Luther, the founder of the Church. It is abundantly significant that Swift argues politics where Locke argues faith, since Swift, as a clergyman, must surely recognise that his weaker suit is Locke's stronger. All Swift's aces are secular, while Locke holds the trump-card of the example of Christ.

Locke concludes from this that, faced with one hundred religions, we have no option but to allow free choice: "Men cannot be forced to be saved whether they will or not. And therefore, when all is said and done, they must be left to their own consciences."¹²² Swift, on the contrary, concludes that the legislature must make a choice by which the people are bound. They may believe what they like, but must keep such beliefs to themselves.¹²³ This is his definition of liberty of conscience, echoing that of the Giant King, where he denies liberals the right to express opinions while majestically allowing them to hold them.¹²⁴ It is conduct not conscience, behaviour not belief, which Swift is concerned to regulate and, as a consequence, he ignores the religious arguments in favour of the secular, quoting Plato's maxim that "Men ought to worship the Gods, according to the Laws of the Country."¹²⁵ To Swift, the authority of God is forever in dispute and is largely useless in this sphere. The magistrate reflects the will of the majority,

not of God, and this makes his judgment more, not less, important to Swift. It is the relative truth - the locally-agreed truth - which is upheld, and may differ from country to country. Unlike Locke, Swift is not wielding a universal truth, so that, when Locke asks whether Christians might not be treated abroad as the dissenters are at home,¹²⁶ Swift says "Yes". "We are the Majority and we are in Possession", he says,¹²⁷ proving that the law is superior to concepts of truth, because it is tangible and incontrovertible. The idea that the individual must weigh the matter of obedience to authority in the scales of his conscience is precisely the dangerous doctrine against which Swift is throwing the full weight of his pen.

It is this which represents the fundamental stumbling-block to anyone who would attempt to link Swift and Locke. Locke regards liberty of conscience as something very much applicable to behaviour and action; otherwise it is meaningless. He uses it to advocate extension of freedom where Swift uses it to establish the limits of its application: "The Word conscience properly signifies that Knowledge which a Man hath within himself of his own thoughts and Actions."¹²⁸ Since few men are knowledgeable enough to voice an opinion, conscience is dismissed as a faculty incapable of arbitrating between standards of behaviour.¹²⁹ This is a direct parallel to Swift's tactics when dealing with opponents: attack the man first, and dismiss the ideas because they come from such a man. As with Tindal, so with conscience.¹³⁰ Swift says that men cannot know whether what they feel is right, because their consciences are inadequate indicators. Thus, having dismissed

conscience as a generic term, he need not discuss its outpourings from the mouths of individual men. With such flawed equipment, men have no more ability to judge their behaviour or that of others than to use their arms to fly to the moon. Swift seeks to encourage people to trust in the established authority rather than their own discredited intellects.

Against this Locke defiantly declares that "No way whatsoever that I shall walk in against the dictates of my conscience will ever bring me to the mansions of the blessed."¹³¹ He puts forth the vital importance of inward light, and offers the ultimate heretic's creed, offered before him by Christ and Luther: "obedience is due, in the first place, to God, and afterwards to the laws."¹³² Spiritual affairs are far above temporal, and their care must be attended to before earthly affairs. A man's conscience is the most important thing to him, and must, where offended by the law, be given priority. Such liberty of conscience is, in the eyes of Swift, the most disastrous thing imaginable, for, with his seventeenth-century approach, this idea of the inner voice is the thing he most feared: "every man his own carver"; the political anarchy of free-thinking. Toleration, carrying such anarchy in its suitcase, is, to Swift, the complete surrender of the citadel, the return to a dreaded America.¹³³ Conscience is nothing more than a private freedom; it is not a public right: "we are commanded to obey our Governors, because Disobedience would breed Seditions in the State."¹³⁴ In the end, the importance of the public peace far outweighs the importance of liberty of conscience.

The attempt to make of Swift a liberal ultimately breaks on the rock of religious freedom. It finds its final expression in the Project where Swift openly declares a preference for hypocrisy over individual conscience.¹³⁵ "A sweet religion, indeed, that obliges men to dissemble and tell lies, both to God and man, for the salvation of their souls!", scoffs Locke.¹³⁶ But, Swift claims, hypocrisy is better than open infidelity and shameless breaching of the public peace. If people wish to be martyrs, Swift is prepared to accommodate them, and those who claim that their disobedience emanates from the calling of God should take up the matter when they appear in that court of courts. Meanwhile, the magistrate is in no way bound by inner voices, and would-be martyrs can have no cause for complaint, so that when Locke says that "the true disciples of Christ must suffer persecution",¹³⁷ Swift responds that he will take his chances on the question of truth when the time comes, but makes it quite abundantly plain that 'true' is a contemptible word which may one day explode in everyone's face:

You who in different sects have shammed
And come to see each other damned;
(So some folks told you, but they knew
No more of Jove's designs than you).¹³⁸

Moderation, as defined by Swift, bears no resemblance to that of Locke, just as his toleration is tyranny, and his freedom enslavement, to the liberal philosopher. His claim that "I believe, I am no Bigot in Religion; and I am sure, I am none in Government"¹³⁹ will be upheld only by those who carefully select their evidence. His middle-way writings are not to be

seen as humble pleas but as the minimum necessary for the survival of religion. The existence of a state Church is to be defended fiercely in all quarters, not quietly advocated in discussion-groups. And one may feel uneasy about the only real freedom Swift will allow - freedom of thought. Does he hanker after even that supposedly untouchable faculty that makes man uniquely man? He does not say so much, for without the means to achieve such an ambition, it would be impolitic in the extreme to express it. But why would the man who is prepared to accept hypocrites, and who is so clearly a pragmatist in the politics of religion, refuse the means to turn the hypocrites into devout Anglicans were he to come into possession of the necessary technology?¹⁴⁰ He says at one point: "You may force men by interest or punishment, to say or swear they believed, and to act as if they believed: you can go no further."¹⁴¹ Locke would say "ought to" but Swift only says "can": he refers to inability alone, not undesirability. After all, when Swift suggests that it is bad politics to try to force-feed natives of distant lands with too much Christianity, it is the article of Christ's divinity he is prepared to jettison. What does this leave the religion?¹⁴²

Those who would have Swift as the greatest compromiser in an Age of Compromise have either ignored or distorted the extant record of Swift's writings on these crucial subjects.¹⁴³ The assumption that Swift had faith and was not a hypocrite in no way alters the fact that these considerations do not appear to have affected his attitude towards the politics of religion as expressed on the printed page. Since it is the page itself with

which we have to deal, we have no right to change his statements in accordance with preconceptions which we may have about what kind of man he must have been. If there is one characteristic absent from his writings on the Church, it is faith; and if there is one word least applicable to his perception of conscience and toleration, it is moderation. 'True' religion is always discarded as a useless chimera, and 'inward light' as a contemptible excuse for not obeying the law.¹⁴⁴

But, having gone thus far, one can really go no further. The point at which the analogy with Hobbes breaks down is when one considers what he did not have in common with him. The very idea of Swift as pastor within Leviathan's puppet-church is laughable, and one need only imagine the reaction of his ecclesiastical masters to this suggestion to realise as much. Swift remained always his own man, for his obsession with law did not obtain when the Whigs were in power. In any event, the crucial difference between the two lies in the nature of their writing. Hobbes is the dispassionate critic, dissecting society with mathematical precision and a cold eye. Swift is both a realist and an angry man, and the roots of his politics lie in his own passionate nature. One need only look at the list of heroes from Glubbudrib to realise the gulf between the two men; for they are all tyrannicides, idealists or sceptics who stood up against kings or creeds to which they refused to submit. The inclusion of both Brutus and More betrays the superficiality of his political links with Hobbes's monolith, for it is their very outlawry and principled nonconformity which links them most closely with Swift, particularly as the author of the Drapier's

Other, cooler, heads may rationalize, ameliorate, weigh the matter in speculative, philosophical scales. But for Swift the Royal Society's motto - nullius in verba - is appropriate; he wants deeds, not words; action not debate. He is concerned with the safety of his precious citadel, and is prepared to provide whatever means are necessary to protect the capitol, and indifferent as to the consistency or otherwise of his defensive materials. Politics and law are his principle weapons of defence, but the Anglican Church is the citadel, and this is the only consistency to be found in these writings. His devotion to his Church is absolute. Because it is his, and because it is the established Church, this enables him to put forward arguments of an authoritarian nature; indeed, compels him to. Swift knows the real danger of the horde without the gates. He is protecting the Anglican Church and its possessions against 'progressive', 'liberal' ideologies designed to break or weaken its hold on the people. Believing in the Hobbesian - or rather Augustinian - state of nature, he becomes like a lion-keeper who knows that his beasts are the same as their fellows in the wild and that, if allowed to mingle for long enough, they will return to their natural ways. This is no argument, in his eyes, for allowing this to happen; rather the reverse. For, in recognising the similarities, he is simultaneously recognising the dissimilarities, and he knows the importance of the cage. Swift has - in his own mind - every justification for preserving the bars against would-be liberators like Locke.

From our distant historical perspective we may state that

Locke was right. Toleration weakened the position of the dissenters by denying them the status of oppressed minority, thereby removing from their brow the laurel of principled sympathy. But this is not to say that Swift and the Giant King are foolish, obsessed reactionaries. Reactionaries they may have been, but they did not know, any more than did Locke, that this would be the case. To say that the town apothecary who sees rival apothecaries threatening his monopoly on trade, and refuses them the right to sell their cure, while allowing them to concoct it, is an absurd figure, would only be acceptable were it to be clear in advance that his patent cure would still dominate the market. But so long as the threat seems real to the market-leader, his paranoia, if far from praiseworthy, is at least comprehensible, given his dilemma. Locke may argue that Swift's position is both insecure and self-defeating, implicitly saying that the other cures are credible; for why else would he take such defensive action? Repression is the best form of advertisement, and Swift is simply perpetuating the dissenters' claims by giving publicity to their existence as an alternative. Swift was prepared to risk the charges of Locke, but toleration was one risk the Anglican Dean was not prepared to run.

But perhaps one can offer a final perspective on the matter which shows precisely what was at stake. At the end of Locke's Letter Concerning Toleration, he categorically refuses any rights to atheists, asserting that "the taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all".¹⁴⁶ Swift's citadel may have been more exclusive than Locke's, but Locke is trying the same trick with atheists that Swift was with dissenting

Protestants. Both were fighting a losing battle, for Locke was stirring up troubles for his descendants that he imagined had been got rid of once and for all with religious toleration. "Natural right" was the password to the citadel, an 'open-sesame' which could be used by anyone, and in providing it to those he most favoured, he unwittingly provided it to those he most feared. As Chadwick observes:

Once concede equality to a distinctive group, you could not confine it to that group. You could not confine it to Protestants; nor, later, to Christians; nor, at last, to believers in God. A free market in some opinions became a free market in all opinions.¹⁴⁷

It had an unlimited application, and, in trying to limit it, the liberals became - as much as Swift had in opposition to them - a crowd of yesterday's men defending a citadel they themselves had unwittingly betrayed.

The ultimate problem comes when one tries to weave a consistent pattern from the various, variable threads with which Swift's works provide us. It must be acknowledged that the most disheartening factor for a would-be explicator of Swift is that, even when broken down into its component parts, the engine of his genius is not laid bare before us, stripped of all mystery and apparent contradiction: it still confounds the critic. So with Swift on party, politics and religious controversy: he is apparently being dishonest at least half the time. At the last, he must be understood in terms of paradox. He was an authoritarian who rebelled, a liberal who proposed censorship and restriction, a polemicist who despised polemic, and a liberator

who advocated chains. But if we look for the constant, the one invariable factor, it will be found to be devotion to the Anglican Church.¹⁴⁸ If we understand this, we still cannot remove the disturbing paradoxes deeply embedded in his diverse writings, but we can at least make them broadly comprehensible.

CHAPTER THREE
UTOPIA vs HISTORY.

The problem of interpreting Swift's meaning in a clear-cut and satisfying way ultimately centres around the Fourth Voyage and the crucial debate over the Houyhnhnms. The perennial question asked by critics over the last three hundred years has been effectively the same. Do the horses represent an ideal or are they themselves part of the satiric target, the object of an ironic attack upon one or more delusive ideals? Are they, in other words, an embodiment of a utopian yearning, or exactly the opposite? As we have shown in Chapter One, critics have been sharply divided on this issue.¹ George Sherburn, for example, argues that the horses do represent an ideal for Swift, and he is far from alone in this interpretation.² Yet a majority of critics find the Houyhnhnms dislikable, even repulsive. George Orwell, to name but one, gives expression to the recurring objection of such critics that Houyhnhnm society is static, incurious, repressive, coercive, authoritarian and indeed, in certain important respects, totalitarian.³ However, even if all the above were true, this would simply group Swift's utopia with every other utopia. No-one has ever written a description of utopia which could persuade more than a handful of like-minded dreamers of its desirability. As one critic remarks of the failed utopian travel agents: "apparently rational horses cannot persuade nor wild horses drag people to live there."⁴

The origins of the idea of utopia as we know it - as this Chapter will demonstrate - lie with Plato and the Platonic

inheritance of the Renaissance, and its unpopularity with modern readers is tied to the authoritarian element introduced by its founding father. Hugh Trevor-Roper has written of just this aspect of Platonism: "in religion, in literature, in art, [it] has always been a source of inspiration," but "in politics [it] has always been not only communist and totalitarian, but also essentially static, unhistorical, indeed anti-historical."⁵ The reasons for this centre around the disintegration which Plato saw happening around him, in particular the effects of history. Plato witnessed the decline of Athens, her military defeat, the crumbling of her great ideals, all of which for him was symbolised in the judicial murder of his mentor, Socrates. According to Trevor-Roper, he consequently looked to Sparta for his inspiration, since Sparta was a society which appeared able to preserve itself against change, an achievement supposedly due to the constitution, given to the Spartans - according to legend - by their great law-giver Lycurgus.⁶ But this was not enough for Plato, for what he wished to achieve was a society which stepped outside history, which could free itself from the inevitable decline - as he saw it - of the historical process and exist immune to change. As a result, he chose to return to "first principles" rather than follow a model, however admirable, from the world of reality:

So his Republic was to be communist, caste-bound, without money, ideologically protected. If this meant that freedom, individualism, poetry - everything which had been the glory of Periclean Athens - should be sacrificed, so be it: first things must come first.

The totalitarian tendencies of utopian thinking were, therefore, inherent in the tradition from its very origins.

When Trevor-Roper suggests that the Renaissance Platonist, Thomas More, inherited, among other things, Plato's hatred of history, he brings us straight to the heart of our purpose in this present Chapter. More the historian did not regard history as constructive. He may have written his history of Richard III as a kind of post facto justification of the Tudor succession, but the wider implications are clear enough. There will always be a tyrant who must be overthrown, but the liberators or their successors inevitably became tyrants in their turn, and so an eternal historical process, an inexorable cycle of tyranny, becomes the centre of all historical insight. As a result, More the philosopher came to the conclusion - a conclusion made inevitable both by his Platonism and his own historical researches - that the answers to the problems of life were not to be sought anywhere in history. "He did not seek, in past history, a means of controlling the future: he looked to philosophy for a means to end history: to end it altogether." In creating his Utopia, consequently, "he sought a social form which would be proof against historical change - that is, against history itself."⁸ In considering Gulliver's Travels within the utopian tradition this is of crucial importance, for More has a dual role in our discussion. He is both the first major figure in the modern utopian tradition - and he gave us the very word itself - and a strong influence on Swift. There can be no question that Swift unequivocally and unreservedly admired More.⁹ The evidence, as we shall see, is overwhelming and is

unsullied by so much as one iota of the famous Swiftian irony. With this in mind, an analysis of the utopianism of Swift as it finds expression in Gulliver's Travels can begin.

When Gulliver complains in his prefatory letter to his cousin Sympson that certain readers have hinted that "the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos have no more Existence than the Inhabitants of Utopia"¹⁰ he opens a discussion which places the Travels within a broad western tradition, and himself hints - in a typically Swiftian irony - at a profound relationship between his creator and the author of the book which gave the whole tradition the name by which it has been known ever since. The connection between Swift and More is a commonplace,¹¹ and the fact that Gulliver's Travels belongs to a utopian tradition has never been disputed,¹² but the question of Swift's precise relationship to More and the degree and extent to which the Travels can be properly described as utopian (in the context of this tradition) still deserve close scrutiny; for, in examining both these crucial contexts of the work, we arrive at the very heart of the Swiftian irony, and come as close as anyone can ever be confident of doing to the motivation and ethos behind the great writer's major satires. The connection with More is vital, both in personal and literary terms, for via More we find the intellectual and historical roots of the Swiftian irony, and discover not only the extent of his utopian tendencies, but also - crucially - the limitations upon them.

For a man so little given to hero-worship of any sort, Swift's extraordinarily high opinion of Sir Thomas More is remarkable. He described More as "the only Man of true Virtue

tha(t) ever Engl(an)d produced" and reiterated the point several times in his writings.¹³ But the most famous and, for our present purpose, the most significant tribute occurs in the Travels, when Gulliver, visiting the island of the sorcerers, asks to see various historical figures, and is given the opportunity to speak to them:

I had the Honour to have much Conversation with Brutus; and was told that his Ancestor Junius, Socrates, Epaminandas, Cato the Younger, Sir Thomas More and himself, were perpetually together: A Sextumvirate to which all the Ages of the World cannot add a Seventh.¹⁴

In order to discover why Swift should have held More in such high regard, and to establish the extent to which this admiration and the reasons for it affected Swift's satires, it will be necessary to examine More's own Utopia and its antecedents. In this examination we shall find vital clues to the utopian elements in Swift's writings, and a certain essential understanding of the uses of irony, an understanding which illuminates the text, and helps the reader to gain crucial insights into the utopian imagination of our greatest satirist.

The idea of utopia is virtually universal, for as anthropologists have discovered over many years, savages all over the world have imagined paradisiacal islands or other places where the problems of society do not exist, and where every man may find the peace that eludes him in his present situation. However, while the idea itself is far from exclusive to western literary traditions, "the profusion of Western utopias has not

been equaled in any other culture."¹⁵ The principal source of this in our culture is traditionally considered to be in the works of Plato, whose record of the life and wisdom of Socrates the philosopher established an intellectual foundation for the criticism of society on a moral basis, and also for the suggestion of what an ideal society should look like and how it should be organised.¹⁶ As a Christian-humanist of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Sir Thomas More shared with his fellows an abiding interest in The Hellenic inheritance, and was much influenced by Plato and the other classical philosophers.¹⁷ This is abundantly plain when one comes to read Utopia where the Platonic connection is evident throughout the book, both in the fact that the book is itself a sort of Platonic dialogue, and in the philosophical jests and intellectual in-joking which precede the actual text. Utopia is, in a sense, a sequel to the works of Plato, since More claims to have advanced the achievement of Plato by providing an actual report on life in the ideal state, adding the pictorial element to the discursive elements in the Republic.¹⁸ More, then, updated the Republic, but not in any spirit of rebellion, since his respect for his Greek master is visible (and implicit) throughout Utopia. But it is not a simple exercise in philosophical reverence, for the exchanges between More and his imaginary voyager, Raphael Hythloday, "expressed More's ambivalence toward Father Plato",¹⁹ and it is partly this ambivalence which distances More from Plato, and which enables him to create his own landmark in the utopian tradition, one which Swift follows to an important extent in the creation of his

own utopian masterpiece.

However, before assessing the respective attitudes towards utopian values of these two authors, we must first examine the utopian ideals and institutions of their fictitious voyages. In Gulliver's Travels there are three utopias which are generally recognised: prelapsarian Lilliput, Brobdingnag, and, of course, Houyhnhnmland.²⁰ A discussion of the values of More's Utopians in relation to these countries' systems should lead to valuable insights, not so much into what Swift may or may not have 'borrowed' from More, as into the extent of their shared attitude towards the faults in society and what, if anything, can be done to remedy them.

The major features of Utopian Society are the rule of reason, community of property, religious toleration, the pursuit of pleasure, and stability. The rule of reason governs all things, and so every feature of the society is shaped by this philosophy. This affects the layout of the fifty-four cities, which are identical in every respect, and also such things as family life, which is patriarchal, with women and children accepting their place in the scheme of things. All property is held in common²¹ and all are assured of work and sufficient to eat and drink, since this is regarded as the only way to ensure that there is no exploitation and that the management of resources is organised for the benefit of the whole society, not for any individuals or groups within it. The result of this approach is that there is no poverty of any sort in Utopia, and beggars are consequently a thing unheard-of.

But the two most striking features of the society are the

idea of pleasure and the attitude towards religion. The intricate hierarchy of pleasures includes every enjoyable sensation of body and mind, but it is not Epicurean in the popular sense of the term. If it can be called Epicurean, then the Epicurus we are referring to is the one whom Erasmus had rehabilitated, a philosopher "who stood for continent, minimal gratification, not maximal indulgence".²³ It does not represent a surrender to sensuality, since pleasures of the mind are always the highest, and those of the body are divided into pure and adulterated categories. Pleasure is never hedonism, for it must be "under the guidance of nature" and includes only "man's natural inclinations."²⁴ The two limitations which they place upon their pursuit of pleasure are firstly, that only pleasures which are neither painful nor harmful to others are permitted, and secondly, that one should not choose a lower pleasure in preference to a higher. In true classical style, the greatest pleasure arises from the practice of virtue and the consciousness of a good life.

The practice of religious toleration is one of the oldest principles of their constitution, for it was instituted by King Utopos himself at the establishment of the country itself: "even if it should be the case that one single religion is true and all the rest are false, he foresaw that, provided the matter was handled reasonably and moderately, truth by its own natural force would finally emerge sooner or later and stand forth conspicuously."²⁵ There is no proper name for, and there exist no images of, God, for he is simply styled Mythras, a general term used to designate the Supreme Being, whoever He might be.

There are many roads to God, they believe, and so who is to say which is the 'correct' one? All of this is encapsulated in the famous utopian prayer, which establishes beyond question the tolerance of religious diversity in the country, and the reasonableness of religious practice. The Utopian reasons thus:

If he errs in these matters or if there is anything better and more approved by God than that commonwealth or that religion, he prays that He will, of His goodness, bring him to the knowledge of it, for he is ready to follow in whatever path He may lead him. But if this form of a commonwealth be the best and his religion the truest, he prays that then He may give him steadfastness and bring all other mortals to the same way of living and the same opinion of God - unless there be something in this variety of religions which delights His inscrutable will.²⁶

There are, significantly, two exceptions to this generous toleration - atheists and proselytisers. Atheism is illegal because it is unreasonable, say the Utopians, to degrade one's immortal soul to the level of an animal's body. Proselytising is forbidden because it contravenes the principle of changing other people's ideas only through rational discourse, and emanates from passion and prejudice. The example is given of a Christian convert who tried to stir people up, showing "more zeal than discretion" and threatening hell-fire for non-believers. His punishment was exile (though the charge was civil - disturbance of the peace - rather than religious).²⁷ The number of Christians in Utopia is small, though growing, for the 'communism' of the Christian beliefs holds a strong appeal for the populace. Even so, many of their practices would seem

positively blasphemous to European Christians of the Catholic faith. Priests are allowed to marry, and women to become priests. Divorce is accepted, though not common, and euthanasia is practised, and sanctioned by the clergy. Officials encourage a man "not to foster the pest and plague any longer nor to hesitate to die now that life is torture to him but, relying on good hope, to free himself from this bitter life as from prison and the rack."²⁸ The absolute rule of reason thus extends to the question of existence itself, although euthanasia is limited to those with incurable diseases which involve excruciating pain, and is strictly voluntary in any case. However, given that the Utopians are imperfect Christians, since they lack revelation, More can allow them substantial leeway on such issues without himself incurring any taint of blasphemy on his own head. In any event their social views in respect of property, money and belief in the importance of the afterlife are all perfectly in keeping with Christian injunctions and practices.

More's contribution to the utopian tradition is substantial, for he introduces certain key elements which, far from being an imitation of his classical mentor, are distinctly un-Platonic.²⁹ The hierarchy of pleasures and the complete equality of property are two significant innovations, underlining the difference between Platonic thinking and that of the Christian - humanist circle to which More belonged. But his major innovation lies in the rehabilitation of the idea of the importance of labour among free men. Utopia has slaves, but their importance to the economy is negligible, whilst that of free men is absolutely essential. This has been described as "a

milestone in the history of utopian thought", one which has been subsequently incorporated into all socialist utopian writing, from Saint-Simon to Ho Chi Minh.³⁰ Although More's society is still to some extent imbued with the aristocratic elements found in Plato, the elitism of the Platonic attitude to work has been overtaken by a kind of equality: "All men are imbued with the values of a philosophical spirit that respects learning and leads to the practice of virtue."³¹

In textual terms Swift's debt to More can be seen in many places in the Travels: in Lilliput, Brobdingnag, and Houyhnhmland, to differing degrees. Lilliput is not a utopia as such, since it contains far too many elements of the Europe which is the book's constant standard of corruption - rope-dancers, scheming ministers, petty warmongering princes - but it contains many utopian features.³² The law "is more disposed to reward than to punish" and observance of the law is consequently rewarded with money and honours, just as in Utopia good behaviour leads to public recognition.³³ There is a rational approach to family life and education. Children are brought up in "The Principles of Honour, Justice, Courage, Modesty, Clemency, Religion, and Love of their Country" and no fondness is allowed between parents and children (just as in Houyhnhmland)).³⁴ Females are educated as well as males, since "a Wife should be always a reasonable and agreeable Companion, because she cannot always be young."³⁵ This is a familiar Swiftian idea, expressed both in A Letter to a Young Lady on Her Marriage and in Houyhnhmland, where the horses are shocked that the English fail to educate women too.³⁶ The final utopian element in

Lilliputian society is the fact that the poor are supported by the state, a clear link with More's thesis in Utopia, and an important concept in presenting a view of society as an organic whole. However, the limitations of Lilliput as a model society are clear, when Gulliver declares of their laws: "It is only to be wished that they were as well executed."³⁷ Lilliput is utopian historically and theoretically rather than currently, not least because, as a comment on English politics, it would be ridiculous of Swift to present it as an existing ideal state.

Brobdingnag is perhaps closest to More's Utopia as an actual picture of the good state, because the Giant King's critical commentary on European history, politics and religion ties in closely with both Hythloday's own assessment and that of Gulliver at the end of the Travels.³⁸ Indeed his remark on the political corruption of our system echoes that of Gulliver on the Lilliputian model: "I observe among you some Lines of an Institution, which in its Original might have been tolerable; but these half-erased, and the rest wholly blurred and blotted by Corruptions."³⁹ This, and his famous refusal of the gunpowder which would have made him "absolute Master of the Lives, the Liberties, and the Fortunes of his People",⁴⁰ distance him immeasurably from the corruptions satirised in the book. There is a strong correlation between his legal code and that of the Utopians. In Brobdingnag, laws may not exceed in words the number of letters in their alphabet - namely, twenty-two - though few are even as long as that, and all are plainly intelligible.⁴¹ Compare this with Hythloday's description of the Utopian code:

They have very few laws because very few are needed for persons so educated.... They themselves think it most unfair that any group of men should be bound by laws which are either too numerous to be read through or too obscure to be understood by anyone.⁴²

The utopians believe that people should be allowed to plead their own cases before a judge, rather than have a tricky lawyer wrap it up in obscure technical jargon which is more likely to pervert the course of justice than to advance it.⁴³ The Giant King wholeheartedly supports such an approach, in government as well as law, and expresses his beliefs on this matter to Gulliver:

He confined the Knowledge of governing within very narrow Bounds; to common Sense and Reason, to Justice and Lenity, to the Speedy Determination of Civic and criminal Causes.⁴⁴

If Brobdingnag is, in a sense, the nearest utopia to that of More, it is largely because both are human societies, and the positive values they espouse can be directly related to our own failure to uphold similar values. In the case of Houyhnhnmland, of course, this does not apply quite as directly, since it is a society of horses, not men, and represents reason abstracted to a level beyond our capability.⁴⁵ But this does not in any way make it irrelevant as a satire on us, for as we discovered in Chapter One, the Yahoos are there constantly as a clear comment on our pretensions, just as in Utopia the history and politics of Europe are held constantly up to the mirror of an ideal society, indicating plainly how desperately short we fall of the standards and values we either claim to admire or, worse still, claim to

uphold. The Houyhnhnm system of values resembles quite closely that of the Utopians. The whole system of government is based on an absolute reason which is understood by all, and is beyond debate. Philosophical speculation does not exist, and indeed, as his Master says to Gulliver, is inconceivable, since the truth strikes everyone at the same time and in the same way. Gulliver compares this to Socrates' attitude to reason,⁴⁶ thereby linking his voyages clearly with the classical utopian tradition of which it is, in large part, a conspicuous example. Like the Utopians, they meet in council rarely, and then simply to discuss distribution of goods amongst the society wherever a particular shortage has occurred - including a shortage of young Houyhnhnms.⁴⁷ Their communal approach to life and property owes some debt to More's depiction of Utopia, a social expression of their completely rational attitude towards all things.⁴⁸

But if, as we have already suggested, neither Swift nor More is providing us with a model which we can follow, what is the purpose of envisaging these two ideal societies?⁴⁹ The answer to this question can be found in the conclusions drawn from their utopian experiences by Gulliver and Hythloday and in their final perorations on human pride. After describing all the Utopian institutions and laws, Hythloday remarks:

At this point I should like anyone to be so bold as to compare this fairness with the so-called justice prevalent in other nations, among which, upon my soul, I cannot discover the slightest trace of justice and fairness.⁵⁰

Similarly, Gulliver expresses a wish that the Houyhnhnms were in a Capacity or Disposition to send a sufficient Number of Their Inhabitants for

civilizing Europe; by teaching us the first Principles of Honour, Justice, Truth, Temperance, public Spirit, Fortitude, Chastity, Friendship, Benevolence, and Fidelity. The Names of all which Virtues are still retained among us in most Languages.⁵¹

In the end both voyagers return to the criticism of Europe, using their praise of the perfect societies they have encountered as a stick with which to beat the pride of their fellow-countrymen. Hythloday attacks the rich for their monopoly of goods and power, and for their callous disregard for the poor who suffer by their deliberate policies. He describes all modern systems as "a kind of conspiracy of the rich, who are aiming at their own interests under the name and title of the commonwealth."⁵² But the root of all this corruption and cruelty turns out to be not merely greed and lust for power, but pride. Like Gulliver, Hythloday delivers a sermon on humanity which strikes at the root of our own self-perceptions:

This serpent from hell entwines itself around the hearts of men and acts like the suckfish in preventing and hindering them from entering on a better way of life.⁵³

It is pride in both cases which is isolated as the cause of our moral corruption, and hence as the cause of all other miseries, and it is this knowledge which causes both travellers to carry out their respective retreats from participation in the continuing calamity of human history.

In textual terms, the problem for the reader at this point is to establish the extent to which the writer identifies with

the utopia itself and the final conclusion offered, and in this respect both Swift and More seem well-matched. For what they share is a utopian mentality of a strikingly similar cast, one which embodies an attitude to life which singles them out as belonging distinctively to the tradition of utopian realists as opposed to that of utopian dreamers. For utopia is not heaven-on-earth, nor ever will be. The contrast between Books One and Two of Utopia (and between Houyhnhnmland and our own society) - utopian excellence cast opposite European depravity - has another meaning:

When compared with the models and institutions of contemporary English society, Utopian life was indubitably nearer to Christian truth. The greater the shame of Europeans, who had the advantage of Christian teaching.⁵⁴

Using Utopia as an absolute standard by which we are judged and found miserably wanting, they present what appears to be a target towards which we can work, but which is in fact an attack on our own wickedness. The ancient mentality they share obliges them to present an absolute, given ideal - not something we can attain, for they do not look forward to an age of reform, but at the present reality only. As one critic puts it: "the wildest of utopian plans could be dramatically thrown on the table to attract attention to the ills that needed remedy."⁵⁵ This is why pride is used in the final perorations on our wickedness, for it is to be found in us all and, whilst it is not exactly susceptible to reform, recognition of it could at least bring about the humility which ought to prevent us from participating

in the corruptions in which we presently indulge. The key tactic is to try to shame us into recognition of our true selves, for this is a crucial emotion to the satirist. "I never wonder to see Men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed,"⁵⁶ says Swift, and it is to instil this very shame that he constructs the argument of Gulliver's Travels, just as More in Utopia offers not a programme of action, but an exercise in humility.

If Utopia is not a programme of action, as we have seen, its implications are nevertheless clearly not unhostile to contemporary England. The trenchant social criticism it incorporates is, in large part, an accurate reflection of the ideals of its creator. But More's saving grace comes from his ability to play the fool, to push genuine principles to a comic extreme, creating laughter rather than outrage, and consequently avoiding the censure of those who, seeing his book as a programme of communism, would destroy him. Furthermore, the absence of Christian values is evidence to the knowledgeable reader that More is not 'serious' in his portrayal of Utopia. The Christian virtues, and the all-important personal salvation, are missing. We know, as did his contemporaries, that More did not believe that life could or should be like this. As John Travgott says: "He simply subjects European life to the criticism of Platonic rationalism, as Swift in his Brobdingnag and Houyhnhnm utopias subjects it to the criticism of his sort of rationalism."⁵⁷ The whole point of subjecting our society to criticism by absolute standards would be lost if Swift or More were foolish enough to suggest that such standards were to be found here on

earth: "Utopia, to effect its purpose, must be nowhere."⁵⁸

The reason why neither Utopia nor Houyhnhnmland offer programmes for us to follow is that they belong to a utopian tradition that does not, paradoxically, believe in itself, or rather in its own potential realisation. J.B. Bury, in The Idea of Progress, explains this when he points to two different utopian concepts: the literal and the non-literal.⁵⁹ Literal utopias look forward to a millenium of sorts where things on earth will come right, and towards which we can work. Non-literal utopias are based on absolute, unchanging values which can never exist on earth, and towards which we cannot possibly work, since they represent an ideal which can never be attained. Failure to understand this 'ancient' cast of mind has led many readers of More to carry off portions of his text in triumph and lead them into the camp of the liberal utopians, and to inscribe his name in the annals of 'progress' as one of its champions.⁶⁰ But this is to confound the original utopian concept, and to distort the whole point about More's utopian imagination. Progress is vital to the literal utopian tradition, but has no conceivable part to play in the non-literal tradition. The good place is no place; it does not exist: but its values are to be admired.⁶¹ This is the limit of the utopianism of both Swift and More, but it is not the last word they have to say on the subject.

The comedy and idealism of Swift and More resemble the idea behind Erasmus's joke about the wisdom of folly, for this is the technique and, at crucial junctures, the substance of their utopias. More and Swift provide elaborately realistic settings

for fantastic stories, narrated by "Nonsense" and a gull. Yet this is not the end of the peculiar irony - as some readers like to think, thereby 'rescuing' Swift from the truth discovered by Gulliver. The irony is that what our two narrators learn is, finally, well worth knowing.⁶² Hythloday's passion is for a state which is properly and reasonably organised - as is More's. Gulliver learns a shocking truth about himself (and us) and advocates humility and a search for self-knowledge, and surely Swift endorses this insight. In both cases the fantastic visions are clear measures of European pride. The important lesson for us is not to work out how we can get to Utopia (we cannot), but to recognise how desperately short of the 'civilisation' we boast we actually fall. The fantasy in the end - More and Swift assert - is European self-perception, for it is we who are living in Cloud-cuckooland, blissfully blinkered, where pride prevents us from recognising our own reality.

Hence the alienation of Hythloday and Gulliver, whose denunciations of pride cut deeply between appearance and reality, leaving them nowhere to rest. But the irony of both Swift and More depends upon an association with the characters at the end. Both works are rhetorical, both characters devices, but, at the critical junctures, both approach the status of tragic characters, if only to call to mind a major tragic theme: "the virtue that destroys."⁶³ This links them - despite the comedy - with the great tradition which Swift and More follow, a tradition of the alienation or destruction of the right-minded philosopher, from the execution of Socrates to the present day.

The two major links between More and Swift are their

classical utopianism and their attitudes towards the Church and society. This is one reason why More joins the heroes of Glubbudrib, the only modern figure so honoured. He shares with Swift a cast of mind derived from ancient ideals of stability, and a fear and loathing of radical change. The classical utopian tradition invariably rejects notions of progress or change. The ancients "believed in the ideal of an absolute order in society, from which, when it is once established, any deviation must be for the worse."⁶⁴ The notion of progress is characteristic of the modern mind, but absolute anathema to the ancient. This is why neither the Utopians nor the Houyhnhnms have the remotest variety in their existence. Living under the rule of absolute reason, they cannot even contemplate change, for, having reached perfection, there can be nothing better to change to. If modern readers see in both societies the seeds of a conformist or even totalitarian state, then they misunderstand the origins of such utopian ideals.⁶⁵ For in the Platonic tradition there is only one reason, which is absolute and pure, and therefore, the very concept of variety in thinking is impossible and absurd. Those who regard such a society as rigid and authoritarian belong to the class of freethinkers whom More and Swift both feared and detested. In both utopias reason is described as the satisfaction of nature. In Utopia the hierarchy of pleasures is designed to lead to this end, for, although various pleasures from scratching to the pursuit of knowledge are present, it is only the highest pleasures which achieve the true satisfaction of nature by pointing to the highest goods - namely, beauty, symmetry, and truth. This is why so many readers find the

societies dull. They are unchangeable because they are absolute standards; they have no history, for they have always been like this. But their dullness cannot be used as an argument against them, because this is exactly the point that the classical utopian is making. Utopia exists only in the mind, free from the nasty clutches of history. It has only one purpose - "to measure the present by an unchanging ideal."⁶⁶

But behind the shared classical ideals More and Swift have something else in common which governs the nature of their respective utopian imaginings.

This is an attitude towards a myth of social integration. The church in Utopia is a representation of this myth, since it demonstrates a harmony and unity between social and religious practices and ideals. The idea that the utopian church could ever become a source of conflict or division is impossible to imagine, for the two are so perfectly interwoven and so ideally married to one another that no such schism could ever come about. This myth is a vital link with Swift, who - as we saw in the previous Chapter - entertained an anachronistic attachment to a Laudian church which was intimately bound up with society. This is why Utopia has no factions, and proselytising is so severely punished, for More states in plain terms his rejection of the liberal idea of allowing factions into the public arena to fight one another to a standstill. There is a perfect match between More's attitudes here and Swift's. The Giant King cannot understand Gulliver's computation of the number of people in England by counting the number of factions, and draws a sharp distinction between the right to concoct poisons at

home and the right to sell them as cordials on the open market.⁶⁷ With Swift's approval he discriminates between liberty and licence in a manner we are to regard as wisely protectionist rather than oppressively authoritarian, for what he is protecting is the cohesion of society, and what he is aiming to prevent, at all costs, is a fanatical fringe creating cracks in the fabric of society and driving the wedge of their millenarian madness deep into the crevices they have created.

Intimately bound up with this concept of the religious fabric is the precious idea of the social fabric, and the crucial connection here is Henry VIII, both in his historical role - not least in relation to More himself - and in the figurative incarnation of him in Swift's imagination. The agrarian capitalism despised by More, and castigated at length by Hythloday in the first Book of Utopia, was equally detested by Swift in its manifestation in his day. The appropriation of Church lands was Henry's bribe to the rich which guaranteed the foundation of his own power. But his political triumph was the peasants' social calamity and the Church's effective emasculation. More's vision of a "communist" society attempts to prevent the division of society along any such lines.⁶⁸ The aggressive individualism of Europeans is presented in Utopia as the exact opposite of their principles of the common welfare: no-one seeks to look after number one because everyone is looked after equally well. The image of the golden chamberpot - like the Yahoos' ridiculous "shining stones" - encapsulates perfectly the absurdity of the search for wealth and the pursuit of selfish (and worthless) ends at the expense of the rest of society. The

striking similarity between Hythloday's - and, behind him, More's - bitter remarks on dispossessed beggars, despoiled monasteries, and capitalist appropriation of land, and Swift's pamphlets on Irish beggary and the impoverishment of the Church, highlights another important link between these two writers, what John Traugott calls "a symbolic recasting of history."⁶⁹ For their vision of history is every bit as important as their vision of utopia.⁷⁰ In Gulliver's Travels European history is presented throughout as random, senseless, and barbarous. Every utopian idea or institution encountered by Gulliver is a direct comment on the real history he recounts. This is underlined in Glubbudrib, where history is paraded before the reader as a warped morality play in which only six men stand out from a contemptible, disgusting rabble. In the same way Swift's tracts stress the incoherence of society, a break in the common social bond, and the images of dispossession and beggary echo almost to the letter those which More had used two hundred years previously.⁷¹ Hythloday's picture of sheep - gentle, pastoral animals and Christian metaphor - become ravenous man-eaters is reborn as The Modest Proposer's vision of Irish mothers turned butchers, selling their offspring to feed the cannibalistic society which reduces them to the lowest conceivable level of human existence.⁷²

To counteract this dehumanisation of society Swift summons up the ghost of social cohesion in order to condemn all those who destroy the essential fabric of society: factions, freeloaders, moneymen, absentee landlords, and all the others who impoverish the land and the people in pursuit of selfish ends. He stresses

the importance of the public interest, and provides a concept of "mutual subjection" in his religious and secular writings, precisely in order to isolate and excoriate the religious fanatics, freethinkers, liberals, and capitalists whom he holds responsible for present miseries. His philosophy - to the extent that it can be regarded as a proper philosophy⁷³ - is essentially an argument in favour of the common body and against individualism, and he finds the historical roots of this aggressive profiteering and moral myopia in the actions of his most detested historical figure - Henry VIII. Swift traces to Henry the contempt for the clergy which began with the despoliation of the monasteries, and continues in his own day with the general despoliation of the whole of Ireland (and large areas of England).⁷⁴ Henry to Swift was a wicked Pandora, a ruthless, selfish individual whose lust for power resulted in a quid pro quo which released every evil of selfishness, arrogant capitalism and egotistic individualism that eats away at the very foundations of Swift's beloved stability and cohesion.⁷⁵ Those who own the land have no interest in any such notion, choose to live elsewhere, and leave those who do live on the land - who have no choice but to do so - in the depths of poverty and degradation, priest and peasant alike. This is why Swift calls Henry a "Bloody inhuman Hell-hound of a King",⁷⁶ for he represents to Swift the founder of that club of arrogant, wilful, destructive individualists which includes Walpole, Marlborough and Wharton.⁷⁷ It is also why More appears in Swift's great pantheon of virtue. In Swift's symbolic rendering of history, More represents all the good things in man: respect for the

social body, belief in a church integral with society - even if it was not Swift's own - and a refusal, in the end, to compromise these values in the face of death. In beheading More, Henry became for Swift the archetypal Modern, an intolerable beast whose murderous pursuit of his own selfish ambitions represented the perfect symbol of Swift's vision of history: the corrupt destructive forces of change - forces with no moral basis - triumphant over the virtuous and harmonious stasis, derived from the ancients, which was the great satirist's ideal.⁷⁸

This symbolic approach to history is perhaps best encapsulated in Book Three of the Travels, where we encounter a brief allegory which precisely sums up Swift's attitude to that great modern chimera, progress. In Laputa and Balnibarbi Gulliver is bombarded with every conceivable utopian plan which the modern mind can imagine. In the Academy of Lagado he meets an endless succession of projectors engaged in the wildest utopian experiments, from an attempt to extract sunbeams from cucumbers to a scheme for turning excrement back into food.⁷⁹ In every case the folly and uselessness of such idiotic undertakings is made plain by the fact that every single one of them is a complete and utter failure. The price of these 'scientific' attempts to improve the lot of man, and to lead us all to a bright new tomorrow, is witnessed by Gulliver: "I never knew a Soil so unhappily cultivated, Houses so ill contrived and so ruinous, or a People whose Countenances and Habit expressed so much Misery and Want."⁸⁰ Having seen the results of the modern visionaries' dream of making the world anew, Gulliver meets Lord Munodi, a man despised by his own society for his lack of vision

and his wilful defiance of the laws of progress. In contrast to the disastrous dwellings of his fellow-citizens, Munodi's house is "built according to the best Rules of ancient Architecture."⁸¹ In defiance of the utopian planners, he is "content to go on in the old Forms; to live in the Houses his Ancestors had built, and act as they did in every Part of Life without Innovation".⁸² His life represents continuity and stability, a link with an ancient tradition where there is no need to change what is working quite well. It may be static, but not backward-looking in any derogatory sense, for what is the point of altering a way of life which is perfectly stable because it is in harmony with the natural order of things?⁸³ In order to demonstrate the conflict of forces in his country, Munodi tells Gulliver the story of the ruined mill. This mill used to stand by a large river whose strong current provided the power to turn the mill and supply the needs of his own family and many others besides. Then one day a team of projectors turned up with a plan to move the mill to the side of a mountain, and build a canal to carry pipes above the mill so that the running water would provide even more power than previously. However, nothing ever came of it, since the project - like every other similar project - failed to come to anything, and the projectors disappeared from the scene, leaving behind a trail of destruction. Nothing remains of the mill but a sad ruin.⁸⁴

This is the paradigmatic example of the Swiftian approach to the wild-eyed advocates of progress, for it establishes perfectly the dichotomy we have been discussing. On the one hand we have stasis backed by tradition and a common bond, whilst on

the other we have 'progress' which comes from nowhere and is going nowhere, which can create nothing, but can destroy everything. On the one hand we have Utopia, on the other history, and the evidence is overwhelming as to which of these we should admire.

But if it is clear that we are to admire Utopia, it is decidedly unclear what we are supposed to do about it. The dilemma is placed before us at the end of the two works we have been examining. At the conclusion of their respective voyages we find both Hythloday and Gulliver back in the Europe which they detest, and which has been held up by them for our scorn and strongest disapprobation. Given the nature and the vehemence of their arguments against our 'civilisation' and in favour of the superior morality and integrity of their hosts, we inevitably find ourselves asking the obvious question: why are they back in our midst? In the case of Hythloday this is arguable, for there seems to be no particular obstacle to his remaining among the utopians for as long as he desires. He says that he "would never have wished to leave except to make known that new world,"⁸⁵ but would anyone really be prepared to voluntarily forsake Utopia in order to return to the corruption of Europe? But if we are uncertain - or unconvinced - about Hythloday's return, we have no doubts about Gulliver's. Gulliver returns, in textual terms, because he is thrown out, because there is no place for a Yahoo - however superior and intelligent a Yahoo -⁸⁶ in the rational country of the Houyhnhnms. But the real reason why Gulliver must come home - as the reader knows - is that Houyhnhnmland is unreal: it simply does not exist. There are no rational horses,

there is no island of absolutely perfect creatures, because Jonathan Swift did not believe in utopia. We may interpret the Fourth Voyage as a holiday from history - a dream for its few admirers or a nightmare for its many detractors - but in the end the holiday must come to an end, and the place to which we must return is the place we left in the first instance.⁸⁷ However repugnant he may find it, Gulliver must return to England because it is his reality, because - from our point of view, as Swift is telling us - history, with all its attendant horrors, is the only world in which any of us can live.

The importance of the history/utopia dichotomy goes beyond what we have already established, for it leads us towards other areas of discussion which are certainly no less important to consider, and probably even more so. For the question of the behaviour of historical figures and public men inevitably comes down to the vexed issue of human motivation.⁸⁸ One's assessment of why events turn out the way they do is inextricably tied to the assessment of what people really are. The fact that Swift and More present us with utopias which could not exist links them not only with the ancients whose tradition they are following, but with a particular cast of mind and a particular attitude towards life. For they go beyond what we have already seen to be the classical utopian approach to suggest not only that we can never achieve the good life, but also, and much more important, we may fail to prevent things from getting much worse than they already are. The battle between utopia and history is no real battle, for utopia is a myth, so that we know from reading their works that history is all we have. The crucial

dilemma the reader is then faced with is this: can we prevent the world from becoming unbearably bad? The choice then ceases to be one between an ideal and a vicious reality and becomes instead one between an already vicious reality and a potentially even more disastrous future; not utopia versus history, but history versus dystopia.

For the theme of degeneration runs through Swift's works, both fictional and non-fictional, as a constant reminder of his intellectual pessimism. At various times Swift bemoans the decay of language, conversation, education, the nobility, political institutions, and, worst of all, morals and religion, and behind it all is his attitude that he is simply stating a self-evident truth.⁸⁹ In Lilliput Gulliver describes the positive aspects of the society, but adds the dark postscript:

In relating these and the following Laws, I would only be understood to mean the original Institutions, and not the most scandalous Corruptions into which these People are fallen by the degenerate Nature of Man.⁹⁰

When he visits the island of the sorcerers later in his travels, his unique opportunity to view the unfolding of history merely affords him the chance to observe how man has deteriorated not only morally but physically:

It gave me melancholy Reflections to observe how much the Race of human Kind was degenerate among us, within these Hundred Years past. How the Pox under all its Consequences and Denominations had altered every Lineament of an English Countenance; shortened the Size of Bodies, unbraced the Nerves, relaxed the Sinews and Muscles, introduced a sallow Complexion, and rendered the Flesh loose and rancid.⁹¹

Even in Brobdingnag the inexorable deterioration has not been evaded. For, whilst their moral standards remain one of the book's positives, their physical stature is subject to the same depressing laws of nature. A moralist author whom Gulliver reads observes "that Nature was degenerated in these latter declining Ages of the World, and could now produce only small abortive Births in Comparison of those in ancient Times."⁹² The process of degeneration is always presented as an inexorable and unavoidable march towards an even blacker future: things are not only bad, they are getting worse by the day, says Swift,⁹³ and it is this belief which underlies the ferocity and intensity of his attacks on the progressivists of his own day in all their manifestations.

In his attacks on the forces of progress in his own day - in politics, letters, and, most important of all, religion - Swift faces head-on the challenge from the opposing forces in the utopian struggle. We have already discovered that Swift's utopianism is of the non-literal variety, which is categorically not a plan of action or a blueprint for a New Jerusalem which we as readers should try to start constructing as soon as we have completed the text. Notwithstanding William Godwin's famous interpretation of the Fourth Voyage in just these terms, most readers of Swift do not see in the Houyhnhnms a goal for humanity.⁹⁴ For Swift, the Golden Age is gone, it is always something in the past, never something in the future. He was always much more inclined to place his ideal society or institution in the irrecoverable past. One only has to look at

the "Argument against Abolishing Christianity" with its central irony of a religion long-since degenerated into a nominal belief or the "Contests and Dissensions" with its central message of history as a record of decline to appreciate this.⁹⁵ But if we accept - as most readers do - that Swift's utopia is dull, this is not merely because utopias on the whole are dull, in contrast to history which is exciting but corrupt. It is substantially due to the fact that Swift's artistic talents are most successfully employed in a different - indeed, opposite - direction.

For Swift is a great negative writer.⁹⁶ He is always much better at exposing and delivering the lash to manic man than presenting positive, temperate, sensible solutions. His incomparable gift is the presentation of madness, of bedlam, not utopia. When he comes to deal with proponents of the other school of utopian thinking in the various shapes and forms in which he encounters them, Swift becomes fired with an outrage which fuels his imagination and feeds the genius of his saeva indignatio of which so much has been written. His assaults on the millenarian madness of his own age (and the age preceding it) are partially present in the Travels, especially in The Third Voyage, where the bulbous-eyed boffins and fanatical visionaries of a new tomorrow are exposed for the frauds, charlatans, and, worse, madmen, they truly are.⁹⁷ But it finds its fullest expression in A Tale of a Tub, a remarkable and biting satire on all the bogus values and pseudo-logic of the modern age which Swift so despised, and which he exposes in a compendious 'tribute' to the advocates of the progress in which he so

categorically disbelieves. It is here that the second utopian dichotomy - history vs dystopia - is explored at length, with conclusions which reach beyond the superficial frivolity to become a fundamental exposé of the motivation of all humanity.⁹⁸

The division offered by Swift in the 'Apology' is usually accepted as a starting-point for discussion of the Tale, for there he says that "the numerous and gross Corruptions in Religion and Learning might furnish matter for a Satyr, that would be useful and diverting."⁹⁹ The form of the Tale corroborates this rough division, with religion being kept in separate chapters from learning until the end of the book, when such divisions disappear dramatically. The actual content of the book does not, of course, correspond to this scheme at all, for it is a fundamental premise of the Tale that the various victims who are brought before us to condemn themselves out of their own mouths are all brothers under the skin, or rather the periwig. The reason for this is reason, or rather the arrogant assumption that we possess it. All the people who are satirised in the Tale at various points are connected by this thread: the Moderns, fops, the wits who drink at Will's Coffee House, the scientific virtuosi of Gresham College, the Grub Street Hacks, the sect that worship the image of the tailor, modern philosophers and all the rest.¹⁰⁰ They are all characterised by pride in their possession of reason, and the constant procession of their beliefs, systems and projects before our eyes is what gives the book its overwhelming exuberance. The "dazzling intellectual activity"¹⁰¹ of the book comes from Swift's astonishing ability

to parody a colossal range of characters and writers, both real and exaggerated, and the energy which carries the whole mad train of thought along is, in truth, this pride as it is given voice on each and every page.

Using as his models those authors whom he most despised, Swift offers us "a reductio ad absurdum honouring modernity,"¹⁰² in which all the hallmarks of his chosen victims are constantly to the fore. These victims - Le Strange, Wotton, Bentley, Dryden and others - are picked out, not simply because of personal grievances which Swift may have felt, but because they represent in concrete form the kind of writing Swift loathed: trite, banal, sugar-coated, endlessly self-important, riddled with Types and Fables.¹⁰³ The apparent fragmentary nature of the Tale is not as it seems, for these individual assaults in the midst of a more general satiric onslaught, highlighting Swift's aversions and dislikes, have, cumulatively, a reinforcing effect, not so much because they unify the book, but because they add conviction to the satire.¹⁰⁴ They do not convey the impression that the persona is consistent, but they do add pieces of evidence to the general charges against the Moderns, who are dull here, lightweight there, and pompous, inept, spleen-ridden elsewhere.

We can experience some of the flavour of these multiple charges if we look in detail at several of the recurring themes and images of the Tale. There is the theme of fashion, of contemporaneity, of profundity, of avowed shallowness, and in particular there are several dichotomies which turn up at regular intervals, contradicting one another, but never letting the

Moderns off the hook. The theme of ephemerality is constantly before us, as Swift mocks at length the notion that the achievement of up-to-dateness is something of which to be inordinately proud. The 'author' declares at the outset that the Tale is the work of "a very few leisure Hours" which came about, among other things, because of "a tedious fit of rainy weather",¹⁰⁵ and to prove that he is proud of this fact, he later declares that "I am living fast, to see the Time, when a Book that misses its Tide, shall be neglected, as the Moon by day, or like Mackarel a Week after the Season."¹⁰⁶ This theme is pursued to the point where the 'author' can only defiantly claim that "what I am going to say is literally true this Minute I am writing."¹⁰⁷ Wit, we are told, is equally bound by such fashion and locality, for "such a Jest there is, that will not pass out of Covent-Garden; and such a one, that is nowhere intelligible but at Hide-Park Corner." The crowning comment upon this pride in being up-to-the-minute comes in the 'Epistle Dedicatory to Prince Posterity', in which the extended joke is that Moderns have no dealings with him at all, since none of the books lasts. The 'author' refers to several recent works, but regrets that they have disappeared without trace, and asks rather wistfully:

Are they sunk in the Abyss of Things? 'Tis
Certain, That in their own Nature they were light
enough to swim upon the surface for all
Eternity.¹⁰⁸

Modern books are so momentary that they resemble mayflies, here today, gone tomorrow, and the irony is, of course, that it was

precisely this spurious topicality upon which they most prided themselves originally. Living for the day, they die with the passing of that day.

The use of lightness above is indicative of another facet of Swift's satiric method in the Tale: the use of established dichotomies to discredit and undermine the credibility of the Moderns. Images of rising and falling, height and depth, lightness and weight, inside and outside abound, and often contradict one another at the literal level, though this is deliberate on Swift's part. The meaning associated with each word depends upon the context, for lightness, rising, height and the outside are used to denounce speculation, airiness, triviality, superficiality when used in conjunction with anything Modern. But their opposites - heaviness, falling, depth and the inside - are used to suggest leadenness, heavy-handed scholarship or plain dullness when they in turn are used for this purpose.¹⁰⁹ Individually, such images are effective means of bringing before the reader a memorable, tangible vision of the victim which guarantees that the reader will view the other with a contempt no rational argument would be likely to instil. This approach to his task involves Swift in his favourite literary tactic - the reduction of men to symbols or cyphers, and the use of the physical to undermine the intellectual and spiritual aspirations and pretensions of his satiric victims: what John Bullitt calls "vulgarizing caricature".¹¹⁰

The clearest example of this is to be found in the central narrative of the Tale, involving the three brothers, but particularly in the presentment of Peter who is given the

character of a fop, a bombastic tyrant and a manipulator: in other words the classic knave. He tries, by the simple force of his personality, to oblige others to believe his interpretations of words, and to give substance to his wild imaginings and hocus-pocus pseudo-religion. He adopts the dual label of "Projector and Virtuoso" - two of the most damning titles Swift can bestow on his victims - thereby aligning himself with the infamous virtuosi of the Academy of Lagado. Swift's tactic here is to find a physical equivalent for every one of Peter's innovations and rituals. The confessional is an ass's head, papal ceremony is described as "Puppets and Raree-Shows", and holy water is called his "famous universal Pickle"¹¹¹ which is just the same, needless to say, as any common pickle to be found anywhere. Perhaps the best example of Swift's technique here is the papal bulls, which Swift characterises as real animals, and for a moment the words seem to escape from the meaning they should have, and take on a kind of poetic significance of their own, giving the passage, and the image, an exuberance all of their own.¹¹² Swift is saying here that words are "the appearance which may conceal, but can certainly never change, the reality they pretend to describe".¹¹³ This is made even clearer in the exchange between Peter and his brothers, when he tries to pass off bread as mutton, which is Swift's image for transubstantiation. When one of the brothers suggests that the "mutton" is only bread, Peter says "Pray Sir ... eat your Vittles and leave off your Impertinence." But they continue their objection, one of them saying

" By G-, My Lord ... I can only say that to my Eyes, and Fingers,

and Teeth, and Nose, it seems to be nothing but a Crust of Bread." To this objection Peter reacts violently:

Look ye, Gentlemen ... to convince you, what a couple of blind, positive, ignorant, wilful Puppies you are, I will use this plain Argument; By G-, it is true, good, natural Mutton as any in Leaden-Hall Market; and G-, confound you both eternally, if you offer to believe otherwise.¹¹⁴

Roman Catholicism is a blustering, bombastic bluff, inaccessible either to reasonable objection or indeed any argument at all. Peter is a con-man, a trickster who uses a brazen front to carry all the arguments he cannot win by any rational means.

Perhaps the clearest statement of the intention behind this kind of satire comes in the Battle of the Books, when we come across the famous exchange between the Spider and the Bee, the Modern spirit and the Ancient. The Spider is infested with spleen, boasts of his own exploits, and refuses to admit that any of his achievements derive from anyone's efforts but his own. The Bee is gentle, modest, and makes no great claims on his own behalf. The ensuing debate on which is the nobler of the two creatures leads to the following conclusion being drawn by Aesop, who interprets the discussion, and says to the Spider:

Erect your Schemes with as much Method and Skill as you please; yet, if the materials be nothing but Dirt, spun out of your own Entrails (the Guts of Modern Brains), the Edifice will conclude at last in a Cobweb.¹¹⁵

This is the point behind a great many of the Tale's satiric

thrusts. The Spider is the type and emblem of the Modern, but he appears in many guises: Descartes, Wotton, Dryden, the 'author' in his many guises, and ultimately Jack and the Aeolists. The Ancients-Moderns controversy which prompted the Battle of the Books clearly sparked off a fair amount of the comedy of the Tale, especially the literary satire. For example, the charge laid by Wotton and Fontenelle at the door of the classical authors was twofold: they were inferior because of inferior knowledge (the world being then so many centuries younger), and they possibly never existed at all, in the sense that their reputations have grown since they wrote (the argument being that giant Ancients are modern creations).¹¹⁶ This produces from Swift's pen the "Digression concerning Critics", in which his 'author' declares that "the noblest Discoveries those Ancients ever made, of Art or of Nature, have all been produced by the transcending Genius of the present Age."¹¹⁷ The final expression is clear illustration of the degree of contempt behind the authorial facade, and is the classic satiric jibe against all Modern writing as we find it expressed in the Tale. Dryden is ridiculed in a passage written in a mockery of his own style, and in the same passage the Types and Fables - each more ridiculous than the last - demonstrate the 'antiquity' of the Moderns by showing an endless list of references to "Asses" to be found in Herodotus, Ctesias and others. But in the end the status of all such Hacks and bad writers is identical to that of Peter, for they have simply hijacked good sense, judgment and taste, and used their momentary advantage in a dictatorial fashion. By this last, I mean the claim made by the 'author' to "that great and

honourable Privilege of being the Last Writer; I claim an absolute Authority in Right, as the freshest Modern, which gives me a Despotick Power over all Authors before me."¹¹⁸

But what the above examples - and many others one could produce to the same effect - have in common finally is that they are memorable, when all is said and done, more for their comedy than their satire. What we are witnessing is the ability of Swift to take a comparatively small stock of common (almost standard) caricatures and jokes and expand them into a superb comic creation. The attacks themselves live in our memories because of the variety and detail of the comic invention of the author, not because anyone really cares, or remembers much, about the original arguments.¹¹⁹

This, however, is but part of the Tale's satire, the part which is most readily in accord with the original cause and the stated purpose: self-seeking, self-important modernity, which raises itself by sheer arrogance and imagination to realms of power and success in all fields of learning and religion. It is only when we come to the most difficult, bedevilling and fascinating parts of the Tale, though, that we confront the real dilemmas the book throws up, and we move straight to the heart of the controversy. For, in the passages involving Jack in his development towards madness, the "Digression concerning Madness" and the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit, we come face to face with apparent authorial purpose more serious, more profound, and more difficult to assimilate into any pleasing scheme of things than we encounter elsewhere in the Tale. Once encountered, these sections cast a different light upon all the preceding and

succeeding passages, and alter the balance both of the book's humour and its ostensible purpose.

The attacks on the Puritans and the other Moderns are related, of course, but there is a marked difference in the intensity of feeling whenever Jack is centre-stage instead of Peter. The reasons for this are clear enough - as we established in the previous Chapter - in political terms, but it is not a historical or theoretical argument Swift is carrying on here; rather it is an attack that goes to the very roots of spiritual experience. Swift is not simply attacking deviations from standards or beliefs in the Puritans: these satires represent "assaults upon the most fundamental convictions and beliefs"¹²⁰ and, as we shall see, Swift's attempts to limit the scope of his assaults meet with dubious success. The denial of the Puritan claim to spirituality is the constant theme of these works, and the identification between spirit and matter, between inspiration and wind throughout is significant in the extreme. Swift has a physical counterpart for every would-be spiritual attribute or experience, and the purpose of this kind of satire becomes clear when we read the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit. The definition of "Enthusiasm" which the 'author' gives is that it is "A lifting up of the Soul or its Faculties above Matter",¹²¹ and it is the brazen effrontery of this claim that Swift is attacking in the satire on the enthusiasts, for it is a fundamental premise in his work that matter can never be transcended.

The keynote to an understanding of Swift's assault here is, again, the Civil War in his interpretation. He shares a

reading of the revolution with many modern radical historians, notably Christopher Hill, who look back to the seventeenth-century upheaval and see the 'other' revolution, the one that never quite took place, which was even more extreme in its aims and beliefs than the outburst of lawlessness, anarchy and brutality, leading to regicide - as Swift would put it - which actually took place.¹²² In this revolution religious freedom combined with sexual licence, unbridled by law or society. What is clear is that Swift is deliberately confusing the actual revolution with the one that was stopped by Cromwell and, using figures from the underground, illicit rebellion as "paradigmatic enemy",¹²³ he attempts to tar all dissenting Protestants with the same antinomian brush. These people are mad, but not dishonest: they mean every word they say. But this makes them much more dangerous, not less.¹²⁴ The "Digression on Madness" makes this abundantly clear when it declares that

when a Man's Fancy gets astride on his Reason, when Imagination is at Cuffs with the Senses, and common Understanding, as well as common Sense, is Kickt out of Doors; the first Proselyte he makes, is Himself, and when that is once compass'd, the difficulty is not so great in bringing over others; A strong Delusion always operating from without, as vigorously as from within.¹²⁵

The purpose of such an argument in Swift's own day was clearly to establish the fraudulence of the dissenting Protestants' cries of hysteria about the return of Popery, and a good deal of Jack's speech has this behind it. He goes around asking people to assault him physically, then returns home, crying:

Neighbours mine, this broken Head deserves a
Plaister; had poor Jack been tender of his
Noddle, you would have seen the Pope, and the
French King, long before this time of Day, among
your Wives and Warehouses.¹²⁶

Swift is warning that the danger from the dissenting quarter is immeasurably greater than any threat from Rome, and any cries to the contrary are simply diversionary tactics to draw Anglican eyes away from Presbyterian activities.

Coupled with this more obvious theme of religious danger we have Swift's own abiding interest in madness.¹²⁷ Swift casts an almost envious - and yet abhorring - eye upon these lunatic successes, these madmen bedecked with laurels, instead of grovelling in the filth of Bedlam Hospital as one might expect. This fascination caused him to view the successful party in the Civil War as a kind of mass infection which gripped the whole nation, until it was eventually eradicated.¹²⁸ This is the root of the satire in the Tale, where Swift asks us to see the so-called lunatics of Bedlam for what they really are: the brilliant men of religion, learning, philosophy and other modern arts and sciences who have simply never been given the chance to show off their talents:

Is any student tearing his Straw in piece-meal,
Swearing and Blaspheming, biting his Grate,
foaming at the Mouth and emptying his Pispot in
the Spectator's Faces? ... give him a Regiment of
Dragoons, and send him into Flanders among the
Rest.¹²⁹

Politicians, lawyers and doctors of outstanding abilities are similarly identified, and always the underlying assault remains

the same: a denial of the reasonableness of human conduct. It is the prime target of Swift's satire that man has prided himself most of all upon the faculty of reason, a faculty which Swift demands incessantly to have demonstrated before we may even begin to talk of possessing it. But it is not just the fraudulence of all the systems of philosophy, religion, metaphysics and history that arouses Swift's anger,

It is the fact that, in their manifest frailty and falseness, it is precisely these 'attainments' which prompt man to assert that he has mastered truth, transcended his natural state, ordered the universe, and received the direct inspiration of God.¹³⁰

It is these assertions which Swift is most anxious to refute, and this he does through Crazy Jack and the Aeolists, and the mechanical operator, but, as we shall see, in so doing he opens a box, like Pandora perhaps, which he is unable to close at the point he would wish.

The fact that the Tale has lasted so well, and is still admired and enjoyed today, has little or nothing to do with the subjects of the satire, for they are in themselves dead ducks, and were so almost as much then as now.¹³¹ What fires the enthusiastic response of the reader is the fact that the mad voices we hear have a significance and an applicability which stretch well beyond the immediate occasion of the Tale. To understand this we must understand Swift's "radical imagination".¹³² Why, if he was the limited man he so often seems to be in terms of his own outlook on life, religion, history and politics, did he play such dangerous, fascinating and brilliant games which seem to suggest the opposite of the

conclusions expressed in the staid, sensible, dull tracts elsewhere in his oeuvre? Why is he so angry if they are just games? What are the origins and implications of such a disparity?

John Traugott suggests that the root of the satire is snobbery, particularly class snobbery, and says that Swift learned this from Sir William Temple. Temple's position in the Ancients-Moderns controversy - the one which Swift takes up in the Battle of the Books - is utterly preposterous and, furthermore, seems to have been obviously so to Temple himself. The very fact that the text by which he chose to exalt the Ancients was a forgery meant nothing, for the difference between Ancients and Modern was essentially one of taste, of a gentleman's taste. But if Swift's irony begins in this way - asserting class solidarity, as it were - it clearly develops well beyond it, until it "ends in tragic irony, separating the despairing realist from the desperate illusionist".¹³³ Swift elevates some dull fare into a cornucopia of rich dishes, and the threadbare platitudes of Temple become reborn as the radical satire of Swift; satire which goes to the heart of man and the limits of experience.

The central text for such an argument is the "Digression on Madness", and especially the two paragraphs which expand upon the assertion that happiness is "a perpetual Possession of being well Deceived".¹³⁴ This part of the Tale cannot properly be called satiric, since there is no real object under attack, and the passage as a whole is much more than anything else in the book has attempted or suggested. "Mankind, or a universal

disposition of mankind, is the object of Swift's attention here", says Edward Rosenheim,¹³⁵ one of the many critics who have attempted to reduce the argument here to something coherent and intelligible, and who eschews the tendency to give all the dubious verbiage to the persona. The principal difficulty in interpreting the passage arises from their tone as much as from the words themselves. Swift's position vis-a-vis the voice is not at all clear, and this creates an ambiguity which makes explication very difficult indeed.¹³⁶ But those critics who feel that, at this point, the voice we hear is the authentic voice of the satirist,¹³⁷ are cautioned by Rosenheim. It is still part of the Tale, the putative author (or persona) is still a device, a disguise and, after all that has gone before, we cannot accept this argument we are reading as a "literal, authentic statement of sober belief", even although we may feel in our bones that it is. The whole structure of the Tale forbids us to suddenly claim that the masks have been dropped.¹³⁸

The real object under attack is delusion, not simply the absence of reason, but irrationality as a force that can create overpowering chaos and evil in government, philosophy, letters and religion.¹³⁹ The happiness mentioned above is shown to be delusive, because it avoids reality, and the reason for avoiding reality is made plain:

How fade and insipid do all Objects accost us that are not convey'd in the Vehicle of Delusion? How shrunk is everything, as it appears in the Glass of Nature? So that if it were not for the Assistance of Artificial Mediums, false Lights, refracted Angles, Varnish, and Tinsel; there would be a mighty level in the Felicity and Enjoyments of Mortal Men.¹⁴⁰

The appeal of this illusory happiness is solely to the surface, because the more one probes into the inner recesses, the more one finds that truth "enters into the Depth of Things, and then comes gravely back with Informations and Discoveries, that in the inside they are good for nothing."¹⁴¹

The truth may be unpleasant, we are (implicitly) told, but it is infinitely preferable to the shallow deception of the surface which conceals it. The controversial images chosen to convey this message - the "flay'd woman" and the dissected beau - illustrate with graphic brutality the unpleasant, vicious reality that underlies all "Varnish and Tinsel". The argument that these images are excessive, or that they somehow represent a 'positive' view of either creature, is debatable.¹⁴² For Swift, however, the importance of these examples is that they uncover the fraud of happiness, for they restate a point made earlier in the Tale, where the 'author' in his capacity as Secretary of the Universe has "dissected the Carcass of Human Nature ... till at last it smelt so strong, I could preserve it no longer."¹⁴³ The argument of the "Digression" thus moves to its climax, and the epicurean speaking voice draws the obvious conclusion from the evidence presented: the truly happy man is identified as

He that can with Epicurus content his ideas with the Films and Images that fly off upon his Senses from the Superficies of Things; such a Man truly wise, creams off Nature, leaving the Sower and the Dregs, for Philosophy and Reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined Point of Felicity, called, The Possession of being well deceived; the Serene Peaceful State of being a

In the light of our interpretation of the preceding passages, this final sentence would seem to be both logical and inevitable. The irrational desire in men is for "security and illusion",¹⁴⁵ and the evil of the Knaves is that they rise to power by providing both at the same time. The "Digression" is, therefore, a statement of the underlying moral principles of the whole satire. The tale of a tub format means that it cannot be a bald statement, offered with straight face in the midst of so much laughter and tomfoolery. Nevertheless, all the other satirised objects of the Tale - modern critics, fanatic preachers, glib philosophers, writers of sugar-coated homilies and the rest - are sufferers from this delusion which the "Digression" nails in crystal-clear fashion. Their offerings are, above all, anathematical to truth; they are peddlars of lies, fake surfaces and nonsense, all passed off as the genuine article. This passage demonstrates, once and for all, that the bedrock conviction beneath Swift's satire is not misanthropy or spleen; it is the unbending desire to expose both the systematic distortion of truth, and the bland acceptance of this distortion - by others - as truth.

However, acceptance of the above interpretation of the bedevilling "Digression" does not, cannot, resolve the central dilemma of the Tale and its attendant writings. For this dilemma revolves around the feeling among readers that, true as it undoubtedly is, the above is not the whole explanation of what we find on reading this great satire; and furthermore, there remains

an even deeper feeling that this 'something else' not only undermines, but ultimately contradicts, the reasonable, moral arguments we have carefully drawn from this most difficult text. What we have to deal with is the element in Swift's satire that goes beyond what he is saying, and seems to offer - or perhaps we should simply say suggest - conclusions difficult to reconcile with the overt argument about religious behaviour and human reason.¹⁴⁶

The problem, as is so often the case with Swift, is what we are to do with the message we are offered, for, as soon as we, as it were, pan back from the "Digression on Madness" to the rest of the Tale and the Mechanical Operation, we find that it is inadequate and difficult to apply to much of what we read. This feeling we have at such points is well-nigh universal among readers. What we are essentially faced with is a problem we cannot solve, for, when we look more closely at what we have read, we find that it does not tally with what we thought Swift was saying.¹⁴⁷ As one critic has put it: "It is not easy to learn the lesson from a reading of the Tale of how not to be a fool among knaves."¹⁴⁸

This is largely because the satire seems to go beyond its proper remit at certain points.¹⁴⁹ For example, in the concluding passage of the central argument of the "Digression on Madness" we come across three points where we might feel this to be so. The two examples given by the 'author' to demonstrate his point about the surface being preferable to the inside seem to substantiate this argument:

Last Week I saw a Woman flay'd, and you will hardly believe, how much it altered her Person for the worse. Yesterday I ordered the Carcass of a Beau to be stript in my Presence; when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected Faults under one Suit of Cloaths: Then I laid open his Brain, his Heart, and his Spleen; But, I plainly perceived at every Operation, that the further we proceeded, we found the Defects encrease upon us in Number and Bulk.¹⁵⁰

The animus is suddenly diverted away from the supposed object of the satiric assault, and a new dimension is entered. Truth versus delusion no longer seems relevant to the point being made, and the point being made raises disturbing questions for the reader, questions which he can neither answer nor properly understand. If Swift had used the beau and the whore as he does elsewhere, especially in the poems, where their habits and immorality are used to exemplify the surface-depth dichotomy, this would be both appropriate and satirically acceptable. But the fact that Swift uses them in the way that he does is abundantly significant. After all, as Claude Rawson puts it: "If a whore's body alters for the worse when flayed, or a beau's innards look unsavoury when laid open, so would anyone else's, and the fact does not obviously demonstrate anybody's wickedness."¹⁵¹ The satire here is directed against the human being as flesh, not as moral being. What does one do to reform one's bowels? What moral code will harden one's skin against the whiplash?¹⁵²

The 'photographic development' process normally used in satire - whereby the reader develops the satirist's negative image into a positive statement - is of no value in this instance, especially since part of the force of the passage

derives from its violation of this developing process.¹⁵³ This violation is capped by the final opposition, not of good and bad, or reason and unreason, we should expect to encounter, but of Fool and Knave, one which leaves no room for the reader to escape. This is the crux of the problem for the reader, who finds himself stranded between two unacceptable options. The uncertainty produced in the reader is an integral part of Swift's overall tactics, as the use of "Knave" shows; he probably uses it to disconcert and knock the reader off balance, and to extend the satire by this means to everyone, making self-exculpation impossible. The relationship between Swift and/or the 'author' and the opposition is unclear, and no line of enquiry seems likely to prove fruitful, so that we are left with little more than a recognition of the "imprisoning rhetorical effect"¹⁵⁴ of the phrase rather than any proper idea of what it actually means. The alternative to being a fool - which is, of course, what we are all trying to find - remains deliberately unacceptable. But the most disheartening experience of all for the reader is to return to the body of the Tale in the light of this fresh evidence to see whether any hope - or further elucidation - is to be found there.

For when we do return to the body of the book we find that Swift's dual themes of corruption in religion and history - the corruptions in learning we have already seen to be more-or-less encompassed within the ostensible purpose - seem to go beyond the bounds of ordinary satiric practice. Even if this is only obvious at certain points, and in odd moments, it is in these moments that Swift follows most assiduously to their origins the

forces that shape human history. Whatever Swift's own predilections and beliefs in life, in art he gives over all the Augustan ideals to the demon of his imagination. These ideals of order and decorum, "Sweetness and Light",¹⁵⁵ are nowhere to be found in this world, and those who would suggest that they are are satirised along with the rest. The satire may begin inside the bounds of such ideals and attitudes, but soon broadens its scope from lower-class grubs and critics to Courts, the Catholic Church, Louis XIV, Descartes, enthusiasm: a Hobbesian world of dog-eat-dog presented from the inside, as Swift enters the imagination of his chosen victims to look at the world through their eyes.¹⁵⁶ But, stranger than this, when these voices speak, they speak the truth that the 'saner' passages can only suggest: "that the world is a more perfect version of Bedlam Hospital."¹⁵⁷

This argument is substantiated, as we have seen, by a description of the inmates of Bedlam, men clearly fitted for a nobler destiny, but for a historical accident, or a misfortune of birth. But when the satirist takes us outside the madhouse, the point is more clearly and dramatically illustrated. The history of Jack, and the passing references to history, amply demonstrate the satirist's view that history is a tale told by an idiot: a random, senseless catalogue of complete insanity that cannot be interpreted in terms of reason or logic. Historical examples brought before us to convince us of this include Louis XIV, whose brutality and glory in slaughter were a mystery until the "Vapour" which caused it formed a tumour in his anus, and was immediately detected: "the same Spirits which in their superior

progress would conquer a Kingdom, descending upon the Anus, conclude in a Fistula."158 Swift adapts Lucretius's atomic theory of "films" to his own purpose here, in order to explain history. These films deceive men into seeing other objects (humans) in a false light, and cause mental and physical chaos within. Hence a chasm is opened up between reality and perception of reality, which causes dire effects when it goes undiscovered. The example here is Henry IV of France, who set Europe a-tremble, and why? Only when he was stabbed did they discover that all this fuss and furore had been caused by "an absent Female, Whose Eyes had raised a Protuberancy, and before Emission, she was removed into an Enemy's Country."159 The semen, being prevented from ejaculating, "ascended to the Brain", bringing about the other disastrous effects.

The impact of such satire derives from the chasm between the rational interpretation historians and the rest of us like to foist on events, and the irrational, random nature of the historical reality. Louis XIV did behave in ways that were well-nigh impossible to explain, so why look beyond some blockage in his bowels? Henry IV must have been driven by some powerful force, so why not the sexual urge? The inclusion of Darius further widens the historical span, and adds more evidence to the satirist's case that some madness must be responsible for history, empire and philosophy. The point is made even clearer when introducers of schemes in philosophy - "The Empire of Reason" - are discussed. Some "Vapour" must be responsible for such innovations:

For, what Man in the natural State, or Course of Thinking, did ever conceive it in his power, to reduce the Notions of all Mankind, exactly to the same Length, and Breadth, and Height of his own?¹⁶⁰

The seemingly endless line of candidates who are paraded before us - and occasionally speak to us - give Swift's overwhelming answer to this question. Driven by passion and irrationality, "the whole of self-deluding, superficial mankind is mad."¹⁶¹

The reductive process by which Swift destroys his victims is even clearer in his attack upon the "Enthusiasts" or "Fanaticks".¹⁶² This attack is made when mad Jack forms his own religious sect, called the "Aeolists", whose religion derives from the belief that the origin of everything is the "Anima Mundi" or wind of the world. Since the source of all is wind, they "affirm the Gift of BELCHING, to be the noblest Act of a Rational Creature."¹⁶³ But the imagery quickly moves beyond the merely humorous, and the association between wind and spirit deepens as the Mysteries and Rites are described. Bellows are applied to the backsides of preachers in order to provide the source of their "inspiration". The process is described in graphic detail: "a secret Funnel is also convey'd from his Posteriors, or the Bottom of the Barrel ... whereupon, you behold him Swell immediately to the Shape and Size of his Vessel. In this posture he disembogues whole Tempests upon his Auditory, as the Spirit from beneath gives him utterance."¹⁶⁴

The key expression is "Spirit from beneath", because this is what Swift is trying to convey: an association in the mind of the reader between these religious fanatics and the lower

faculties, never the higher faculties from which they themselves claim to derive their 'spiritual' sustenance. The disreputable origins of such inspiration are further displayed when the sexual aspect is brought to our attention. Among the "wise Aeolists" women are sometimes thought to be better orators than men because their

Organs were understood to be better disposed for the Admission of those Oracular Gusts, as entering and passing up thro' a Receptacle of greater Capacity, and causing also a Pruriency by the way, such as with due Management, hath been refined from a carnal, into a Spiritual Exstasie.¹⁶⁵

Even whilst bearing in mind the object of Swift's attack - and it is a devastating blow against some of the antinomian excesses of the Civil War - it is difficult not to find this kind of thing disturbing, not from prudishness or moral disdain, but from a normal critical standpoint. What are we to make of such images? Are we to ignore them, dismiss them, or denigrate their impact in the cause of redeeming Swift from charges of excess and blasphemy? The images are excessive, not least because of their enveloping insistence that the roots of all spiritual activity and feeling lie in foul matter, in wind and sexual gratification.¹⁶⁶

The pursuit of this contention is followed to its logical conclusion in the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit, where it is expressed as a belief that "the seed or Principle, which has ever put Men upon Visions in Things Invisible, is of a Corporeal Nature."¹⁶⁷ The hubris of mankind is to believe that the body can be transcended and some nirvana of spirituality entered.

This is where the attack on Jack sweeps well beyond that on Peter (despite Swift's claims to the contrary),¹⁶⁸ because it deals not with a crook, a con-man, a tyrant or a mountebank, but a proselytising madman, who believes every word of the fantastic drivel he delivers to his congregation. Swift traces this fanatical self-delusion to its origins, comparing the peroration to its bodily counterpart:

in the Height and Orgasmus of their spiritual exercise it has been frequent with them *****; immediately after which, they found the spirit to relax and flag of a sudden with the Nerves, and they were forced to hasten to a Conclusion.¹⁶⁹

The brutal conclusion is that all pretension to rise above matter is doomed to failure, for we are too firmly rooted in it.¹⁷⁰ The example of Thales is offered as the paradigm of all such self-deluding dreamers. In this he is like Strephon in the poems; he must learn the hardest lesson of all, and learn it the hardest way of all:

Nor, wonder how I lost my wits;
Oh! Celia, Celia, Celia shits!¹⁷¹

The lesson Strephon learns, then, is that those who entertain preposterous romantic notions about humanity are bound to come to grief in the end. Whether philosopher, King, Grub-Street hack or Puritan fanatic, the message remains the same: "subtending every romantic dream is a bedrock of physiology."¹⁷²

The final effect of such satire is to dissuade the reader from Christianity, for, even if Swift says he attacks only

Papists and Dissenters, they are nevertheless the two central groups within the Christian tradition. As one critic puts it: "His development of the mechanical operation of the spirit leaves precious little room for genuine spirituality."¹⁷³ He includes Church history, the history of kings, absurd religious dogma as evidence; but man is nowhere to be found behind the various costumes, stage machinery and tricks of wind, semen and other bodily matter.¹⁷⁴ It seems as though, by adopting a parodic countenance, Swift is freed to tell us the filthy truth about ourselves, a truth he could never express in propria persona. Sexuality and its drives are central to Swift's psychology of human public behaviour. In order to express this truth, he must don the fool's motley. In this way, he looks at the world for evidence of rationality, and finds none. Seeing only hypocrisy, egotism and social conditioning, his fool condemns all history, all religion, and beneath the Augustan parody we find the madman with his terrible truth about the human condition; and Swift can always hide behind the masque, the game and deny all knowledge that he is saying anything of the sort.¹⁷⁵ Needless to say, modern critics have been only too anxious to agree with him, and pull him back from the nihilistic abyss inhabited by his fool. "We share the author's creative liberty, not the supposed Author's captivity in chaos", says one.¹⁷⁶ "Swift stands well aloof from the drama taking place upon his stage",¹⁷⁷ says another, and these are but representatives of a wider body of critics determined to distance the satirist from his work.

But, if we are to apply such ideas to the text - particularly the notion that 'compromise' is intended - we will

find that the problems remain. For, whatever the status of Martin, religion as a whole must suffer from the implicit denial of spirituality and religious rites when one reads the following:

Who, that sees a little poultry Mortal, droning,
and dreaming, and drivelling to a Multitude, can
think it agreeable to common good sense, that
either Heaven or Hell should be put to the
Trouble of Influence upon what he is about?¹⁷⁸

Such a sentiment, if accepted, cannot be limited in its application, and since it underlines the evidence presented on nearly every page of the Tale, we must presume that Swift did mean it to be accepted.¹⁷⁹

The truly subversive conclusion offered by the Tale appears to be that irrationality is the source of all human actions. Swift decries the acceptance of "common forms",¹⁸⁰ yet curiosity is hardly recommended. To accept surfaces - "Tinsel and Varnish" - is to be shallow; to delve into the depths is pompous, and ultimately heart-breaking, for what do we find? The dissection of the beau is the image which conveys this most clearly. His vision of the sublime teaches us sublimation, for spirituality is human nature in Sunday glad rags; our "spiritual" pastimes are rooted firmly in our animal nature ("ways of ejaculating the Soul", as Swift puts it quite bluntly). This is all a million miles away from any idea of Augustan decorum that Swift may have learned from Sir William Temple, and the farther we proceed into the inner recesses of the Tale, the farther we travel from the expected ironic responses. The object of the satire ceases to be pretended wisdom, inane or misleading

philosophy, silly theorising and religious cant, and becomes an assault upon the man who assumes that he possesses the rational faculties (and sublime faculties) which raise him above the level of the victims presented.¹⁸¹ The metaphors become literal truths. Puritans are not like sexual perverts: they are sexual perverts.¹⁸² Kings and great men do not occasionally behave in ways that appear to make them worthy inmates of a sanatorium: they are out of their tiny minds. This is the major strength of Swift, the area in which his true genius is most effectively employed. For his utopianism and his presentation of rational but ultimately insipid ideals are manifestly less successful and inspired than his assaults on the enemies of those ideals. The argument that the best form of defence is attack is nowhere more clearly substantiated than in Swift's satire, where tepid defence becomes an exuberant and brilliant attack on loathsome reality and the fraudulence of human claims to reason. The attack on the "Empire of Reason" produces a conclusion, but not the one we might expect. The world at large - the only world there is - is not an empire of unreason, but the Empire of Bedlam.¹⁸³ The book places before us "the idea that man and the truth are not companions along the same road, but that the choice is between the annihilating truth and a delusive hope that alone guarantees survival."¹⁸⁴ What we are faced with at the end is what Swift himself - in the guise of his fool - wants us to be left with, for this is the real truth that underlies all his major satires: the appalling anxiety of being a man.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HUMANIST HERESY

When Denis Donoghue suggests in a short but challenging article on Gulliver's Travels that it "has become a dauntingly 'modern' book again in the last 15 or 20 years, because it presents as fiction what many of us are troubled by as fact",¹ he introduces what is perhaps the most striking of the book's insinuatingly prophetic themes, and one which, perhaps above all, links the great satirist with our own age. Gulliver, on this view, is a blank tape upon which each society with which he comes into contact may write its own message, its instructions, which will be absorbed and obeyed by the hero of the book.² Donoghue's evidence centres upon the readiness with which Gulliver accepts his environment in the Fourth Voyage to the extent of eradicating - or rather, to his grief, unsuccessfully trying to eradicate - the instructions imprinted on the databank he calls his brain by his first social surroundings, namely eighteenth-century England. The profound effect upon Gulliver of such brainwashing (as Donoghue calls it) is, as we have seen, the source of most debate surrounding the Travels, since the vital knowledge of Swift's approval or disapproval is lacking.³ However one may eventually resolve this crucial dilemma, Donoghue's argument that Swift is offering us a general truth about humanity seems to hold water, since the evidence for the view that Swift is saying that the society which surrounds us dominates us, and forms the essence of what we are, abounds in the Travels.

Wherever Gulliver finds himself, he adopts not only the language and clothes of his peers, but absorbs their world-view, their manners, their customs, and even their prejudices. When he saves the palace at Mildendo in Lilliput by means of a torrential micturation, he explains that it was possible because he had drunk a large quantity of wine, called "glimigrim". In parenthesis, he adds that "The Blefuscudians called it flunec, but ours is esteemed the better sort", exemplifying the extent to which he identifies with his captors.⁴ Titles of kings and emperors are used with the enthusiasm and awe of a man who has lived his whole life among such people, not with the polite courtesy of a man who is an accidental, and temporary, guest. His unbounded humble respect is given in equal measure to the midget king ("Monarch of all Monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the centre, and whose head strikes against the sun")⁵ and the giant queen ("The Ornament of Nature, the Darling of the World, the Delight of her Subjects, the Phoenix of the Creation").⁶ The man beneath, the essential Gulliver, is nowhere to be found by the end of the book, for he is not even the sum of his experiences. Each successive experience erases the one before, replacing old data with new and issuing Gulliver with a fresh set of cultural assumptions which he blithely espouses.⁷ The difficulty he has in readjusting on each return to England comically underlines the existential problems he faces. He acknowledges as much at the end of the Second Voyage when, on his return, he behaves as though he were a giant, and his fellows pygmies, referring to "the great power of habit and prejudice".⁸

When, at the end of the Travels, Gulliver is presented to the reader as a man trying every way he knows how to be a horse, discarding every trace of humanity he can manage, and even stuffing his nose with tobacco to keep the stench of his fellow-men at bay,⁹ the problem is both hugely comic and desperately serious. The extent to which we believe it to be either of these things depends upon our reading of the crucial Fourth Voyage, for it is only there that the disparate elements previously encountered in the Travels are brought into sharp focus, and the various lessons which Gulliver learns are summarised for us in several passages many readers have found hard to take literally, many hard to take seriously, and still more, hard to take at all. Nowhere is the contentious nature of Swift's satire more evident; nowhere the crucial nature of its lessons for our own age more crystal-clear. Our attitude towards the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms epitomises our view of the great satirist, unless we deliberately focus our attention sharply on other works - for instance, the poems - to the exclusion of the major item in his oeuvre; it is there that the great and contentious issues are raised, and there that we must go to meet them.

The survey of critical response to this part of the Travels, offered as the introductory Chapter of this present work,¹⁰ indicated clearly that it is a watershed for all readers, and stated quite clearly where the present author stands on the major issues. In this Chapter, I propose to offer the views of one particularly important reader of Swift, and to indicate vital ways in which this interpretation affected not

only that reader, but, through its more subtle effects as it filtered through into his own writing, almost every reader of serious fiction today.¹¹ This author was a man whose own major works achieved a fame and notoriety not dissimilar to that of Swift, and, as I will argue, for reasons that were also not dissimilar. He would surely be counted among the writers described by Louis Bredvold as the "tough-minded" along with Swift,¹² for in his most famous works we encounter problems essential, it is surely not too much to say, to be solved if we are to continue our existence on this planet beyond the next age. He is, of course, George Orwell.

Comparisons between Swift and Orwell have been made many times, and, indeed, the link between the satire of Swift and Orwell's last two books is now virtually a commonplace of literary criticism.¹³ The debt owed by Orwell to Swift is most apparent in the style and manner of Animal Farm, a comic masterpiece which draws heavily upon the treasure-chest of Swift's great comic achievement in the Travels. The use of animals and many of the ideas expressed derive quite explicitly from the Fourth Voyage and, given Orwell's own testimony on the matter when he describes Gulliver's Travels as one of the six most important books ever written,¹⁴ it is surely not something he would have sought to deny. The debt, I would argue, goes beyond this specific instance of literary borrowing, and manifests itself in many ways not immediately apparent to the casual reader, and ultimately is to be found right at the heart of Orwell's own major thesis as it found expression in his last, darkest and most important book, Nineteen Eighty-Four.¹⁵ It is

here, as we shall see, that the vital link becomes most apparent and causes the vast differences between the two men, which only a fool would attempt to deny exist, to pale into insignificance beside a shared insight both profound and fundamental, and far-reaching in its impact upon the reader.¹⁶

Both Swift and Orwell were largely practical writers, the overwhelming bulk of their work seeking to convey an essentially simple message, namely, the improvement of society through commonsense logic and adherence to what appear to both to be obvious values. Their most famous works may be satires, but the majority of their material is straight, usually campaigning, prose. Orwell campaigned for a society based on equality and democratic Socialist principles, Swift for a society based on traditional religious values and enforced respect for authority. In their respective writings on language, both display distrust of obscure, affected, jargon-ridden speech, and for the same reason.¹⁷ If their beliefs are to be put into widespread practice, the appeal must be to the common intelligence, not simply to cliques of the initiated. After all, since both believe that politics ought to be more honest, straightforward and consistent with a clearly-defined moral standpoint, and since both claim that their views represent common sense, it is, self-evidently, neither necessary nor desirable for practical writing to be difficult to comprehend. In his piece on 'Polite Conversation', Swift attacks the kind of language which takes colourful routes to saying precisely nothing, which hides its hollowness in a mist of so-called 'fine' talk.¹⁸ Orwell, for his part, bitterly condemns the language of the intellectual,

firstly for its unnecessary unintelligibility, and secondly, and much more important, for its perniciousness and its ability to provide aspiring tyrants with a ready-made tool to trap and later imprison the ordinary man.¹⁹ In a letter about a book by Sartre, which he is to review, Orwell says "I don't profess to understand Existentialism", the implication being - since Orwell is neither a fool nor a follower of continental intellectual haute couture - that Sartre is obscurantist, or at least over-difficult, in his philosophy.²⁰ And when Orwell concludes by saying "I think Sartre is a bag of wind, and I am going to give him a good boot",²¹ we cannot help but think of the great Dean and his attitude towards enthusiastic, mystical windbags.

The crucial importance of language is as the primary communication between men, and for both writers this has a practical relevance. Both are, after all, what Swift called "Empiricks", because they want what they write to change the way men think and act, and therefore for his views to be clearly understood is vital to each. The question of influencing public opinion leads, however, to the greatest problem for the "Empirick". Assuming the meaning, intent and truth of what they write to be clear, why do men remain defiantly indifferent? Why, faced with such clear-sighted, unambiguous logic do people not act upon its truth? Orwell wrote volumes on the Spanish Civil War and the more general, and frightening, spread of fascism across Europe, arguing all the points, both broad and fine, over a substantial number of years, and eventually risked his life for what he believed to be justice and freedom; yet, as he bitterly comments, the average man cares far more about Manchester United

than the burning political issues of the day.²² Such indifference is the most bitter pill for the "Empirick" to swallow. If people argue violently for or against his writings, it proves at least that they are alive to its importance, and recognise that the subject-matter, if not the argument itself, is significant. In ignoring it, they are in effect saying to Orwell: "What you write doesn't interest us". As a great believer in the socialist democracy that is to come - the age of the common man - Orwell is rocked back on his heels by the realisation that the ordinary everyday man, in whom he places such faith, has delivered him the cruellest blow of all. The greatest crime of all is not to care, but how can a democrat accuse the majority without betraying his elitism?

This is very close to Swift's most bitterly personal satire, A Modest Proposal.²³ Swift, the hero of the Irish over Wood's infamous halfpenny - where he had first of all to tell the people why it was such a bad thing - and constant friend to Irish liberty, who risked his very life as the Drapier, unleashes a multi-faceted assault on political abuses, exploitation and colonial maladministration. The underlying thrust of the argument, however, is against two satiric objects not immediately identifiable on a first reading. The English and their lackeys are the obvious targets, brutally exploiting Irish poverty and weakness, and the unforgettable, shocking centre-piece of the mock-treatise - the contention that if one is going to treat people like animals, one might as well go the whole way, and do it in an efficient, cost-effective, profitable fashion, as with pigs or cows - is certainly directed across the Irish Sea. But

the underlying attack, a time-bomb that detonates only on a second, careful reading, is against the Irish people themselves. What he appears to be saying is that, since the Irish are such unthinking, heedless, defiantly stupid animals, this would be a fate that is little more than they deserve. The English are condemned for kicking the Irish into the ditch, but the Irish are condemned in their turn for not even trying to get out.²⁴ The irony is finally, and bitterly, at the expense of Swift himself: can he have been so blind and stupid as to believe that such people could ever be reformed?²⁵

Both are shocked and indignant that the people to whom they have given so much, and for whom they have risked so much, appear to be neither interested in, nor capable of, change, even when such change is obviously in their own interests. As a rebuke to their presumption, they are obliged to don the hair-shirt of mass-indifference and reflect upon the folly of their ways. When Swift added the "Letter to Sympson" to the Travels, it was, at least partly, in this spirit. "I have now done with all such visionary Schemes forever" is, among other things, the end of trying to be an exception to one's own rules, the "Empirick's" confession of futility.²⁶ The lessons learned by each in these cases - Orwell in Spain, Swift in Ireland - turned out to be profound. Swift discovered in Ireland that the Irish were Yahoos,²⁷ whilst Orwell found out in Spain that the battle for the brotherhood of man was capable of turning into a brutal internecine bloodbath.²⁸ More than this, however, Swift found looking round Europe, that all men were Yahoos, just as Orwell saw that all attempts to bring socialism about could end

in just the same river of blood. The result was that, given their far-from-abandoned mission to reform man and society, each set about constructing a major literary enterprise to bring to the attention of the world the insights hard-won from the bitter soil of Dublin and Barcelona; to give the world one last chance to learn a lesson it must learn: the truth about mankind.

Despite this shared experience, the discussion of Orwell in relation to Swift must begin with a kind of antipathy, for the starting-point of this argument is a close look at Orwell's direct comments on Gulliver's Travels, as he expressed them in his essay, "Politics vs. Literature."²⁹ In his reading of the Travels, Orwell goes along with much of Swift's criticism of human nature, but rejects the conclusions about what is to be done as a kind of defeatist-escapist solution, whose obvious flaw - to Orwell, at least - is its reactionary nature, its defiant exclusion of progressive possibilities. Where, says Orwell, are the good things on the other side of the coin? The ostensible positives of satire centre around the possibility of achieving the good by owning up to the bad: crack the vicious shell of lies, folly and deceit which surrounds and incapacitates the good in man, and thereby free it from its imprisoned state to open up future possibilities of better things. But in Gulliver's Travels the crucial conclusion leaves the reader with the impression that the book offers no such comforting formula for improvement. The most positive conclusion that the book seems to offer us is that the best we can hope for is to stop being proud of our faults and corruptions, since they themselves are "in the Nature of Things" and therefore immutable.³⁰ Orwell is, quite clearly, not

prepared to endorse any such world-view and goes so far as to call Swift a "diseased writer".³¹

What really irritates Orwell is the lack of progress in Houyhnhnmland, although he never, significantly, in the light of more modern critical suggestions to the contrary, doubts that it is meant as an expression of Swift's utopian desires. He attacks Swift's anti-scientific stance as narrow-minded, for it is important for Swift that the Houyhnhnms have no science, and indeed, much to Orwell's disdain, "appear not to have invented wheels".³² Orwell clearly disapproves of Swift's dislike of theoretical science. The only aspect of the Third Voyage to get a tick from him is the implication that state-control through spies and informants, involving falsification and fabrication of evidence, is an adumbration of the more widespread totalitarian practices of our own day.³³ The issue that is at stake here is progress, viewed from two diametrically-opposed angles. Orwell's description of Houyhnhnmland as a "static, incurious society"³⁴ is intended as a severe condemnation of Swift's defiance in the face of historical progressivism. He believes history to be a linear development and opposes Swift's attempt to stop a particular point - and a point in the distant, pagan (Orwell's word) past³⁵ - and dig himself in. But what, above all else, Orwell objects to is the "refusal of life" in Houyhnhnmland,³⁶ the denial of other aspects of man's nature and civilisation. The horses, it is implied, do not have any enjoyment of life; worse than this, do not even seek any. Orwell says that "their aim is to be as like a corpse as is possible while retaining physical life".³⁷ But Orwell here, at the very heart of his

argument, seems to miss the real point of the satire, the core of the Fourth Voyage. The fact that the country lacks vitality or variety, the achievement of peaceful consensus, the absence of heated debate - discussion of the Yahoos is a pest-control problem, not a moral issue - are put forward by Swift as positives precisely because they represent reason triumphant over progress. What the country lacks for Orwell is life, but for Swift such life involves hatred, brutality, lust, killing, greed and the other sundry 'benefits' of 'civilisation'. Swift is saying, in my view, that you cannot have progress without these things - they are the very mainstay of, and also the impetus behind, the Empire of Bedlam - and, since the best possible society ought to be free of them, it must, following the logic to its inevitable conclusion, consequently deny progress.

The curious relationship between Orwell and Swift is abundantly clear from the concluding passage of the essay. Orwell says that "the durability of Gulliver's Travels goes to show that if the force of belief is behind it, a world-view which only just passes the test of sanity is sufficient to produce a great work of art."³⁸ From such inauspicious beginnings, it may perhaps appear optimistic to draw parallels between these two writers, but, obvious differences notwithstanding, a study of Orwell's two major works, Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four, will, it is hoped, reveal similarities that lie deeper than the surface differences already found.

Orwell's study of the revolution gone wrong in Animal Farm is, in certain clear respects, derived from Swift. The use of animals instead of men,³⁹ and the reduction of human ideas to

silly animal equivalents, achieve precisely the reductive tenor that characterises so much of Swift's works.⁴⁰ The tone of detached amusement almost throughout is reminiscent not just of the Fourth Voyage, though that is the obvious source of the technique, but also of the Lilliput episodes, perhaps even sections of the Tale of a Tub. Stalin is wicked, devious, and brutal, but somehow never frightening, as Napoleon, perhaps because he is, whatever else, a pig, a cartoon animal, and never a human being. The comedy depends upon an association in the reader's mind never quite taking over: we know who he is meant to be, and what his human equivalent in real life did, at the cost of millions of lives, yet, even as the drama unfolds, the reader is never fully involved in the action, as he is in Nineteen Eighty-Four.⁴¹ As with most of Gulliver's Travels, the elements that make the book a children's classic predominate, so that the reader always feels himself to be above the action, just as he does in Lilliput or in parts of the Third Voyage. The various committees formed by the animals - The Egg Production Committee, The Clean Tails League, The Wild Comrades Re-education Committee, The Whiter Wool Movement⁴² - bring to mind the zany experiments carried out by the professors at the Academy of Lagado, where mad scientists bring to men the inestimable benefit of their talents, attempting, though never quite succeeding in bringing to completion, such worthy tasks as extracting sunbeams from cucumbers, breeding naked sheep, sowing chaff, and turning excrement back into food.⁴³ We laugh at what does not frighten us, and talking animals do not frighten us, any more than six-inch tyrants.

If we take Lilliput as equivalent to Animal Farm, and gauge our reaction accordingly, it is perhaps permissible to extend this to suggest that, in that case, Brobdingnag is like Oceania, with an atmosphere of foreboding and a threatening environment. Identifying with Gulliver in Lilliput, we laugh at the plots and the self-important pride, even when they are genuinely malicious and wicked. Identifying with Gulliver in Brobdingnag, on the other hand, we feel his vulnerability, recognising the dangers inherent in everyday objects and activities, and previously harmless beasts.⁴⁴ In the space of the Second Voyage, Gulliver's life and well-being are endangered by a small boy, a baby, rats, a hazel nut, flies, wasps, apples, hailstones, a spaniel, a kite, a snail, a frog and, most dangerous of all, a monkey. He is nearly drowned in cream, and is stuffed to the neck inside a marrowbone by a malevolent dwarf.⁴⁵ Gulliver is, throughout, at the mercy of every man, woman and child in the kingdom, and is never truly safe until he 'escapes'. Similarly, Winston is at the mercy of everyone he meets, for the most innocent-looking gesture - a twitch, a momentary alteration of facial expression - could end in arrest and subsequent evaporation. At every point surveillance is maintained: at work, at home, in bed - especially in bed, where even unconsciousness can betray - in the lavatory. The terror of Oceania is not darkness but an unremitting brightness that destroys any notion of privacy, that exposes the slightest hint of "ownlife" as deadly. What was funny because small becomes frightening when large, and Stalin ceases to be either amusing or manageable when he becomes Big Brother instead of Napoleon.

Oceania is much more terrifying than Brobdingnag because there can be no escape. We are not tempted to laugh at people or events in Oceania, as we were in Animal Farm.

Yet, though the events are often comic, the central action, and the intellectual impact of the book, are deadly serious. The art of Animal Farm - and it is, without much serious dissent, accredited as his supreme artistic triumph - cannot be allowed to blind us to the vital moral issues at stake in the fable of the animals' revolution. It is the history of the Revolution Gone Wrong, and, furthermore, was written by one who, all his adult life, wrote on behalf of, and campaigned for, the belief on which that Revolution was originally based. Orwell is not some right-wing reactionary pouring scorn on the failure of something which was anathema to him anyway. What makes this book, and its successor, so fascinating is that their creator at no time stopped believing in the good of the belief itself. Nowhere in Orwell's letters or journalism will democratic Socialism take a beating; only this or that individual, or this or that system. On his return from Barcelona, Orwell wrote: "I have seen wonderful things and at last really believe in Socialism which I never did before."⁴⁶ The upper-case "S" is deeply significant, showing that the political belief remains sound, whatever hammering its incarnation in the Spanish Civil War may have taken. Hounded by his own side, he narrowly escaped with his life; yet at the end of his book of wartime experiences, it is optimism that rides high. Why should this be? The poem with which he concludes Homage to Catalonia provides all the explanation that is necessary. He writes of an Italian

militiaman whose innocence and honest demeanour inspired him to believe that Socialism (upper case) was possible:

But the thing that I saw in your face
No power can disinherit:
No bomb that ever burst
Shatters the crystal spirit.⁴⁷

The combination of decent, honest, ordinary man and just, democratic Socialism should be enough, in the long run, to see mankind through.

A look at the plot of Animal Farm, however, causes the reader to pause when considering this. Briefly it goes as follows. The animals on the farm bemoan their lot, decide to oust their cruel master and establish a farm run by themselves. The pigs, as the most intelligent animals, emerge as leaders. However, after several dubious rules are instituted about food and working hours, which favour the pigs at the expense of the other animals, further changes in the Seven Commandments are made until the pigs are clearly tyrannical rulers, indistinguishable from the previous despots, and the only question the animals have to answer is whether they are worse off than before, or only the same. The motto "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others"⁴⁸ remains as the bitter pill for them to swallow, and the concluding passage finds them unable to distinguish, physically, between the new masters and the old.⁴⁹

Even from such a crude sketch it is evident that some difficult questions remain to be answered, if Orwell's status as believer in Socialism is still to be credible (to his fellow-believers, that is).⁵⁰ If Orwell's condemnation of

Swift's Houyhnhnmland as negative is to stand, how does one explain the pessimism of the twentieth-century man's animal fable? We should, according to the previous discussion, be able to find two things that redeem Animal Farm: a reliable creed, and an honest, good animal. They need not win in the book, but the future will be shown to be theirs. Remembering Orwell's condemnation of Swift's denial of life, we recall also the passage where he writes: "The notions that life here and now is worth living, or that it could be made worth living, or that it must be sacrificed for some future good, are all absent".⁵¹ This is an essential item in the revolutionary's kit-bag, no less important than the sickle or the hammer, probably more. To work hard and sacrifice now for the benefit of others (perhaps ourselves, too) tomorrow: this is the very essence of Orwell's precious crystal spirit. If Animal Farm does no more than demonstrate that this spirit shines under any circumstances, then the fact that the revolution fails need not be disastrous, even if it must be inconvenient. If this conclusion can be drawn, legitimately, from the book, then the distance between Swift and Orwell will remain substantial.

A more detailed examination of Animal Farm reveals, however, that the pessimism runs deep, for in attempting to come up with an animal exemplifying the crystal spirit, we are obliged to settle on Boxer the horse. Boxer is certainly honest, decent, loyal and benign - even mourning a farm-boy whom he thinks he has killed, much to Snowball's disgust⁵² - and a society of Boxers would, surely, be enough to see the future all right. Yet the combination of his two mottoes illustrates the cruel irony at

work in the society, one exemplifying his industry, the other his loyalty. His first motto is "I will work harder" and his second "Napoleon is always right". He is not the instigator of further rebellion, but the upholder of inequality, because his combination of industry and blind loyalty are the very walls and bars of not only his, but every animal's, prison. His lack of intelligence condemns not only him, but his fellows too, to a life of oppression. His physical strength is thus effectively nullified as a threat to the pigs' rule. The animals who do have intelligence, such as the cat or Benjamin the donkey, are indifferent or selfish, aware of the reality of Animal Farm, but preferring cynicism to rebellion - Benjamin says that "hunger, hardship, and disappointment" are "the unalterable law of life"⁵³ - though their combined forces would be of little significance in any event without the physical strength of Boxer.

This seems to encapsulate the central, rather bitter, irony of the fable. Orwell presents us with good and evil but the possible success of good is destroyed by the fact that intelligence is on the side of evil. The pigs very quickly perceive that the other animals are weak and stupid, and it is the combination of these two qualities which Squealer, with a trick of the tail, is easily able to exploit. The suggestion, surprising but inescapable, seems to be that the good animals are incapable of possessing power because their powerlessness is intrinsically bound up with their goodness. This sounds more like Dickens than Orwell,⁵⁴ yet is the only conclusion we can draw from the evidence presented. There is no hope in Animal Farm of the good animals ever achieving power. If Boxer did kick

the pigs and their vicious guard-dogs to pieces, he could achieve power, but in doing so he would invalidate his claims on our sympathy, because his very lack of ruthlessness, power-hunger and intelligence is shown to be his most positive asset. He is saved from the corruption of power and forced to remain in chains because of his stupidity and blind, ignorant loyalty.⁵⁵

If we wish to draw a positive conclusion from the book, then we must settle simply for this: goodness exists; the crystal spirit is intact. But goodness exists at such a level, and in such a way, as to ensure perpetual powerlessness and subjection to slavery. If any reader can draw sufficient comfort from such a prospect, let him declare the book a qualified positive statement. For the rest, we must surely conclude that such a description of the crystal spirit, as it exists on Animal Farm, is far from optimistic, lacking even a glimpse of comfort for the future. It seems to be a restatement of the bitter, and, for the reader, infuriating, dichotomy in the "Digression on Madness": an update, for modern man and society, of the Fools and Knaves division we found in Swift. The situation of the reader at the end of Animal Farm at least is the same as it was after reading the Tale. As one critic has put it: "The available options within the text are unacceptable, while the acceptable option is not available."⁵⁶

In the context of Orwell's life and work, the book is surprising in one sense, predictable in another. Surprising, in that his whole life had been geared towards achieving democratic Socialism, and the book appears to suggest that this is not, at least under the circumstances presented within the text,

achievable, not least because those with the intelligence are shown to be a malevolent force. For this 'betrayal' Orwell received many harsh rebukes from the Left, being accused of handing the Capitalists a stick with which to beat their opponents. Yet, the book is predictable in that Orwell was, no less than a democratic Socialist, a believer in the intrinsic value of objective truth.⁵⁷ If the truth happened to be inconvenient - too bad. Comparing this life-long love-affair with the truth with his belief that Socialism, of one sort or another, was the future, we find ourselves a good deal less surprised at the book's contents and argument. Since Capitalism and Fascism were defeated - the first dying, the second dead - the only question left was: which kind of Socialism will come to power, to fill the void?⁵⁸ Orwell's consistent denunciations of Stalinist excesses and brutalities, and his frequently-expressed opinion that it is vital for Socialism that they should be exposed and flayed, show, in crystal-clear fashion, his anxiety to avoid in the minds of the masses an association between Socialism and Soviet - or, indeed, any other kind of - Communism.⁵⁹ To become toadies to the Politburo was, to Orwell, to betray the cause of true Socialism, and to hinder its coming to power, not to aid it. Within this overall context then, the book appears at least to be quite comfortably compatible with its author's stated aims and objectives.

Yet, to restate a case made in previous Chapters, this kind of argument cheats Animal Farm the book. For, to argue from external evidence that Orwell meant this or that, or believed this or that, is not really a legitimate approach for the

literary critic.⁶⁰ To say this is not to get up on a high-horse, or to pronounce one's verdict as though it came from the very top of Olympus. It is simply to state a sound principle, which becomes even more important when we deal with Nineteen Eighty-Four. One cannot import the life into the works, and sweep away the uncomfortable fiction with the broom of biography. Life and work are not absolutely separate entities, but they are, or may be, distinct from one another. Therefore, to suggest that the pessimism of Animal Farm goes deeper than a simple fable against the Stalinist model of a socialist future, seems to me to be legitimate and, given the text, inevitable. A follow-up fable to this one is unimaginable, or perhaps one should say redundant, since the action would inevitably repeat itself. Given this, how can the democratic Socialist society Orwell wants come about at all? The eventual, deep-lying, pessimism of the book revolves around this question, for if power and those who desire it are consistently bad, and if all tyrannicides are doomed to turn tyrants themselves, where is the light at the end of the tunnel?

In the end, our reaction to the deep pessimism of Animal Farm is probably conditioned by our response to the form it takes. The material remains more-or-less manageable, even at its most depressing, simply because Animal Farm remains just that: a farm full of animals. This is, without question, something that Orwell learned from Swift, and, indeed, the book has usually been credited with the technique of Swiftian satire.⁶¹ The reduction of European history and religion to the ant-like capers of Lilliput, where serious and bloody religious strife becomes a

debate on which end of the egg should be broken first, and the representation of a calamitous revolution involving millions upon millions of deaths as "a record of barnyard chicaneries",⁶² involve the same technique and achieve the same end. The intellect registers every nuance of the satiric thrusts, but the emotions remain stable; we understand the horrors, yet do not feel horrified.⁶³

This is very far from the case when we read Nineteen Eighty-Four, Orwell's last and darkest work of fiction. The oppressive atmosphere of the book is not something that many readers have felt themselves able to surmount, and the rejection of the book's message by many critics has often amounted to a horrified recoil. Reaction to the book among a twentieth-century audience brings to mind the Victorian response to the Fourth Voyage of Gulliver's Travels, and the accusations of betrayal recall the charges levelled at Swift, for 'blaspheming' against human nature.⁶⁴ The bleak brutality and naked horror that characterise Orwell's novel have often been explained in terms of the disease that was killing him as he wrote, just as Swift's depiction of men as filthy, disgusting Yahoos was put down to his supposed disintegrating mental state. The mentality which concluded that only a deranged madman could present man in such a depraved, bestial condition, returns to suggest that only a dying man could create such a black nightmare of unrelenting gloom as Oceania. If the man who wrote Gulliver was, on this view, an atheist priest, the man who wrote Nineteen Eighty-Four cannot have been a socialist.⁶⁵

It is not, as I will argue, a matter of coincidence that

both books should be given the same reception, for the view of man that each contains is not one that is ever likely to meet with approbation among most men. It is, however, a view of man that is almost identical in its conclusion, a fact which may, somewhat paradoxically, have surprised Orwell, since, whatever conclusions we may draw from his last book, he remained true to his own belief in democratic Socialism to the very end. It is perhaps hugely ironic, then, that the man who accused Swift of being a "diseased writer"⁶⁶ has been awarded that title in our own day by many critics, and that the verdict of Orwell on Gulliver's Travels, that it represented a world-view just this side of sanity, has been surpassed by the verdict upon his own novel, which has, as often as not, been found to stray on the other side of that self-same divide.⁶⁷

Both Nineteen Eighty-Four and Gulliver's Travels set about asking the same fundamental question: what is a man? Gulliver travels, but his most important voyage of discovery is internal. He travels, essentially, to find out the truth about himself; not about exotic peoples and places, midgets and giants, flying islands, but simply about Lemuel Gulliver. Similarly, Winston rebels, as he is eventually taught by O'Brien, not to expose the wickedness and corruption of the society that surrounds and oppresses him, but in order that he may finally be brought to understand his own depravity. As one critic says, speaking of Gulliver, though it clearly applies to both: "he is his own greatest, most appalling discovery."⁶⁸ The shocking discovery for the reader is that Swift, who wrote his Travels to reform a creature whose belief in his own goodness angered the

satirist,⁶⁹ finds a fellow in Orwell, whose novel seems not simply to agree with Swift, but, if anything, to go beyond him in its pessimism, not least because the vision of man which is exploded as a comforting myth was known to be shared by its author.

The world of Oceania is, in many respects, similar to the world of most of Orwell's fiction. The drabness, bleakness and oppressive atmosphere that we find there are met, in one form or another, in places as diverse as Paris, London, Barcelona and Burma, and even the plot, the struggle of one rebellious man to understand the world around him and to accept his place in that world, is a repetition of earlier works. But, of course, the discovery by Winston that this is what he is doing is not the superficial plot, and the knowledge strikes both character and reader at roughly the same point in the book. The rebellion that ends in a surrender is familiar enough territory for readers of Orwell's fiction, but in the case of Oceania, such surrender becomes shocking, for the nature of the society is so brutal and powerful that the reader longs for a note of hope, which must be provided by Winston, for there is no one else in the book remotely capable of providing it. Flawed individual as he is, Winston is clearly the defender of the crystal spirit as it exists in Nineteen Eighty-Four, and, like the good animals in Animal Farm, it is to him that we must look for any positive statement in the book. When Gulliver enters Houyhnhnmland, and Winston takes up the cudgels against Big Brother and the Party, they do so as our representatives, and it is vital to establish this before examining their fictional voyages.⁷⁰ What is at

stake is man's good opinion of himself, so that Gulliver and Winston represent the humanist version of our nature. What is on trial is the vision of man as animal rationale, and the representative defendants are Winston Smith and Lemuel Gulliver.

Having suggested in Animal Farm that the good cannot overcome the evil, Orwell seems to turn the question round, and asks, can the evil completely eradicate the good? For the world of Oceania is indisputably evil, and the evil not only controls all life, but is all life. The Party has absolute power over every aspect of individual life, and has sucked the life-blood from every person in the society, turning each person into a single cell of a complete body: a universal social embodiment of Fear and Hate writ large. One element of hope alone remains: Winston Smith is carrying on a lone struggle to defeat the Party, or, given the dimensions of the struggle, at least to defy it. To remain human and retain the values in which he believes: this is his goal; a goal which would effectively defeat the Party, for it is humanity that is the enemy of the Party. Winston's positives are vaguely imagined and tenuously grasped because he is remote from the society which advanced them, a society which no longer exists. He believes in the value of words, and keeps a diary in consequence. He believes in the importance of the past, and in the absolute truth and unchangeability of facts, of history: "There was truth and there was untruth, and if you clung to the truth even against the whole world, you were not mad."⁷¹ He imagines, and dreams of, the Golden Country, a place where life is better than in Oceania, where his humanist values govern men's lives. All his efforts are towards a

rebellion which will be meaningful, which will advance truth and expose the lies of the Party. In addition, his final triumph really, he loves Julia. This is his greatest act of rebellion, for it is spontaneous, instinctive, human, and, most important of all, affirms a shared humanity, a bond between people that must be the basis of a decent society. "They can do anything ... but they can't get inside you",⁷² says Julia at one point, and this belief must be proved true if the rebellion is to succeed.

The black depths of the society are chillingly revealed in an entry in Winston's diary after he has been to the pictures. He sees several war films, and describes both the action and the audience reaction:

Audience much amused by shots of a great huge fat man trying to swim away with a helicopter after him ... the sea round him turned pink and he sank ... audience shouting with laughter as he sank ... then there was a wonderful shot of a child's arm going up up up right up into the air ... and there ⁷³was a lot of applause from the Party seats...

This passage strikingly reveals the inhumanity of the people who live in Oceania, but also recalls a passage from the Travels, where Gulliver is describing European warfare to his Houyhnhnm master:

I gave him a Description of Cannons ... Pistols, Bullets, Bayonets ... Battles ... Attacks ... Bombardments, Sea-fights; Ships sunk with a Thousand Men, twenty Thousand killed on each Side; dying Groans, Limbs flying in the Air ... trampling to Death under Horses' Feet ... Flight, Pursuit, Victory; Fields strewed with Carcases ... Ravishing, Burning, and Destroying ... I had seen them blow up a Hundred Enemies at once in a Siege ... and beheld the dead Bodies drop down in

Pieces from the Clouds, to the great Diversion of
all the Spectators.⁷⁴

The extraordinary similarity in both the matter and manner of the two passages suggests, firstly, that Orwell used the Swift passage, and adapted it to his own purpose - his frequent readings of the Travels familiarising him with many such passages⁷⁵ - and secondly, that the thrust behind the two passages is much the same: an attack on the inhumanity of men, and their easy assimilation of a callous, brutal attitude towards the suffering of others. The chief difference lies in the fact that Swift is saying that this is what we are like already, whilst Orwell is suggesting that this is what we could become in the future.⁷⁶

It is, supposedly, this mentality that Winston is fighting against. As custodian and embodiment of the crystal spirit, it is up to him to transform such mass inhumanity, and to at least suggest the possibility of a restoration to power of the other Party, what Peter Gay has termed the Party of Humanity,⁷⁷ the tradition of which he is the last follower in Oceania. In the course of his struggle it becomes clear that the questions of his truth and his sanity can be answered by the Party. It is the task of O'Brien to prove to Winston that his truth is a lie and his sanity madness. The bitter irony is that he does this by exposing Winston's positives as methods of the Party, and shows that he is not a rebel at all, simply a muddled schoolboy who must learn to read the lesson of his life aright. When they meet at O'Brien's house, Winston and Julia tell him what they are prepared to do to overthrow the Party. O'Brien asks the

questions:

"You are prepared to give your lives?"

"Yes."

"You are prepared to commit murder?"

"Yes."

"To commit acts of sabotage which may cause the death of hundreds of innocent people?"

"Yes"

"If, for example, it would somehow serve our interests to throw sulphuric acid in a child's face - are you prepared to do that?"

"Yes."⁷⁸

What they are saying is that, in pursuit of some distant, hypothetical better world, they are prepared to break every rule of moral and physical conduct which could give that world its validity. If they are prepared to "corrupt the minds of children" and commit the acts just mentioned, what possible claim can they have to goodness?⁷⁹

O'Brien has laid the subtlest of traps, by proving that they are willing to use the methods of the Party to overthrow the Party. This is a logical absurdity. To use fear and hatred and brutality to defeat fear and hatred and brutality, and expect to produce the Golden Country, is an impossibility. It is, in fact, acceptance of the Party, not rejection of the Party, and this is the first major lesson that Winston must learn in the Ministry of Love. Winston presumes that the vices of the majority can become the virtues of the minority. What O'Brien shows Winston is that, so long as fear and hatred are the driving force of minority and

majority, they are not on different sides at all. The same forces operate upon both powerful and powerless, and moral justification is dissolved. Winston is shown up as a power-worshipper hiding behind the disguise of a freedom-fighter. A more terrible revelation awaits Winston in Room 101, but first he must learn that the Party is invincible, and why.

The methods of the Party aim eventually to wipe out all traces of the kind of dissent that Winston epitomises. The chief enemy is the past. When Winston proposes a toast to the past at O'Brien's house, instead of the future or the death of Big Brother, O'Brien gravely concurs: "The past is more important."⁸⁰ During the later interrogation, O'Brien explains that Oceania is different from any dictatorship in history, because it controls the past as well as the present. No martyrs are allowed, because martyrs are witnesses that inspire future rebellion: "we do not allow the dead to rise up against us." Winston will be "lifted clean out from the stream of History".⁸¹ This task will be made easier by the use of Newspeak and Doublethink, since all thought processes alien to, or hostile to, the Party can be checked and obliterated by the self at the moment of thought. Inculcated into each person from birth, this process will eradicate both the idea of and the word 'freedom'.⁸² Doublethink and the constant rewriting of the past are crucial. By making present reality the only reality, all appeal to historically objective truth is denied. Orwell himself, writing about German reports of bomb-raids on London which he knew to be untrue, sombrely admits that the truth of his

statement depends not so much upon objective evidence, but upon the ability to offer objective evidence. If the Germans win, it is true, he says, because "history is written by winners".⁸³ He goes further in saying that "the really frightening thing about totalitarianism is not that it commits atrocities" - quite a statement for a socialist to make - "but that it attacks the concept of objective truth: it claims to control the past as well as the future".⁸⁴ O'Brien admits that, until the scheme is perfected, Winstons - like bugs in a computer program - will continue to appear, but, once perfection is achieved, the very possibility of revolt, of alien beliefs and ideas even, will be utterly eradicated.

Thus one cornerstone of Winston's rebellion is effectively removed. As for facts, the statement by Winston that "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two makes four. If that is granted, all else follows"⁸⁵ is shown by O'Brien to be false. It only seems to be reality because it is accepted as such. But if everyone except Winston believes that two plus two equals five, because the Party says so, then how can Winston prove his sanity? He cannot; his case relies upon the existence of a court which accepts his standards of truth as legitimate. Where in Oceania could he find such a court? Nowhere, of course. O'Brien shows Winston that truth is a means to an end. If it is useful to the Party for two plus two to make four, it will; if not, it won't.⁸⁶ Without a contrary standard against which to prove the fallacy of such a claim, it becomes the truth. This point links up directly with the Glubbudrib episode in Gulliver's Travels, where the problem of obtaining truth from living men is

satirised. Gulliver can summon the dead, to whom lying is no longer advantageous, and be sure of a truthful answer, but the message is clear enough: only dead men will not lie.⁸⁷ Orwell fears this state of affairs where truth is relative and contingent; Swift suggest that it is already the case.

Having established the ability of the Party to erase all other realities, O'Brien lays bare the heart of its reality. "The object of power is power. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture."⁸⁸ It is absolute authority without moral purpose. Its object is self-perpetuation through subordination and domination. It obliges everyone to obey through indoctrination and force, and in this is both its nature and its object. Eventually everyone is to be absorbed into the Party, and together they will perpetuate the Party through "fear, triumph, rage and self-abasement"; by this means the Party's power will extend infinitely into the future. "If you want a picture of the future", O'Brien tells Winston, "imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever."⁸⁹

The validity of this - for the reader as much as for Winston himself - depends upon the validity of one of the final exchanges between Winston and O'Brien, in which the former tries to find the words for the thing which will stop the Party before it reaches its goal. He says: "I don't know - I don't care. Somehow you will fail. Something will defeat you. Life will defeat you."⁹⁰ O'Brien replies:

"We control life, Winston, at all its levels. You are imagining that there is something called human nature which will be outraged by what we do and will turn against us. But we create human

nature. Men are infinitely malleable."⁹¹

Struggling to counter this thrust, Winston falls back upon the phrase that encapsulates the precious crystal spirit of his creator. What will defeat the Party is "the spirit of Man".⁹² Without a belief in a transcendent God, Winston and his creed are thrown back upon this last bastion of defence. But at this precise instant, O'Brien replays a tape of Winston's catalogue of deeds he is willing to perform to overthrow Big Brother. He has no answer; his depravity is clear beyond question, even to himself. O'Brien obliges him to observe his physical decay: "You are the last man ... You are the guardian of the human spirit. You shall see yourself as you truly are."⁹³ A long mirror reveals the extent to which Winston has physically disintegrated, physical decay to match the moral decay just exhibited. O'Brien contemptuously sums up both:

"You are rotting away", he says, "you are falling to pieces. What are you? A bag of filth ... Do you see that thing facing you? That is the last man. If you are human, that is humanity. Now put your clothes on again."⁹⁴

Winston is stripped, not only to the skin, but to the self. Every defence against the Party has been systematically destroyed. But even without the structure of the humanism that is his real defence - words, an unchangeable past, a tradition of human decency vaguely grasped - a retention of his own self-esteem, his own sense of worth, dignity and nobility, would be enough, if he could sustain it. Even death could not destroy

such a victory: "To die hating them, that was freedom".⁹⁵

But Room 101 removes even this semblance of victory from Winston and his humanist dreams, for it is there that he discovers that even his one remaining virtue, his love for Julia, is erased, leaving him hollow, according to O'Brien's promise, in order that he may be filled by the Party. The sensationalism of the rats has often been derided by critics,⁹⁶ yet it is not the specific means of extracting the last iota of self-respect from Winston that is really important. Any test would have produced the same result, for Winston's cover is already blown. Substitute any other method for the rats, and the result would be the same. The significance of his screams of "Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! I don't care what you do to her"⁹⁷ is that it smashes irrevocably, not only the human bond between Winston and Julia, but the ability ever to form such a bond again.⁹⁸ He has plumbed a depth from which there is no return to the surface. "There were things, your own acts, from which you could never recover."⁹⁹ It is neither the torture, nor the fear, nor the 'confessions', nor the despair of other things or people, that finally defeats Winston, but a terrible self-knowledge. The crystal spirit, as he saw it in himself, is, like the paperweight broken by the Thought Police, smashed into a million smithereens, incapable of ever being reconstituted. What he has discovered is that he, Winston Smith, is rotten to the core.

The annihilating self-knowledge achieved by Winston at the end of the book mirrors that of Gulliver at the end of his travels, and the myth at the heart of Winston's revolt - that man, or the spirit of Man, is unconquerable, that man is

basically good - is the chief target of the satirist's great work. Throughout the book, Gulliver, in the various roles which Swift obliges him to play, is the scourge of humanity or its chief proponent,¹⁰⁰ depending upon the way in which Swift chooses to attack the myth at the heart of the humanist heresy. Even before setting foot in Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver has amassed a dossier of evidence that men are rotten, their institutions corrupt, and their moral and intellectual pretensions no more than the beau's suit: a few rags that, once removed, reveal the stinking carcase of humanity. Gulliver has succeeded throughout in failing to add up the sum correctly, and not until his final voyage do we see his deluded mind stripped of its infirmities, enabling him to perform his final, tragic piece of arithmetic. We, the readers, accompany Gulliver, aware all the time that the set of cultural assumptions he takes with him are ours too, that the belief in civilisation is one that we share.

At least one critic has noted that Gulliver, on his arrival, gets things exactly wrong, and, on his first meetings with both Yahoos and Houyhnhnms, makes the blunder that eventually must be corrected.¹⁰¹ Meeting the Yahoos, Gulliver feels utterly revolted and declares that "I never beheld in all my Travels so disagreeable an Animal, or one against which I naturally conceived so strong an Antipathy."¹⁰² He is approached, repulses the impudent Yahoo, and is immediately assaulted by an excremental volley from a "herd" (Gulliver's word) of his fellows. Rescued by a horse, Gulliver discerns in its behaviour something approaching the rational, and observes that "if the Inhabitants of this Country were endued with a

proportionable Degree of Reason, they must needs be the wisest People upon Earth".¹⁰³ Gulliver's error soon becomes apparent to him, and his belief that some human tribe or other must be the masters of the country is soon exposed as fallacious.

For Gulliver, as for the rest of us, the lessons of the book appear to be in the horses. If we are to leave Houyhnhmland the wiser, we must, like him, study Houyhnhnm customs and morality, and learn to emulate their wisdom, sagacity and moral rectitude. If the book is Utopian, if it contains Swift's great positives and his vision of an ideal society, the message must be in the words of Gulliver's Houyhnhnm master, for the only other creature on view is the detestable Yahoo, and surely we can learn nothing to our benefit from him? This is Gulliver's view, and he sets himself to the task of learning from the rational horses immediately. However, the horses' insistence that he is a Yahoo constantly irritates him for, beyond a physical similarity - which he reluctantly admits - there is the rational gulf, the divide that separates man from beast. If the Houyhnhnms have upset this dictum somewhat, the gulf is at least self-evident between Gulliver and the loathsome, hairy Yahoos.

But gradually, as the dichotomy between Gulliver's protestations of European civilisation - which, of course, come out as a catalogue of pride, chicanery and bestiality - and the description of Houyhnhnm society becomes clear, even to him, doubts begin to creep into Gulliver's mind. The conditioning of his earlier life has led him to believe that western civilisation is the supreme achievement of man, and that man is the crown of creation. The lessons he learns on his final voyage contradict

this. He is told, and comes to believe, that the word Houyhnhnm means "the perfection of nature". Furthermore, he comes to believe that the horses' society is the best that he ever has, or ever will, come into contact with. Its principal virtues of "friendship and benevolence" and the preservation of "Decency and Civility"¹⁰⁴ in the highest degree are set forth to be admired by Gulliver - and us - just as their programme of education for the young, stressing "TEMPERANCE, Industry, Exercise and Cleanliness" is surely to be approved too.¹⁰⁵ Recognising his great good fortune in falling among the rational horses,

Gulliver lists the many reasons why a life among the Houyhnhnms is to be desired:

I enjoyed perfect Health of Body and Tranquillity of Mind; I did not feel the Treachery or Inconstancy of a Friend, nor the Injuries of a secret or open Enemy. I had no Occasion of bribing, flattering or pimping ... I wanted no Fence against Fraud or Oppression; here was neither Physician to destroy my Body, nor Lawyer to ruin my Fortune; no Informer to watch my Words and Actions, or forge Accusation against me for Hire: here were no Gibbers ... Backbiters, Pickpockets, Highwaymen ... Attorneys ... Politicians ... Murderers ... Virtuoso's ... no Encouragers to Vice ... no Pride, Vanity, or Affectation ... no Scoundrels, raised from the Dust upon the Merit of their Vices ...¹⁰⁶

This is but a representative sample, but is enough, surely, to establish in the reader's mind an association between the Good Life - the great human goal, everyman's Utopia - and the life lived by Gulliver in Houyhnhnmland. Even if we do not admire the horses - and most readers do not - the beneficial effects upon Gulliver are there for all to see.

So what sets Gulliver hurtling towards his eventual cataclysmic discovery, if all the above is true? Recognising his intellectual and moral inferiority to the Houyhnhnms, and also the fact that he will never achieve their noble status, he nevertheless buckles to the task of improving, to whatever miniscule extent, his behaviour and knowledge of true morality, and sets out the pattern of his future days: to sit at the feet of his master, assimilating whatever crumbs of wisdom his small intellect can manage. Fated thus, Gulliver is the happiest man in the world. But Gulliver is not fated thus. Even although his Houyhnhnm master has spoken in his defence, and acknowledges some progress in his pupil's education, he is, and must remain, a Yahoo in the horses' eyes.¹⁰⁷ Consequently, he must leave the country, lest his modicum of reason added to his undoubted Yahoo vices cause him to lead the vile creatures in a rebellion against the Houyhnhnms.¹⁰⁸

This represents the end of the road for Gulliver, but not simply in the obvious literal sense that he must pack up and leave. For, running parallel to the narrative of events that concentrate on the Houyhnhnms, their virtues and Gulliver's humility towards his moral superiors - the obvious Utopian side of the voyage - is another, darker series, not of events as such, but of pieces slowly coming together, rather like a large jigsaw puzzle whose picture is unclear until the last few pieces are correctly fitted. Gulliver already knows that he is not animal rationale, for he has seen that creature, and even accepts that, for him, it is an impossible dream. But his revelatory experience comes when he realises that there is another lesson to

be learned in Houyhnhnmland, one that shocks him, and reduces his status beyond what, even in his newly-enlightened state, he would have dreamed.

The other lesson for Gulliver is in the Yahoos. Dissociating himself from them at every turn, he nevertheless concedes his "Resemblance in every Part but could not account for their degenerate and brutal Nature".¹⁰⁹ Yet as he proceeds in his description of European history, of kings, courts and ministers, of lawyers and crooks of every conceivable kind, the obvious conclusions are drawn by his master. The irrational, brutal behaviour of the Yahoos mirrors, almost exactly, the description of human behaviour given by Gulliver - not only in the final voyage, but throughout the whole book - and indeed, as Gulliver admits to himself, the humans usually have the edge when it comes to viciousness:

I EXPECTED every Moment that my Master would accuse the Yahoos of those unnatural Appetites in both Sexes, so common among us. But Nature it seems hath not been so expert a Schoolmistress; and these politer Pleasures are entirely the Productions of Art and Reason, on our Side of the Globe.¹¹⁰

Like Europeans, the Yahoos "are cunning, malicious, treacherous and revengeful" and the cultivated vices of the civilised creature are shown to be there, in embryo at least, in the Yahoos.¹¹¹ But the final degradation, and the one that strips Gulliver like the beau to his true state - moral as well as physical - comes when he goes to bathe in a river. A female Yahoo standing nearby, catches sight of Gulliver and "embraced me

after a most fulsome Manner".¹¹² Typically of Swift, he obliges Gulliver to sit the ultimate test of kinship: the sexual examination. He who can father a Yahoo must be a Yahoo himself, possessing those specific - in the strict scientific sense of the word - characteristics that put the matter beyond dispute.¹¹³ For Gulliver, this is the final revelation, the key to self-knowledge he came, unwittingly, to find.¹¹⁴

If Winston Smith is the last man in Oceania, Gulliver is his counterpart in Houyhnhnmland.¹¹⁵ As our sole representatives, they must take us up or pull us down.¹¹⁶ The fate of liberal-humanism is in their hands, and if we object that they are particularly weak, we beg the question that logically follows: are we better than Winston or Gulliver? The conclusion offered by Gulliver's Houyhnhnm master is based on the evidence of history as presented by its champion:

He went through all our Vices and Follies, and discovered many which I had never mentioned to him, by only supposing what Qualities a Yahoo of their Country, with a small Proportion of Reason, might be capable of exerting; And concluded, with too much Probability, how vile, as well as miserable such a Creature must be.¹¹⁷

In recognising the truth behind this verdict, Gulliver, for the first time in the book, adds up his sums and arrives at the right answer. The society he comes from, which he has loved, grown up in, admired and vocally championed throughout "is a society barren of virtue, decency and hope".¹¹⁸ Having learned to value truth above all else, Gulliver cannot escape the force of his own verdict upon himself and his fellows: they are worse than

Yahoos, and all share in the guilt.¹¹⁹ If there are superficial differences, the underlying kinship is no longer able to be denied. Gulliver, on this reading, belongs to History and the Yahoos, whilst Utopia and the rational horses are forever out of his reach.

Gulliver has to leave Houyhnhnmland, we as readers realise, because there is no such place, there are no rational horses, there is only corrupt Europe with its corrupt history. The horses are a figment of Swift's imagination, and Gulliver's enforced, and bitter, exile makes the point dramatically. But it is the classic schoolboy mistake to assume that the Yahoos too are fictional, for the evidence of the whole book - not just the final few pages - gives substance to every word of the denunciation of our society. "The fallacy of vous autres ... is to assume that because the Houyhnhnms are an impossible dream, the Yahoos must be an equally impossible nightmare: the first is true but the second isn't."¹²⁰ The real lessons of the Fourth Voyage are - as I argued in Chapter One - to be learned from the Yahoos, for, in styling the crucial dichotomy as one between Utopia and History, we have found that the Utopia is simply that - no place - whilst the History is all too real. The general argument throughout the book has been one that we have all been prepared to swallow, and the last voyage simply spells out the lesson for us. And the lesson is surely for us, for on what other pretext would such a book be written? Our journey with Gulliver is made so that we - the "gentle readers" - share in the experience of self-discovery, and so that we may start a process of re-education that must begin with acknowledgment of our own

stinking corruption.¹²¹

In Gulliver's case, his response is both right and wrong. He is wrong to try to be a Houyhnhnm in the ridiculous literal fashion he affects, but right to recognise that the message he receives in the land of the horses applies to him. He does not attempt to evade the responsibility of his own culpability: he simply cannot handle it. In this he is no different from Winston Smith, for he too has reached zero-point in terms of self-esteem. For both, the truth, eagerly sought but devastatingly revealed, is, quite literally, annihilating. "An inexpiable guilt, a sense of personal vileness that locks the door to any remedial action - this is the worst torment of all."¹²² This is the final fate of both Gulliver and Winston, for neither has been able to hold on to the myths about themselves through the heuristic mill of their self-revelatory experiences. For the books' readers, the dilemma is identical.¹²³ We are meant to identify with the two heroes, to place ourselves in their shoes, and treat their experiences as our own.¹²⁴ We surely cheat both authors - and retain our own myths - if we do otherwise, for what would be the point of showing how a deluded madman comes to believe he is a Yahoo, or how a second-rate, unconvinced liberal-humanist falls apart under the torturer's expert hand?¹²⁵ The conclusion of both books, as drawn by the heroes, is really the same; in Eliot's powerful words: "after such knowledge, what forgiveness?"¹²⁶

If reaction to Swift's devastating attack on the pride of man tended to be extreme, reaction to Orwell's last novel was, if anything, more so. The ad hominem diatribes against the great

Dean were rewritten in the context of an attack on Orwell's failure both as man and socialist.¹²⁷ Isaac Deutscher, in a famous essay, suggests that Orwell simply expanded upon the great Stalinist purges of 1936-8, and calls the book "a cry from the abyss of despair",¹²⁸ written from the despair of rationalism which caused Orwell to view reality "through the dark glasses of a quasi-mystical pessimism".¹²⁹ Rejecting Orwell's own claim that the book was intended as a warning, Deutscher says it goes too far to be anything of the sort, and is instead "a piercing shriek announcing the advent of the Black Millenium".¹³⁰ So far from seeing the book as a warning, or even a prophecy, he concludes that it is in fact "an item in the programme of Hate Week".¹³¹ Others have been less harsh on Orwell the man, but share the conclusion that the book represents a final despairing cry from a dying man. "The whole world, Orwell felt, is steadily moving towards a vast and ruthless tyranny, and there is absolutely nothing that can stop the monstrous progress."¹³² The same critic concludes that "Orwell, in his last years, was a man who watched in horror while his entire life work was robbed of meaning."¹³³ The subtle infiltration of biographical assumption is clear, and widespread, for no one seems prepared to take the book on its own terms alone.

Other critics have been prepared to see Orwell's design for what he claimed it to be. "Part of Orwell's contention is that conditions could arise under which men are stripped of all personality and become emotionally and intellectually impotent",¹³⁴ says one, adding that "it is clear that Orwell did not intend Nineteen Eighty-Four as a statement of his

rejection of socialist principles".¹³⁵ Bernard Crick, major biographer of Orwell, describes it as a "flawed masterpiece", stressing that the flaws lay in Orwell's failure to clarify where the optimism, which must certainly have been there, was to be found;¹³⁶ consequently, he suggests that "Orwell was at best incautious, at worst foolish".¹³⁷ His mistakes centred upon the use of socialism, since this provided an ideological weapon to the Right.

Yet Orwell himself clarified his position on all these points. "I do not believe that the kind of society I describe necessarily will arrive, but I believe (allowing of course for the fact that the book is a satire) that something resembling it could arrive."¹³⁸ He goes on to stress the reason for using England as his chosen country. "The scene of the book is laid in Britain in order to emphasize that the English-speaking races are not innately better than anyone else and that totalitarianism, if not fought against, could triumph anywhere."¹³⁹ The society of Oceania is a "plausible nightmare"¹⁴⁰ that becomes the more plausible in proportion as it is rejected. Those who reject it as a possibility may even be unwittingly laying the foundations of the Ministry of Love.¹⁴¹ The moral of the book is, surely, "Don't let it happen. It depends on you."¹⁴²

The crucial dilemmas we encounter on reading Orwell and Swift have a relevance to our time that is difficult to overstate, and the importance of correctly interpreting their essential message is great and urgent. The arguments offered to suggest that the world is not really heading in this direction must be met head-on, if the ground is to be cleared for a full

appraisal of their importance.¹⁴³ Since the complacency against which both authors consistently campaigned has remained, in large measure, intact, a brief survey of literary and philosophical trends may be helpful.

The 'death' of religion in the twentieth century has left a gap which is not being filled by any comparable faith. The nineteenth-century optimism and confident belief in progress and the ascent of man falter in the face of the awesome reality of Belsen and the nuclear bomb. The linear vision of history, it would appear, tends not towards Utopia, but threatens instead to head in the direction of totalitarianism.¹⁴⁴ Orwell himself knew only too well the threat of totalitarianism, but not until Nineteen Eighty-Four did he come to see, or predict, that it could be the end of Progress, the terminus of history. If the 'death' of religion left a gap in men's lives, the death of progress leaves a chasm which is impossible to fill: it leads to despair. But, whereas a writer like Swift could afford to despair intellectually, because there was a God, another, superior, system of values, another frame of reference, progressivists cannot afford to despair, because they have burned all their bridges. In fairness to Orwell, he was not a complacent atheist, always declaring that it was simply a question of priorities: sort out this world, and then we can think about man's place in a cosmic context.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the implications for an age without religious faith are profound; the more profound when we consider the dominant literature of our era.

Pessimism is, without question, the dominant factor in

most important twentieth-century literature: Heart of Darkness, The Waste Land, Waiting for Godot, The Fall, Lord of the Flies, Catch-22, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four itself. The list is all but endless. Whether the central concern is the individual or society is immaterial, since despair of the one means, in effect, despair of the other. The specific focus of individual writers may vary, and the exact nature, and degree, of pessimism is not necessarily the same from book to book, but the underlying message seems to be the same: namely that something is desperately amiss in our world, and unless we face up to it, the future will be even blacker. Some books attack malevolent societies, whilst others expose the black heart of man, and still more predict, or suggest, that future societies could exploit either or both of these factors (social or personal) to provide a gloomy fate for our species. The message in The Fall and Lord of the Flies is that there are dark forces within man that crucially undermine society: the closing image of the Lieutenant and the cruiser in Golding's book clearly suggests an extension of the book's relevance to the adult world beyond the boys' island, a relevance underpinned by the world of Oceania, where the same forces have taken over the driving-seat of history with the disastrous and horrendous results we have already seen. If society is rotten, we must look to man for the cause; and if man is rotten, what kind of society can we hope to create? Despair of one need not mean despair of the other, but optimism, if present at all in these books, must be both tentative and conditional upon a proper, and thorough, self-knowledge.

Even our best comedy is tragi-comedy - the tramps in

Waiting for Godot, Yossarian in Catch-22 - and its essential message, too, is the hopelessness of the human condition. The heart of, for example, Catch-22 is tragic: it is the truth which Snowden is hiding beneath his flak-jacket. That truth is not - how could it be? - God, or Progress, or Utopia, or man's goodness - potential or actual - but Snowden's guts hanging out of his rib-cage and writing their message for modern man in a horrific confession over the flight-deck floor. Existence is physical, animal even, and society is the herd, the pack, operating under the same conditions as hyenas or coyotes (or Yahoos). The question 'Why?' is meaningless, painfully so. The Houyhnhnms' verdict on man's reason is vindicated, Swift's vision of the Yahoo no longer the raving of an embittered madman. The meaninglessness and emptiness which Orwell found in the rational horses' lives, and recoiled from, returns as the truth of our existence, but without the compensation of a rational environment. What Oceania offers is a life based on that of the Yahoos. The only difference is in the relative sophistication of the future society. Yahoos with that "Tincture of reason" have achieved the technological revolution, and have discovered one-hundred-and-one new ways of hating, fighting, torturing, and killing forever into the future. The image of even the animal rationis capax is destroyed, because the instincts of the brute have proved to be stronger.¹⁴⁶ The bitter irony for linear historians is that the victory of Progress in history becomes the victory of forces of totalitarian repression, which repudiate, and even eradicate, the optimistic voices which gave them life in the first place, replacing a Utopian reverie of harmony with a

cacophonous Dystopia, a vision of freedom with a life of bleak servitude, and a dream of perpetual peace with a nightmare of relentless war, hatred and brutality.

The shadow of Swift falls not just over modern literature, but even modern philosophy, for the choices he offers us, and the anxiety that lies at the heart of his greatest writings, return when we examine such a philosophy as existentialism. The prophetic note in Swift's display of Gulliver as a man lacking a rockbottom self - noted at the beginning of this Chapter - can be seen when we look at the terms of existentialism. Man is a blank tape, we learn from observation of Gulliver: "Existence precedes essence", says Sartre. We are nothing until we, or society, or our peer groups, make us something; and then we can only be what we are made.¹⁴⁷ The awesome responsibility is shown in the terminology of existentialism: anguish, abandonment and despair.¹⁴⁸ The anguish is the responsibility for all our choices, and a compulsion to choose. Abandonment means that God is dead: we are on our own.¹⁴⁹ We despair because we must act without hope, for hope is cheating, since it involves propitiation of a God who no longer exists.¹⁵⁰ Existentialism is, in a sense, the opposite of that other modern philosophy: behaviourism. Behaviourism, at least, is comforting insofar as we are not morally responsible for our actions: Pavlovian responses are not moral choices. The very title of B.F. Skinner's book Beyond Freedom and Dignity, with its crystal-clear death-knell for liberal-humanism, reveals the awesome gulf between certain ways of looking at ourselves now, and more traditional views of the human potential, as Anthony Burgess

notes in his own study of Orwell's last book.¹⁵¹

Sartre sums up the situation for modern man, without God or an axiomatic belief in progress. He says that the optimist who thinks that the death of God still allows certain absolute values and norms of behaviour to remain, is deluding himself. Consequently, far from rejoicing in the death of God - as Nietzsche did in the nineteenth century - "the existentialist finds it extremely embarrassing that God does not exist, for there disappears with Him all possibility of finding values in an intelligible heaven. There can no longer be any good a priori, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it."¹⁵² Quoting Ponge, Sartre says "Man is the future of man", and this blank page is offered as the opportunity for man to fashion his own destiny.¹⁵³

In speaking of human nature, George Steiner has asserted that "the dark places are at the centre. Pass them by and there can be no serious discussion of the human potential".¹⁵⁴ Both Swift and Orwell applied themselves assiduously to just this task, recognising the importance of seeing man as he truly is. The essential link between the two writers is to be found in this forthright honesty. They deal with the possibility of man as we (think we) know him becoming extinct. Yet in their despair is our (possible) salvation. Orwell wrote about Oceania in order that we may, through remaining vigilant, prevent its coming to pass. But we cannot do that by dismissing the book as a bugaboo, one man's craven surrender to despair. It is not a surrender but a challenge, not a prediction but a warning.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, when Swift portrays us as Yahoos with a little bit of reason, he

does so, not just to shock us or needle us or exhibit his scorn and spleen, but to dare us to pick up the gauntlet.¹⁵⁶ The situation for the readers at the end of both books is identical. The ball is in our court. If we think we can avoid Oceania, prove it; if we think we are better than Yahoos, prove it.

To grapple with these books is to meet, head-on, the central problems of human existence. The solution to such problems is clearly beyond the scope of this study or the gifts of this writer - perhaps any writer - but it remains essential to all of us that the problems be kept in the forefront of our minds, and it is not the least achievement of our greatest satirist that he achieves this end on nearly every page. The problems of being human, the difficult path to self-knowledge, the implications for the future of present scientific and moral attitudes, but, above all, the vital importance of seeing ourselves for what we truly are - not what we would like to be - are constantly brought before us; and the questions asked require to be answered. We may reject Swift's challenge, but the questions he asks will trouble our minds until we either answer them or destroy ourselves. If modern man wishes to survive, he must meet this challenge. The continuing relevance of Swift is that he threw it down nearly three hundred years ago, and it is still valid. The constant evasion by critics, readers and the world at large, of this challenge is perhaps the major reason for the importance of reading his works. We must keep looking into the pool, beneath the surface rags, behind the "jabber" we speak, until we accept that what we see is ourselves. That is the importance of Swift, the reason for this study, and the reason

why his epitaph is both fitting and justifiable: he did serve
human liberty.

NOTES - CHAPTER 1

1. Corr., III, 87.
2. Herbert Davis, "Alecto's Whip," in Jonathan Swift: Essays on His Satire and Other Studies, N.Y., 1964, 249.
3. "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," Thesis Submitted for the Degree of B.Litt., Bodleian Library, Oxford University, 1966, 49. I do not mean to suggest that what I am attempting here is something entirely new. Critics such as Reilly and Claude Rawson have already established such an approach, and my intention is to reinforce their arguments rather than to supplant them.
4. Corr., III, 182.
5. Corr., III, 180.
6. See Corr., III, 152-4. For a full account of the story behind the publication of the book, see Irvin Ehrenpreis, Swift: The Man, His Works and the Age, III: Dean Swift, London, 1982, 487-508.
7. Corr., III, 181.
8. Corr., III, 189.
9. Corr., III, 180.
10. For a good survey of the early criticism of the fourth Voyage, see Merrel D. Clubb's article "The Criticism of Gulliver's "Voyage to the Houyhnhnms", 1726-1914," Stanford Studies in Language and Literature, Stanford, Ca., 1941, 203-32, on which the present survey is partly based. See also Swift: The Critical Heritage, ed. Kathleen Williams, London, 1970, for a further collection of early comments on the Travels.
11. Corr., III, 183.
12. Corr., III, 179. Of course, Arbuthnot's comment could be interpreted as ironic; Gulliver could be "happy" in the Tale's sense: a deluded fool whose "merry work" is the result of the effects of his delusion. But even if we acknowledge the potential ambiguity of the comment, it still helps to set out one side of the critical response to the Travels, the side which recognises it as a major comic work, although one cannot categorically attribute such an interpretation to Arbuthnot himself. Jenny Mezcimens argues that Lucian and Erasmus are important keys to Arbuthnot's irony here: "the ironic senses in which the compliment is deserved depend on a knowledge and understanding of the mode and the tradition in which Swift wrote" ("Swift's Praise of Gulliver: Some Renaissance Background to the Travels," 252).

13. Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift, London, 1752, 62.
14. Life of Johnson, rev. edn., ed. R.W. Chapman, Oxford, 1970, 595; see also 1112.
15. Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. Birkbeck Hill, 3 vols., London, 1905, vol. 3, 66. Johnson is talking here about the Tale, but his praise surely applies equally to the Travels, at least as far as modern commentators are concerned.
16. Remarks, 189.
17. Observations Upon Lord Orrery's 'Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift', London, 1754, 171.
18. James Harris, Philosophical Inquiries, London, 1781, 537.
19. James Beattie, Letters, vol. 2, 1819-21, London, 1822, 132.
20. Johnson, 'Life of Swift', in Lives of the English Poets, vol. 3, 64.
21. The Enquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners and Literature, London, 1797, 134. Godwin undoubtedly reads his own political ideals into the book, but his view is one that many subsequent critics have shared, at least insofar as it stands against the negative image of the book's message.
22. Lectures on the English Poets, London, 1818, 111.
23. See, e.g., A.O. Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, Baltimore, Md., 1961, 7, where he speaks of the Victorian era as "the Age of Man's Good Conceit of Himself".
24. George Steiner discusses the "strenuous or complacent pride" of the Victorians, and quotes Macaulay's essay on Bacon to substantiate his argument. A brief selection of Macaulay's assertions about science should suffice to illustrate my point: "it has lengthened life ... it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from the heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendour of the day; it has extended the range of human vision ..." (Critical and Historical Essays, 3 Vols., London, 1843, 2, 399). As Steiner comments: "we look back on these now with bewildered irony" (In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Re-definition of Culture, London 1971, 16). Further evidence of this Zeitgeist can be found in Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, where Marx lauds the bourgeois achievement (seeing it as a great step towards Utopia, where Macaulay saw it as the thing itself): "it has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted

expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades" (The Communist Manifesto, with an Introduction by A.J.P. Taylor, Harmondsworth, 1967, 83). Of course, not all Victorian thought was so optimistic, and one only has to think of Carlyle and Arnold to realise that certain major figures of the nineteenth century took a gloomy view of such 'progress'. Yet it is the popular self-image of the age, and it is largely the degree to which they stand against such facile worship of science and 'progress' that singles them out now. See, for instance, T.S. Eliot's essay on Baudelaire, where the argument about Baudelaire's vision partly revolves around his prescient rejection of this dominant Zeitgeist (Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot, ed. Frank Kermode, London, 1975, 231-6).

25. The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century, Everyman edn., 1968, 34.
26. Of course, with Swift above all writers one cannot simply take such a declaration at face value, and the extent to which he genuinely believed in the reformatory powers of his satire is debatable. Indeed Swift himself stresses the futility of words, and at certain points in his works he expresses a defeatism in relation to his powers as a satirist, a defeatism which is an important element in his seriousness. In the Tale he amusingly discusses the futility of satire, a futility based upon the reaction of the reader who refuses to apply its corrective message to himself (Works, I, 131). But here, perhaps, a mood of elation at the successful completion of a major work allows him to express a more optimistic view of his satiric undertaking, even if one cannot take the remark at anything like the level of a completely serious statement.
27. See the characterisation of Podsnap in Dickens's Our Mutual Friend: "The question about everything was, would it bring a blush into the cheek of the young person?" (Penguin edn., ed. Gill, Harmondsworth, 1971, 175); see also note 1 on p. 900 of the same edition, where Gill describes the background to the growth of Victorian prudery, and the role of Thackeray in maintaining it.
28. Thackeray, The English Humourists, 25.
29. ibid., 28.
30. ibid., 35.
31. The Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. Sir Walter Scott, 1883 edn., I, 315.
32. The insanity of Swift the man has been thoroughly refuted in our time, thanks initially to Walter Brain's article, 'The Illness of Dean Swift' (Irish Journal of Medical Science, Aug.-Sep. 1952, 337-46), which showed, once and

for all, that Swift was not mad, either when he wrote the Travels, or, indeed, even when he was much older. The probability is that he suffered from Ménière's Syndrome, a terrible affliction of the inner ear, which causes severe bouts of giddiness and dreadful pain, but has no connection with any disorder of the brain. When combined with the senility that comes to most of us in time, this may have given rise to the stories of Swift's 'insane' ramblings of his later years, during which period, his most lurid and unsympathetic biographers had claimed, he became, as Dr. Johnson observed, "a Driv'ler and a Show" ("The Vanity of Human Wishes", l. 318). But most recent biographies have convincingly shown that, whatever else may have inspired the writing of Gulliver's Travels, it certainly was not insanity. (See Ehrenpreis, Swift: The Man, His Works, and the Age, III: Dean Swift, 319.20; J.A. Downie, Jonathan Swift: Political Writer, London, 1984, 34, 181, 192, 194; David Nokes, Jonathan Swift: A Hypocrite Reversed, Oxford, 1985, 298; Michael Foot, 'Round the Next Corner: The Pursuit of Jonathan Swift,' in Debts of Honour, London, 1980, 181-212; Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Viencken, 'Psychoanalytic Criticism and Swift: The History of a Failure,' in Eighteenth Century Ireland, ed. Andrew Carpenter, Dublin, 1986, 127-41.

33. Reilly, "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," 4, 29. 'Christian' in this context refers to a particular interpretation of the Fourth Voyage rather than to any particular religious inclination on the part of the critics concerned. Indeed Christian critics in the true sense of the word have found - hardly surprisingly - much to admire in the book. John Wesley, for example, quotes Gulliver's Travels with unqualified approbation in his own assault on the pride of man and on philosophers who praise the dignity of human nature. (The Doctrine of Original Sin, According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience, 1756; reprinted in Works, n.d., vol. 9).
34. The statement that Swift was definitely a Christian is itself far from uncontroversial, and indeed in the following two Chapters the disturbing lack of spiritual conviction in Swift's works is explored in some detail. However, in biographical terms the work of Williams, Tuveson, and Landa in particular has gone some way towards removing the mantle of black hypocrite from Swift's brow, and this seems just and proper. Nevertheless, the new wholesome Swift does not ring true when he is used to reclaim the satires, and it is this wholesale attempt to save Swift from his own writings which is objected to in the following pages.
35. Ernest Tuveson, 'The Dean as Satirist,' in Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964, 102. L.J. Morrissey provides a most extreme interpretation of the Travels in relation to Swift's religion. His argument rests on Gulliver's complaints to

the printer about misrepresented dates, which Morrissey believes to be hidden references to scriptural readings from the church calendar. (Gulliver's Progress, Hamden, Ct., 1978).

36. Kathleen Williams, Jonathan Swift and the Age of Compromise, Lawrence, Ks., 1959, Preface.
37. Reilly, "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," 6.
38. Milton Voigt, Swift and the Twentieth Century, Detroit, Mn., 1964, 182. This claim is now, of course, over twenty years old, and cannot be presumed to still hold absolutely true, but as recently as 1984, W.S. Anderson, in his article "Paradise Gained by Horace, Lost by Gulliver" (in English Satire and the Satiric Tradition, ed. Claude Rawson, Oxford, 1984, 151-66), argues the "Christian" interpretation of the Fourth Voyage, and David Nokes, in his biography of Swift (Jonathan Swift: A Hypocrite Reversed) says that Gulliver is a "madman" (326) who can "conceive of no middle way between these extremes [i.e. Yahoos and Houyhnhnms]" (328). Other views, and other critics, have certainly appeared in the intervening years to strongly challenge the "Christian" interpretation, but such an approach is still very much to the fore in a substantial number of new and recent books and articles.
39. Edward Rosenheim, Jr., "The Fifth Voyage of Lemuel Gulliver: A Footnote," MP, LX, 1960, 107 (my emphasis). John J. McManmon upbraids critics who try to foist a religious interpretation on the Travels, declaring that there is no textual evidence that the author was a Christian or a clergyman, and that it is consequently suspicious when critics try to use this as a basis for interpretation of the Fourth Voyage. ("The Problem of a Religious Interpretation of Gulliver's Fourth Voyage," JHI, XXVII, 1966, 64). See also Everett Zimmerman, Swift's Narrative Satires: Author and Authority, Ithaca, N.Y., 1983, 137-8. Irvin Ehrenpreis says that "few readers of Gulliver's Travels come away from it feeling that the author has strengthened their devotion to Christianity" (Swift: The Man, His Works and the Age, III: Dean Swift, London, 1982, 468).
40. Works, XI, 58.
41. Tuveson, "The Dean as Satirist," 109.
42. Works, XI, 246.
43. Kathleen Williams, "Gulliver's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," ELH, XVIII, 1951, 280.
44. Works, XI, 248.
45. Works, XI, 278.

46. Claude Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader: Studies in Swift and Our Time, London, and Boston, Ms., 1973, 22.
47. Conrad Suits, 'The Role of the Horses in A Voyage to the Houyhnhnms,' UTQ, XXXIV, 1965, 126.
48. Kathleen Williams, Age of Compromise, Preface.
49. Herbert Davis, Jonathan Swift: Essays on His Satire and Other Studies, N.Y., 1964, 19.
50. George Sherburn, 'Errors Concerning the Houyhnhnms,' MP, LVI, 1958, 92.
51. Kathleen Williams, Age of Compromise, Preface.
52. R.S. Crane, 'The Houyhnhnms, The Yahoos, and the History of Ideas,' in Reason and the Imagination: Studies in the History of Ideas, 1600-1800, ed. J.A. Mazzeo, N.Y., 1962, 233.
53. Charles Peake, 'Swift and the Passions,' MLR, LV, 1960, 180.
54. Martin Kallich, 'Three Ways of Looking at a Horse: Jonathan Swift's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms Again,' Criticism, II, 1960, 122-3.
55. R.S. Crane, 'Review of Martin Kallich's "Three Ways of Looking at a Horse: Jonathan Swift's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms Again",' PQ, XL, 1961, 429.
56. Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge, London, 1963, 36.
57. ibid., 36.
58. 'The Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos and the History of Ideas,' 238.
59. "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," 22.
60. Crane, 'Houyhnhnms,' 240.
61. ibid., 240.
62. Louis A. Landa, 'Jonathan Swift,' in Essays in Eighteenth-Century English Literature, Princeton, N.J., 1980, 134.
63. Crane, 'Review of Martin Kallich,' 428.
64. Corr., III, 103.
65. Corr., III, 102.

66. Irvin Ehrenpreis, "The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Voyage," in Jonathan Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ernest Tuveson, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1946, 141.
67. Selected Poems of Johnson and Goldsmith, eds. Alan Rudrum and Peter Dixon, London, 1965, 74. Clive T. Probyn suggests that Goldsmith had taken in the "logic" argument of Swift's satire before writing his own ("Swift and the Human Predicament," in The Art of Jonathan Swift, 70).
68. ibid., 74. Rochester makes the same point in "A Satire Against Reason and Mankind":
 "Which is the basest creature, man or beast? Birds feed on birds, beasts on each other prey, But savage man alone does man betray.
 Pressed by necessity, they kill for food;
 Man undoes man to do himself no good." (The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, ed. David M. Vieth, New Haven, Ct., 1968, 99). The point is also made in earlier writings in the Christian pessimist tradition. In the "Dulce bellum inexpertis" adage of Erasmus, for example, we find the following: "So true it is that anything that diverges from its true nature degenerates into a species far worse than if its vices had been engendered by nature herself." (Margaret Mann Phillips, The "Adages" of Erasmus: A Study with Translations, Cambridge, 1964, 315.)
69. Works, I, 31.
70. Maynard Mack, "The Muse of Satire," in Studies in the Literature of the Augustan Age, ed. R.C. Boys, Ann Arbor, Mn., 1952, 219.
71. Landa, "Jonathan Swift," in Essays, 119-139.
72. Ricardo Quintana, "Situational Satire: A Commentary on the Method of Swift," UTQ, XVII, 1948, 130.
73. Mack, "The Muse of Satire," 223.
74. John F. Ross, "The Final Comedy of Lemuel Gulliver," in Swift - Gulliver's Travels: A Casebook, ed. Richard Gravil, London, 1974, 119.
75. Samuel Holt Monk, "The Pride of Lemuel Gulliver," in Eighteenth-Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. James L. Clifford, N.Y., 1959, 129.
76. Reilly, "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," 11.
77. Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art, Princeton, N.J., 1960, 214.
78. Works, XI, 296.
79. Elliott, The Power of Satire, 130.

80. ibid., 214.
81. Reilly, "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," 12.
82. Joseph Horrell, "What Gulliver Knew," SR, LI, 1943, 500.
83. Works, XIII, 203.
84. Thackeray, The English Humourists, 35.
85. Edmund Gosse, A History of Eighteenth Century Literature, N.Y., 1889, 162.
86. Samuel Kliger, "The Unity of Gulliver's Travels," MLQ, CI, 1945, 404-5.
87. Edward Stone, "Swift and the Horses: Misanthropy or Comedy?" MLQ, X, 1949, 369.
88. Works, XI, 235.
89. Stone, "Swift and the Horses," 369.
90. ibid., 369.
91. Harold Kelling, "Gulliver's Travels: A Comedy of Humours," UTQ, XXI, 1952, 371-2. My emphasis.
92. Works, XI, 132.
93. Reilly, "Swift and Seventeenth Century Pessimism," 32-3.
94. Monk, "The Pride of Lemuel Gulliver," 118.
95. ibid., 118.
96. Kliger, "The Unity of Gulliver's Travels," passim.
97. Ehrenpreis, "The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Voyage," 138.
98. Reilly, "Pessimism," 33.
99. Walter Allen, The English Novel: A Short Critical History, London, 1954, 39. See also Claude Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader, 74.
100. Herbert Davis, Jonathan Swift: Essays on His Satire, 12.
101. ELH, XIX, 1952, 49-63.
102. ibid., 49.
103. Reilly, "Pessimism," 38.
104. Works, XI, 289.

105. Works, XI, 221. My emphasis.
106. Works, XI, 247. My emphasis.
107. 'Literary Artist,' 58.
108. Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader, 17.
109. 'Literary Artist,' 58.
110. ibid., 58.
111. ibid., 62.
112. Elliott, The Power of Satire, 219.
113. Tuveson, 'The Dean as Satirist,' 110.
114. Reilly, "Pessimism," 45.
115. 'Ulysses: Order and Myth,' in Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot, ed. Frank Kermode, London, 1975, 176.
116. 'The Excremental Vision,' in Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ernest Tuveson, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964, 32.
117. 'Swift's Allegory: The Yahoo and the Man of Mode,' UTQ, XXXIII, 1963, 2.
118. 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage: "Hard" and "Soft" Schools of Interpretation,' in Quick Springs of Sense, ed. Larry S. Champion, Athens, Ga., 1974, 33-49. Other surveys include Frank Brady, 'Vexations and Diversions: Three Problems in Gulliver's Travels,' MP, LXXV, 346-67; William Kinsley, 'Gentle Readings: Recent Work on Swift,' ECS, 1981-2, 442-53; Ricardo Quintana, 'A Modest Appraisal,' in Fair Liberty Was All His Cry: A Tercentenary Tribute to Jonathan Swift, 1667-1745, ed. A. Norman Jeffares, London and N.Y., 1967, 342-55.
119. Nigel Wood offers a different approach to this entirely, arguing that one should not be obliged to choose between 'hard' and 'soft' interpretations, but should adopt a 'textual' approach as opposed to the 'mimetic' approach just outlined. The problem then becomes one of appreciating the complexities of a difficult body of work, rather than seeking artistic or biographical unity, which must, according to Wood, be at least partly spurious and certainly misleading (Swift, Brighton, 1986, 5, 6, 7-8, 64). Wood himself offers an interpretation of Swift's works based on recent 'post-structuralist' and 'deconstructive' theories of literature by Derrida, Foucault and others, which seeks to avoid what he sees as the errors of biographical and 'mimetic' approaches to writing, partly - though by no means wholly - along the

lines of the present argument in this Chapter.

120. Edward Rosenheim, Jr., 'The Fifth Voyage of Lemuel Gulliver'; Charles Peake, 'Swift and the Passions'; Louis A. Landa, 'Review of Ehrenpreis'; Donald J. Greene, 'The Sin of Pride: A Sketch for a Literary Exploration,' New Mexico Quarterly, XXXIV, 1964, 8-30; Conrad Suits, 'The Role of the Horses'; R.S. Crane, 'Review of Martin Kallich.'
121. Claude Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader. Rawson has become arguably the outstanding new critic of Swift, and every one of his publications contains much of real worth and penetration (see Bibliography); David Ward, Jonathan Swift: An Introductory Essay, London, 1973; Peter Steele, Jonathan Swift: Preacher and Jester, Oxford, 1978; Patrick Reilly, Jonathan Swift: The Brave Desponder, Manchester, 1982. See also Denis Donoghue, Jonathan Swift: An Introduction, Cambridge, 1969; John Traugott, 'A Voyage to Nowhere' and several other brilliantly controversial essays (again, see Bibliography).
122. In a forthcoming review of Patrick Reilly's Jonathan Swift: The Brave Desponder in Notes and Queries. I am grateful to Patrick Reilly for showing me the review.
123. See Denis Donoghue, 'The Brainwashing of Gulliver,' The Listener, 1976, 578-9.
124. Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage,' 44. See also Ehrenpreis, 'The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Voyage'; M.M. Kelsall, 'Iterum Houyhnhm: Swift's Sextumvirate and the Horses,' EC, XIX, 1969, 35-45; Jenny Mezciems, 'Swift and Orwell: Utopia as Nightmare,' Dutch Quarterly Review, XV, 3, 1985, 194-5, 199.
125. Works, XI, 235.
126. According to Jenny Mezciems, Swift "lets Gulliver fail in a fantasy world, only to teach us that the proper study of mankind is man, not giants, or horses" ('Gulliver and Other Heroes,' in The Art of Jonathan Swift, ed. Clive T. Probyn, 206).
127. George Orwell, 'Politics vs. Literature: An Examination of Gulliver's Travels,' CEJL, IV, 254.
128. A.E. Dyson, 'Swift: The Metamorphosis of Irony,' in The Crazy Fabric: Essays on Irony, London, 1965, 9.
129. ibid., 9.
130. See, e.g., W.B. Carnochan, 'The Consolations of Satire,' in The Art of Jonathan Swift, ed. Clive T. Probyn, 34-5.

131. F.R. Leavis, 'The Irony of Swift,' in The Common Pursuit, London, 1972, 84.
132. Nigel Wood argues that, at the end of the book, Gulliver's essential credibility remains intact, so that the words which appear on the page attempt "to convince us, without neurosis, that Gulliver's vision is not negligible and, what is more, mirrors Swift's sentiments accurately" (Swift, 63).
133. 'A Voyage to Nowhere with Thomas More and Jonathan Swift: Utopia and the Voyage to the Houyhnhnms,' in Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ernest Tuveson, 145. See also Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage,' 46-7.
134. 'A Voyage to Nowhere,' 145-6. See also Robert B. Heilman, Introduction to Modern Library edition of Gulliver's Travels, N.Y., 1950, xv.
135. Works, XI, 296.
136. Traugott, 'A Voyage to Nowhere,' 146.
137. See Clive T. Probyn, Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study, Harmondsworth, 1987, 55.
138. Works, XI, 8.
139. See Probyn, Gulliver's Travels, 93.
140. As Patrick Reilly points out: "it is always better, for Swift, to be sadly wise than deludedly self-deceived" (The Literature of Guilt: From 'Gulliver' to Golding, London, 1988, 20).
141. At least it is not Swift the writer's problem. As a member of our species he is presumably as implicated as the rest of us, although Swift's Olympian standpoint as expressed in the poem "On the Day of Judgement" would seem to imply that Swift does exclude himself. He says "You who in different sects have shammed," excluding himself alone. Perhaps it is an unjustifiable position, but is nevertheless the one he chooses to adopt. (Poems, 507).
142. See W.R. Irwin, 'Swift and the Novelists,' PQ, XLV, I, 1966, 102-13, esp. 102-3; also Claude Rawson, 'Gulliver's Travels and Some Modern Fictions,' in Order From Confusion Sprung: Studies in Eighteenth-Century Literature From Swift to Cowper, London, 1985, 68-120; Jenny Mezciems, 'Swift and Orwell: Utopia as Nightmare,' Dutch Quarterly Review, XV, 3, 1985, 189-210; Maurice Johnson, 'T.S. Eliot on Satire, Swift, and Disgust,' Papers on Language and Literature, V, 1969, 310-15.

NOTES CHAPTER 2

1. Rosalie L. Colie, 'Gulliver, the Locke-Stillingfleet Controversy and the Nature of Man,' History of Ideas Newsletter, II, 1956, 58-62. See also Ricardo Quintana, Swift: An Introduction, Oxford, 1955, 30.
2. Patrick Reilly, Jonathan Swift: The Brave Desponder, Manchester, 1982, 33.
3. A.L. Morton, The English Utopia, London, 1952, 116-43.
4. W.B. Yeats, Collected Poems, 2nd edn., London, 1950, 227.
5. George Orwell, 'Politics vs. Literature: An Examination of Gulliver's Travels,' CEJL, IV, 243, 245.
6. See David Nokes, A Hypocrite Reversed, 97, 98
7. William Godwin, Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness, ed. Isaac Kramnick, Harmondsworth, 1976, 552-3, footnote. For a more detailed discussion of the fascinating influence of Swift on the anarchist philosopher, see James Preu, 'Swift's Influence on Godwin's Doctrine of Anarchism,' JHI, XV, 1953, 371-83.
8. George Orwell, 'Politics vs. Literature:' CEJL, IV, 252.
9. David P. French, 'Swift and Hobbes: A Neglected Parallel,' Boston University Studies in English, III, 1957, 243-55.
10. Rosalie L. Colie, 'Gulliver, the Locke-Stillingfleet Controversy and the Nature of Man,' History of Ideas Newsletter, II, 1956, 58-62.
11. See Claude Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader, 1-33. See also Clive T. Probyn, Preface to The Art of Jonathan Swift, 12; Jenny Mezciems, 'Gulliver and Other Heroes,' in the same collection of essays, 205.
12. Louis A. Landa says that "it is rare indeed that a commentator appraises any work of Jonathan Swift without reference to biographical fact" ('Jonathan Swift,' in Essays, 119).
13. See Nigel Wood, Swift, 5-8.
14. See principally Kathleen Williams, Jonathan Swift and the Age of Compromise, Lawrence, Ks., 1958, 100-7. See also J.A. Downie, Jonathan Swift: Political Writer, 37-9.
15. Works, IV, 245.
16. Irvin Ehrenpreis, 'Swift on Liberty,' JHI, XIII, 1952, 146. See also Ricardo Quintana, Two Augustans: John Locke, Jonathan Swift, Madison, Wn., 1978, 9-10.

17. "His mind remained fixed upon the disorders of the Civil War and at what the Puritans had done to their opponents, and he saw at the root of all this the desire on the part of a ruthless minority to gain and wield unrestricted power" (Quintana, Two Augustans, 126).
18. David Nokes says: "It is noticeable that, although he claims to deal impartially with the balance of power, all the examples which Swift chooses from Roman history illustrate the dangers of such a dominatio plebis." (A Hypocrite Reversed, 55.)
19. Poems, 480.
20. Ricardo Quintana says that Swift was "committed to the Revolution's principles" (The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift, 136), and J.A. Downie asserts that there is no evidence that Swift was a Jacobite (Jonathan Swift: Political Writer, London, 1984, 344-5). David P. French, on the other hand, argues that Swift's attitude towards the settlement was at best ambiguous, and it was only his realism that prevented him from adopting a more positive position on the question of Non-jurors and Jacobitism: "Quite clearly, Swift was inconsistent with himself on the Revolution settlement; even in old age, he found incipient Jacobitism warring with necessity." ("Swift, the Non-jurors and Jacobitism," MLN, LXXII, 1957, 258-64). For the background to sermons on the martyrdom of Charles I, see Edward Rosenheim, Jr., "Swift and the Martyred Monarch," PQ, LXIV, 78-94; also Helen W. Randall, "The Rise and Fall of a Martyrology: Sermons on Charles I," HLQ, X, 1947, 135-67.
21. Whatever the truth about Swift's "Jacobitism", his attitude towards the Revolution of 1688 was certainly ambivalent. See, e.g., Nigel Wood, Swift, 22-3.
22. Patrick Reilly, Jonathan Swift: The Brave Desponder, Manchester, 1982, 239-40. See also Nigel Wood's remark that it was the successful nature of Partridge's proselytising which aroused Swift's anger (Swift, 22).
23. See John D. Seelye, "Hobbes' Leviathan and the Giantism Complex in the First Book of Gulliver's Travels," JEGP, LX, 1961, 229, 238-9. See also Robert H. Hopkins, "The Personation of Hobbism in Swift's Tale of a Tub and Mechanical Operation of the Spirit," PQ, XLV, 1965, 372-8, where the author argues that the Hack represents a Hobbesian speaking-voice which is a satirical mockery of Hobbesian materialism.
24. Works, II, 15.
25. Works, II, 16.
26. Works, XI, 73.

27. Works, IX, 244.
28. Works, IX, 155; Works, IX, 156; Works, XII, 88.
29. David P. French says that "if carried out consistently, [Swift's] program would found all government on a combination of the enticing carrot and the chastising goad" (Swift and Hobbes, 244).
30. Clearly, there were exceptions to this general rule - Thomas More, the heroes of Glubbudrib, his great friend Arbuthnot and, even in the Travels, Don Pedro - but this, surely, cannot provide a loophole for the rest of us. Swift is making reasonable concessions to reality here, but not providing mankind with an easy escape. Interestingly, in connection with this, Swift declared in one of his most famous letters: "O, if the World had but a dozen Arbuthnots in it, I would burn my Travells." But he adds, significantly: "however, he is not without Fault" (Corr., III, 104).
31. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 24.
32. Works, IX, 244.
33. Works, IX, 152.
34. "Conceive of God as goodness and benevolence, of nature as His creation, include men in nature, let the myth of the Fall imply, as it did for Locke, merely a legal death penalty laid upon otherwise innocent descendants of Adam, who are rational beings, free to choose good and evil, and you have the Pelagian heresy." (T.O. Wedel, On the Philosophical Background of Gulliver's Travels, in Swift - Gulliver's Travels: A Casebook, ed. Richard Gravil, London, 1974, 92.)
35. Works, IX, 157.
36. Works, XI, 59.
37. Works, II, 41-63. Phillip Harth argues that the Project is meant to be taken seriously, and is not satirical (Swift's Project: Tract or Travesty, PMLA, LXXXIV, 1969, 336-43). See also David Nokes, who says that the Project is "a scheme as narrow, naïve, and utopian as any that he satirizes, and totally without a trace of irony" (A Hypocrite Reversed, 95).
38. Works, IX, 175-6. On the question of Swift anticipating Orwell, I am not referring to Orwell personally, but to the characterisation of Winston Smith in Nineteen Eighty-Four: he is a power-worshipper masquerading as a freedom-fighter, as O'Brien demonstrates. (See Chapter Four of the present study).

39. Works, IX, 197.
40. A connection between Swift and Locke is made in two articles concerned with Gulliver's Travels. Richard J. Dircks argues that Houyhnhnmland is an ironic portrayal of the life of reason, and therefore a parodic representation of Lockean rationalism. Such a view naturally depends upon disbelieving in the credibility of the horses, who are (as 'disciples' of Locke) the objects of the satiric message of the book ('Gulliver's Tragic Rationalism,' Criticism, II, 1960, 134-9). W.B. Carnochan, on the contrary, attempts to establish a more positive relationship between Swift and Locke, seeing the book as Swift's 'Essay on the Human Understanding'. On this view Gulliver progresses, in true Lockean fashion, from sensation to reflection in the course of his voyages. But even Carnochan himself admits to being unsure of what this would mean even if accepted ('Gulliver's Travels: An Essay on the Human Understanding?' MLQ, XXV, 1964, 5-21). Ricardo Quintana opposes both suggestions when he argues that Swift had no strong connections with Locke - though the two shared many attitudes and a crucial seventeenth-century perspective - and that Swift neither borrowed from Locke in his satire, nor attacked him specifically (Two Augustans, 80-1).
41. Rosalie L. Colie argues that, intellectually, Locke's approach to human nature was "calculated to appeal to Swift's stern if undisciplined sense of reality," and goes on to suggest that Don Pedro in the Travels is the crucial figure who provides the link with Locke's definition of man, as it found expression in the Locke-Stillingfleet debate ('Gulliver, and the Locke-Stillingfleet Controversy,' 58, 61-2). The documents discussed here can be found in Clive T. Probyn's Jonathan Swift: The Contemporary Background, Manchester, 1978, 172-84.
42. Works, IX, 132; Works, IV, 245; Works, V, 81.
43. Works, IX, 32.
44. See Oliver W. Ferguson, Jonathan Swift and Ireland, Champaign, Ill., 1962, 2.
45. "Swift's Epitaph," in Collected Poems, 2nd edn., London, 1950, 277.
46. Nigel Wood proposes such an approach as the only one likely to be able to deal with the bewildering complexity of Swift's satire (Swift, 7-8).
47. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 26.

48. Works, XI, 245-64.
49. See Ricardo Quintana, Swift: An Introduction, 94; J.A. Downie, Jonathan Swift: Political Writer, 120.
50. See, e.g., Claude Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader, 125; David Nokes, "Hack at Tom Poley's": Swift's Use of Puns," in The Art of Jonathan Swift, ed. Clive T. Probyn, 54.
51. A.E. Dyson pursues this theme in his essay on Swift, offering the view that, at times, the irony "ceases to be a functional technique serving a moral purpose, and becomes the embodiment of an attitude to life," and goes on to suggest that this attitude is not only different from the ostensible purpose of the satire, but "even diametrically opposite." ("The Metamorphosis of Irony," 2, 1).
52. See Nokes, A Hypocrite Reversed, 101, 278.
53. On the question of Swift regarding parties as factions, see Z.S Fink, "Political Theory in Gulliver's Travels," ELH, XIV, 1947, 156, 157.
54. Works, IX, 32.
55. Works, IV, 245.
56. Works, V, 81; Works, IX, 176-7.
57. Works, III, 100; Works, II, 6-7; Works, II, 60.
58. Works, II, 106-7.
59. Works, IX, 32.
60. Ehrenpreis, "Swift on Liberty," 138.
61. See William Braggs Ewald, Jr., The Masks of Jonathan Swift, Cambridge, Ms., 1954. Nigel Wood points out that "the historical entity known as 'Swift' can hardly be distinguished from the work that now bears his name," and challenges critics such as Ewald on the grounds that attempting to reduce the personae to a recognisable "authentic" figure "could really be a form of deliberate blindness to a text's full complexity" (Swift, 5, 44).
62. Works, IX, 262.
63. F.R. Leavis, "The Irony of Swift," in The Common Pursuit, London, 1972, 73-87. See also Rosalie L. Colie, "Gulliver, the Locke-Stillingfleet Controversy, and the Nature of Man," 61.
64. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 33-4.

65. John Locke, Two Treatises of Government, 343.
66. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, 186.
67. Two Treatises, 298.
68. See Wedel, 'Philosophical Background of Gulliver's Travels,' 90-1.
69. Works, IX, 166.
70. Works, XI, 277-8.
71. Works, II, 15.
72. Works, I, 141-2.
73. Works, IV, 247.
74. Works, IV, 115.
75. Works, II, 88. See David P. French, 'Swift and Hobbes,' 255.
76. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 33.
77. Works, II, 20.
78. Works, II, 74.
79. Ehrenpreis, 'Swift on Liberty'. 134.
80. ibid., 144.
81. Leviathan, 261-3.
82. Owen Chadwick, The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century, Cambridge, 1975, 21.
83. See note 18.
84. Works, II, 74. See also David P. French, 'Swift and Hobbes,' 247.
85. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 39.
86. Works, IX, 143.
87. Such authoritarian attitudes inevitably lead one to ask the question which Swift - in his more liberal moments - would have asked: quis custodiet ipsos custodies?
88. The Social Contract, ed. Maurice Cranston, Harmondsworth, 1968, 53.
89. Leviathan, 234.

90. Works, II, 74.
91. Leviathan, 277.
92. Orwell, 'Politics vs. Literature,' CEJL, IV, 253. See also Edward Said, 'Swift's Tory Anarchy,' ECS, No. 1, Aut. 1969, 48-66.
93. Works, XI, 131. John Traugott makes the point that all the 'Utopias' in Gulliver's Travels - prelapsarian Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Houyhnhnmland - are absolutist, preferring public virtue to private, and restrictive of personal freedom: "None tolerates sect or faction and each separates opinion from truth." Lilliput counts murder - a crime of man against man - as less important than ingratitude, fraud or informing: "crimes that injure the fabric of society." (Works, XI, 58; Traugott, 'The Yahoo in the Doll's House: Gulliver's Travels the Children's Classic,' in English Satire and the Satiric Tradition, ed. Claude Rawson, Oxford, 1984, 148-9.)
94. A Letter Concerning Toleration, in The Second Treatise on Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration, ed. J.W. Gough, rev. edn., Oxford, 1966, 137.
95. ibid., 128.
96. Works, II, 29; Works, IV, 50; Works, IX, 151.
97. Works, II, 89.
98. Letter, 136.
99. Leviathan, 306, 360.
100. Works, IX, 31.
101. Works, II, 5-6.
102. Works, IX, 159.
103. Works, XII, 89.
104. Works, XII, 243-4.
105. Works, II, 88; Works, II, 99; Works, II, 37-8.
106. Works, XI, 71.
107. Letter, 160.
108. Corr., III, 118.
109. Works, IX, 167.

110. Works, II, 35. See David P. French, "Swift and Hobbes," 245, 248.
111. "So, when Milton writ his Book of Divorces, it was presently rejected as an occasional Treatise, because every Body knew, he had a Shrew for His Wife. Neither can there be any reason imagined, why he might not, after he was blind, have writ another upon the Danger and Inconvenience of Eyes." (Works, II, 67). This is a particularly caustic example of Swift's familiar ad hominem strategy: go for the man, and ignore the ball.
112. Works, IX, 165.
113. Works, XI, 159.
114. Works, II, 38.
115. Letter, 125, 135.
116. Works, III, 90. See David P. French, "Swift and Hobbes," 248-9.
117. Works, XI, 49-50.
118. As David Nokes points out: "nowhere is there a hint of faith, or a whisper of a hope of salvation" (A Hypocrite Reversed, 101).
119. Letter, 129.
120. Secularization of the European Mind, 23.
121. ibid., 23.
122. Letter, 43.
123. Works, IX, 261. Dr. Johnson puts forward the classic conservative point of view on this subject when he says: "People confound liberty of thinking with liberty of talking, nay, with liberty of preaching. Every man has a physical right to think as he pleases; for it cannot be discovered how he thinks ... But, sir, no member of a society has a right to teach any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true." (Boswell, Life of Johnson, 539).
124. Works, XI, 131.
125. Works, II, 11. See David P. French, "Swift and Hobbes," 249.
126. Letter, 150.
127. Works, II, 124.

128. Works, IX, 150.
129. Works, IX, 150-1.
130. Works, II, 67-8.
131. Letter, 143.
132. ibid., 155.
133. Works, IX, 263.
134. Works, IX, 144.
135. Works, II, 56-7.
136. Letter, 152.
137. ibid., 133.
138. Poems, 507.
139. Works, II, 2. As Angus Ross points out, such a declaration of moderation might be possible in England, but in Ireland it must involve support for the state Church and consequently support for the machinery which terrorised the Catholic majority who tried to pursue their religious beliefs. ('The Hibernian Patriot's Apprenticeship,' in The Art of Jonathan Swift, ed. Clive T. Probyn, 102).
140. See Reilly, Brave Desponder, 37-8.
141. Works, IX, 261.
142. Clive T. Probyn suggests that, as far as Swift's politics of religion is concerned, "the moral ruthlessness of it indicates a tyranny close to that of the Inquisition" (Jonathan Swift: A Critical Study, 92). David Nokes makes the same point in A Hypocrite Reversed, 195.
143. Kathleen Williams, Age of Compromise, 217-18.
144. David Nokes suggests that, for Swift, "God is a perennial tub, thrown out to divert restless leviathans that might otherwise disturb the ship of state." In Nokes's view, Swift's perception of Christianity "is [as] an invaluable social cement" (A Hypocrite Reversed, 99). See also John Traugott, 'The Yahoo in the Doll's House,' 135.
145. Works, X.
146. Letter, 158.

147. Secularization, 21. This assertion is not literally true as it stands. One can think of certain opinions and preferences which are not likely ever to jostle with others in such a free market - cannibalism and paedophilia are obvious examples - yet the theoretical basis for such inclusiveness is encapsulated in the original concession of freedom of opinion.
148. David Nokes calls this devotion "an axiom of faith that transcended belief in God Himself" (A Hypocrite Reversed, 227).

NOTES - CHAPTER 3

1. See pp 1 - 41 of the present study.
2. George Sherburn, 'Errors Concerning the Houyhnhnms,' MP, LVI, 1958, 92-7. See also Irvin Ehrenpreis, 'The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Voyage,' REL, 3, 1962, 18-38; M.M Kelsall, 'Iterum Houyhnhnm: Swift's Sextumvirate and the Horses,' EC, XIX, 1969, 35-45.
3. 'Politics versus Literature: An Examination of Gulliver's Travels,' CEJL, IV, 241-61. See also Kathleen Williams, Jonathan Swift and the Age of Compromise, 177-209; A.E. Dyson, 'Swift: The Metamorphosis of Irony,' in The Crazy Fabric, 1-13.
4. Patrick Reilly, Brave Desponder, 102.
5. Hugh Trevor-Roper, Renaissance Essays, Fontana edition, London, 1986, 48. Karl Popper also argues that Plato's politics were totalitarian (The Open Society and its Enemies: Vol 1: The Spell of Plato, 5th (revised) edition, London, 1966, 87; see also pp 86-119).
6. Elizabeth Rawson lists the Spartan features which have been drawn upon in Plato, More and other European writers in The Spartan Tradition in European Thought, Oxford, 1969, 171. The importance of Spartan society to Swift is explored at length in Ian Higgins's essay 'Swift and Sparta: The Nostalgia of Gulliver's Travels,' MLR, LXXVIII, 1983, 513-31. See also Chad Walsh, From Utopia to Nightmare, London, 1962, 37.
7. Trevor-Roper, Renaissance Essays, 48. My emphasis.
8. ibid., 49.
9. See references in note 13 below for the evidence. On the question of the desirability of halting the historical process and creating a static society, see Swift's tribute to Lycurgus, the Spartan law-giver, in the Contests and Dissensions (Works, I, 200).
10. Works, XI, 8.
11. John Traugott, 'A Voyage to Nowhere with Thomas More and Jonathan Swift: Utopia and the Voyage to the Houyhnhnms'; F.P. Lock, The Politics of 'Gulliver's Travels', Oxford, 1980, 19-22; Jenny Mezciems, 'Swift's Praise of Gulliver: Some Renaissance Background to the Travels,' in The Character of Swift's Satire: A Revised Focus, ed. Claude Rawson, Newark, N.J., 1983, 245-81.
12. It has, of course, been argued that it belongs to a dystopian tradition too, both because Swift deals with certain aspects of a nightmare world envisaged by others -

principally in Laputa - and because some readers have regarded Houyhnhnmland as a distinctly unpleasant proposition (one man's utopian meat being another man's dystopian poison - see Chad Walsh, From Utopia to Nightmare, London, 1962, 74). Both aspects are dealt with in the following pages.

13. Works, V, 247. See also Works, XII, 123,; Works, V, 84, 248.
14. Works, XI, 196. It is also, surely, significant that More is the only Christian to merit inclusion in this sextumvirate. Swift after all is writing after seventeen centuries of Christianity, yet More remains the only man worth admiring, in Swift's view, throughout this period.
15. Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, Utopian Thought in the Western World, Oxford, 1979, 1. Eugen Weber suggests that "the utopia is the characteristic manifestation of the Western cultural tradition" ("The Anti-Utopia of the Twentieth Century," in Utopia, ed. George Kateb, N.Y., 1971, 88).
16. Chad Walsh suggests that all subsequent utopias are virtual footnotes to the Republic, and says that "Plato is the benchmark from which all observations and commentaries must start and to which reference must constantly be made." (From Utopia to Nightmare, 40).
17. There are other classical sources for such thinking - Lucian's True History, for example - but Plato remains the most significant. "I believe that if we study More's thought in his early years, we must see that his mind was not merely dipped, it was steeped in Platonism: the Platonism of Pico; the Platonism of St Augustine, who had brought Neoplatonism into Christianity; the Platonism of Plato himself". (Trevor-Roper, Renaissance Essays, 32.)
18. Plato himself attempted something of the sort in the Timaeus.
19. Manuel, Utopian Thought, 121. See also Ernest Barker, Plato and his Predecessors, London, 1918, 385-8.
20. Brobdingnag is utopian in moral and political terms, but it is also a place of physical horror, so that what Swift gives with one hand is balanced by what he takes away with the other, since no human society can be presented as wholly ideal.
21. More, however, stops short of Plato's community of women, perhaps because as a Christian he could not bring himself to recommend such a non-Christian proposition.
22. There are, of course, slaves, though, and punishment of those who travel without internal passports. Compare this

to Swift's scheme for giving badges to Irish beggars (Works, XIII, 127-40), especially since Utopian slaves are also required to wear badges (Utopia, 167). See Barbara Goodwin, 'Economic and Social Innovation in Utopia,' in Utopias, ed. Peter Alexander and Roger Gill, London, 1984, 69-75.

23. Manuel, Utopian Thought, 129. Swift, of course, is no devotee of pleasure, irrespective of how one interprets Epicurean ideas.
24. More, Utopia, 167.
25. Utopia, 221. This is a statement more relevant to Milton than Swift, but my argument is not that More and Swift are identical thinkers. Louis Bredvold points out that Pyrrhonism argued that since truth was impossible to agree upon, men must accept authority, and this seems a more Swiftian attitude to the subject. (The Intellectual Milieu of John Dryden: Studies in Some Aspects of Seventeenth - Century Thought, Ann Arbor, Mn., 1934, 137.)
26. Utopia, 237. This in turn sounds more like the Locke of A Letter Concerning Toleration, but the same point applies. For that matter, its applicability to More himself is questionable, given his willingness to burn heretics. (See below, note 27.)
27. Utopia, 221. The public order argument is both an important link with Swift, and a possible defence of More in the disjunction between his burning of heretics as Chancellor, and the Utopian prayer, for More would argue that it was only contumelious heretics who were burned.
28. Utopia, 187. Swift would certainly endorse the idea that death is by no means undesirable in itself (see Works, IX, 263), but never even refers to a better future world.
29. See Manuel, Utopian Thought, 124.
30. ibid., 127.
31. ibid., 127.
32. In fact, Lilliput in its contemporary configuration is Europe.
33. Works, XI, 59. This ties in with Swift's A Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners (Works, II, 41-61), which I believe is in itself a utopian work, although of the realisable kind rather than the unrealisable.
34. Works, XI, 61.
35. Works, XI, 62.

36. Works, IX, 85-94; Works, XI, 269. See also Works, IV, 225-8.
37. Works, XI, 58.
38. The Giant King resembles the Platonic version of the Spartan King Lycurgus: the great law-giver who can halt history.
39. Works, XI, 132.
40. Works, XI, 135. His attitude is the exact opposite of that of the politicians found in Machiavelli's The Prince. This work, the bible of Realpolitik, stands in opposition to More's Utopia, and the two together - The Prince was published in 1513, Utopia in 1516 - provide a dichotomy of political writing which effectively divides virtually all approaches to the subject of government from their time to ours.
41. Works, XI, 136.
42. Utopia, 195.
43. This ties in exactly with the description of lawyers as expressed in the Fourth Voyage, where they are described as a closed society which " hath a peculiar Cant and Jargon of their own, that no other Mortal can understand, and wherein all their Laws are written, which they take special Care to multiply" (Works, XI, 250).
44. Works, XI, 135.
45. I do not mean that the horses are not a satire on us, for their values are those claimed by human beings. I simply mean that they are quite obviously - and deliberately - not human. The creatures who are like us - the Yahoos - provide the essential corrective to our pretensions.
46. Works, XI, 268. Even Socrates, however, had to debate with his opponents in order to enlighten them.
47. The practice of eugenics in utopias generally is discussed in John Maynard Smith, 'Eugenics and Utopia,' in Utopias and Utopian Thought, ed. Frank E. Manuel, London, 1973, 150-68.
48. Moreover, it undercuts the individualism detested by both.
49. See Anthony Stephens, 'The Sun State and its Shadow: On the Condition of Utopian Writing,' in Utopias, ed. Eugene Kamenka, Melbourne, 1987, 10-11.
50. Utopia, 239.
51. Works, XI, 294.

52. Utopia, 241.
53. Utopia, 243. Gulliver, of course, attacks all men, whereas Hythloday is more discriminating in his assault.
54. Manuel, Utopian Thought, 123.
55. ibid., 133.
56. Works, IV, 251.
57. John Traugott, 'A Voyage to Nowhere,' 162.
58. ibid., 162.
59. J.B. Bury, The Idea of Progress : An Enquiry into its Origin and Growth, London, 1920, 5. See also Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor, The Politics of Utopia : A Study in Theory and Practice, London, 1982, 15-17.
60. Frank E. Manuel provides a survey of responses of this type to Utopia. William Morris saw him as a prophet of socialism, Karl Kautsky of communism, and John Stuart Mill enlisted him as an advocate of an early form of utilitarianism. Rousseau, Owen, and Marx all quote Utopia as a literal suggestion of egalitarianism. As Manuel himself observes: "In the history of utopian thought the dramatic phrases that packed a punch, encapsulations of massive and amorphous protests, demands, hopes, were remembered by themselves and reiterated. More's demurrer - 'I cannot agree with all that he [i.e. Hythloday] said, - was forgotten". (Utopian Thought, 145-7.)
61. "Utopian construction may take the form either of a picture of an unrealisable ideal social order criticising an existing order... or, alternatively, of a blueprint intended to guide the actual reorganisation of a society." (Peter Alexander and Roger Gill, Introduction to Utopias, London, 1984, xi.) The mistake of such critics is to confuse the two and erroneously categorise Utopia as an example of the latter form rather than the former.
62. Traugott, 'Voyage to Nowhere,' 164-5.
63. ibid., 165.
64. J.B. Bury, The Idea of Progress, 7.
65. They are, of course, conformist and totalitarian, following the tradition of Plato, but, the authors would argue, for a very good reason: to escape the chaos of history. "Utopia is a dream of order, of quiet and calm. Its background is the nightmare of history". (George Kateb, Introduction to Utopia, N.Y., 1971, 8).

66. Traugott, 'Voyage to Nowhere,' 152. See also Ralf Dahrendorf, 'Out of Utopia: Toward a Reconciliation of Sociological Analysis,' in Utopia, ed. George Kateb, N.Y., 1971, 106; Ruth Levitas, 'Need, Nature, and Nowhere,' in Utopias, ed. Peter Alexander and Roger Gill, London, 1984. 27.
67. Works, XI, 131. See also p 76 of the present study.
68. More, as Chancellor, drew up the first social welfare programme, underlining his commitment to the maintenance of the social fabric.
69. Traugott, 'Voyage to Nowhere,' 156.
70. Indeed, the two are necessarily interdependent, since one's vision of history will dictate one's attitude to utopia.
71. Works, IX, 4, 7; Works, X, 128-32; Works, XII, 124, 135-6; Works, XIII, 81.
72. Utopia, 71; Works, 109-18.
73. John Traugott says in this context: "The moral superiority of the public good over personal and the mutual subjection of the members of the commonwealth, King, landlord, peasant, trader, priest, are almost the only principles of Swift's political philosophy." ('Voyage to Nowhere,' 158). Individualists of every sort are enemies of this philosophy, as the Tale makes plain when it proposes ironically a book entitled An Universal Rule of Reason, or Every Man his own Carver (Works, I, 80). Behind the joke lies a deadly serious abhorrence of the individualism he satirises.
74. Works, XIII, 121-6. On Swift's detestation of Henry VIII in relation to the origins of the contempt for the clergy, see Louis A. Landa, Swift and the Church of Ireland, Oxford, 1965, 163-5.
75. Compare this to More's History of Richard III, where the arguments about the tyranny of Richard and the justification for his overthrow - the ostensible reason for the history being a postfacto justification of the Tudor succession - could easily be interpreted as an ironic condemnation of Henry VIII, since the argument about the cycle of tyranny - tyrannicides become tyrants in their turn - might just as well apply to him as to Richard. (See above p. 88).
76. Works, V, 248.
77. Thomas Cromwell, More's great enemy, and architect of this social disaster, easily gains entry to this vicious circle. In the context of the dichotomy between Utopia

and The Prince (see note 40 above) he was an open admirer of Machiavelli, and stands alongside Henry VIII as an agent of destruction.

78. F.P. Lock argues that More's place in the sextumvirate is due in part to another aspect of Swift's mentality: admiration for the beautiful losers of this world. "These men are all examples of the same syndrome; all men whose victory was won through nominal defeat. An important element in Swift's pessimism was his belief that integrity was almost sure to end in defeat". (The Politics of Gulliver's Travels, 15).
79. Works, XI, 179-80.
80. Works, XI, 175.
81. Works, XI, 176.
82. Works, XI, 177.
83. "All processes going on in utopian societies follow recurrent patterns and occur within, and as part of, the design of the whole. Not only do they not upset the status quo: they affirm and sustain it, and it is in order to do so that most utopians allow them to happen at all". (Ralf Dahrendorf, 'Out of Utopia,' 106).
84. Works, XI, 177-8.
85. Utopia, 107.
86. In fact his intelligence simply makes Gulliver a greater potential danger. He is obliged to leave Houyhnhnmland because of a fear that he might use his "Rudiments of Reason" in conjunction with his natural Yahoo depravity to lead an attack on the Houyhnhnm's cattle. (Works, XI, 279).
87. "Houyhnhnmland is an image of Utopia created by a man too tough-minded to believe that Utopia is feasible" (Patrick Reilly, Brave Desponder, 113).
88. Particularly where Swift is concerned, since he invariably prefers the ad hominem approach when dealing with opponents.
89. Works, II, 174-7; Works, IV, 94; Works, XII, 53; Works, XI, 137-8, 201-2, 210; Works, II, 57, 265.
90. Works, XI, 60. See Brian Tippett, Gulliver's Travels, London, 1989, 73-8.
91. Works, XI, 201.

92. Works, XI, 137. There is, of course, a joke here too. One only has to imagine what Brobdingnagians were like before they `degenerated` in order to appreciate the humour.
93. Works, IX, 264.
94. William Godwin, Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness. See also James Preu, `Swift's Influence on Godwin's Doctrine of Anarchism`.
95. Works, II, 26-39; Works, I, 191-236.
96. This is most forcefully argued in F.R. Leavis, `The Irony of Swift,` in The Common Pursuit, London, 1972, 73-87.
97. The attack on scientific virtuosi and that on the Puritans serve a common purpose, undercutting the credibility of the individualism of their respective creeds by means of an attack on the credibility and the sanity of those who uphold them. A further link can be found in the fact that many of these scientists were themselves Puritans, thereby establishing a connection between two different kinds of searchers whom Swift can choose to attack separately or collectively, since they all belong in the same madhouse as far as he is concerned. See Jenny Mezcims, `Swift's Praise of Gulliver,` 270-1, where the dual attack on religion and science is traced to Renaissance authors.
98. "The utopian has often been disregarded as a fool, or feared as a dangerous madman, the contagion of whose fancies could lead his followers to destruction, particularly if the fantast proceeded to act out his vision." (Frank E. Manuel, Introduction to Utopias and Utopian Thought, London, 1973, xiii). In the case of Swift on the Moderns, it is clearly the second option which applies.
99. Works, I, 1.
100. Quintana, Swift: An Introduction, 61.
101. Williams, Age of Compromise, 121.
102. John R. Clark, Form and Frenzy in Swift's 'Tale of a Tub', Ithaca, N.Y., 1969, 114.
103. The best discussion of the specifically literary satire in the Tale is to be found in Miriam Kosh Starkman's book, Swift's Satire on Learning in 'A Tale of a Tub', Princeton, N.J., 1950.
104. Edward Rosenheim, Jr., Swift and the Satirist's Art, Chicago, Ill., 1963, 89. Pat Rogers argues that it is not formlessness that Swift is presenting in the Tale, but

"excess of form," and so "the trouble with the narrator is not that he hasn't heard of system ... he has heard far too much" ("Form in A Tale of A Tub," EC, 22, 1972, 142; see also 154, 157).

105. Works, I, 18.
106. Works, I, 132.
107. Works, I, 22; see Clark, Form and Frenzy, 115-40.
108. Works, I, 19.
109. It is always impossible to win with Swift, for he will change his ground as required to achieve the desired entrapment of his victim. The Lilliputians are contemptible because they are tiny, whilst the Brobdingnagians are hideous because they are huge. His work is a minefield which not only has no map to facilitate a safe exit, but which also leaves no spaces between the mines, so that every footstep results in a satiric explosion for the reader.
110. John M. Bullitt, Jonathan Swift and the Anatomy of Satire: A Study of Satiric Technique, Cambridge, Ms., 1953, 176.
111. Works, I, 67.
112. Works, I, 68-9.
113. Bullitt, Anatomy of Satire, 141. See Chapter Four of the present study, note 81, where Swift's view of words and meaning is compared with Orwell's in Nineteen Eighty-Four, and where the point is expanded upon.
114. Works, I, 73.
115. Works, I, 151.
116. Clark, Form and Frenzy, 113.
117. Works, I, 59.
118. Works, I, 81.
119. Rosenheim, Satirist's Art, 135. See also Robert Martin Adams, "Swift and Kafka," in Strains of Discord: Studies in Literary Openness, Ithaca, N.Y., 1958, 147.
120. ibid., 188.
121. Works, I, 174.
122. See Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution, London, 1972, 252-8, 273-6; A.L. Morton, The World of the Ranters,

London, 1970, 70-114.

123. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 65.
124. For the background to this kind of attack on the Puritans' sincerity and lack of hypocrisy in their advocacy of 'dangerous' doctrines, and the Anglican attitudes towards such enthusiasm, see Phillip Harth, Swift and Anglican Rationalism: The Religious Background of 'A Tale of a Tub', Chicago, Ill., 1961, 71-100.
125. Works, I, 108.
126. Works, I, 126.
127. See Michael V. DePorte, Nightmares and Hobbyhorses: Swift, Sterne and the Augustan Idea of Madness, San Marino, Ca., 1974, 55-105, where the theme of madness, and Swift's fascination with it, are explored in considerable depth.
128. See Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, 277-86, for some examples of the attitudes Swift abhorred and feared.
129. Works, I, 111.
130. Rosenheim, Satirist's Art, 220. See also Robert Martin Adams, 'Swift and Kafka,' 152-5.
131. See Robert Martin Adams, 'Swift and Kafka,' 147. See also Phillip Harth, Swift and Anglican Rationalism, 153.
132. Traugott, 'A Tale of a Tub,' 83.
133. ibid., 86.
134. Works, I, 108.
135. Rosenheim, Satirist's Art, 198.
136. "The 'Digression' is a textual vortex in which a lunatic modern utters hard truths, and Swift saps common-sense certainties through a maddeningly plausible logic that suppresses all mediation" (Frank A. Palmieri, "'To Write Upon Nothing': Narrative Satire and Swift's A Tale of a Tub," Genre, XVIII, 1985, 163).
137. See, e.g., Robert C. Elliott, 'Swift's Tale of a Tub: An Essay in Problems of Structure,' PMLA, LXVI, 1951, 452.
138. Rosenheim, Satirist's Art, 199.
139. See Elliott, 'Swift's Tale of a Tub,' 442.
140. Works, I, 109.

141. Works, I, 109.
142. Claude Rawson argues that those who see the "flay'd woman" passage as a protest against the treatment of whores misunderstand the animus of the passage ("Order and Cruelty: A Reading of Swift (with some Comments on Pope and Johnson)," EC, XX, 1970, 26-7).
143. Works, I, 77.
144. Works, I, 110.
145. Rosenheim, Satirist's Art, 203.
146. See Nigel Wood's suggestion that such passages represent "Swift's exploration of tensions otherwise inexpressible by the Anglican clergyman" (Swift, 42).
147. Bertrand Bronson asks the pertinent question: "How much confidence does [Swift] inspire in us that we have read him as he meant?" ("The Writer," in Man versus Society in Eighteenth Century Britain, ed. J.L. Clifford, Cambridge, 1968, 17-18). Clive T. Probyn expands upon the point in the Preface to The Art of Jonathan Swift, 9.
148. Traugott, "A Tale of a Tub", 76.
149. Herbert Davis observes that Swift "did not always realize perhaps the power and the effect of the weapons he was using" ("Literary Satire," 122).
150. Works, I, 109-10.
151. Rawson, "Order and Cruelty," 34. There is also the possibility that the reader is first trapped, and more thoroughly, because he (or, for that matter, Swift) might enjoy seeing the woman and beau punished.
152. A.E. Dyson asserts that "the irony intended to 'wonderfully mend the world' transmutes itself into a savage exploration of the world's essential unmendability" ("Swift: The Metamorphosis of Irony," in The Crazy Fabric: Essays on Irony, London, 1965, 5. See also Clive T. Probyn, who refers to the "visceral specificity" which goes beyond the satiric purpose both in the satires and the "scatological" poems (Jonathan Swift: A Critical Study, 86).
153. John Traugott makes this point about Swift's irony refusing to offer a moral, suggesting that it is the reader who must fill the void, and he warns us: "every reader to his own outcome, but whichever way he turns the bind tightens" ("The Yahoo in the Doll's House", 147). See also Nigel Wood, Swift, 119; Clive T. Probyn, Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study, 78.

154. Rawson, 'Order and Cruelty,' 34.
155. Works, I, 151.
156. Robert C. Elliott says that "when Swift fantasizes himself into the skin of one he hates, extraordinary energies are liberated" ('Swift's "I",' Yale Review, LXII, No. 3, Spring 1973, 383). See also Ricardo Quintana, Two Augustans, 114-5.
157. Traugott, 'A Tale of a Tub,' 93.
158. Works, I, 104.
159. Works, I, 103.
160. Works, I, 105.
161. Rosenheim, Satirist's Art, 199.
162. C.M. Webster has explored, in considerable detail, the background to literary assaults on the Puritans, pointing out that Swift's attacks were nothing new and that, in the ferocity of their language, some even exceeded Swift. But, as I argue in the following pages, Swift seems to go further in the religious assault, and exposes all spiritual experience to the same harsh satiric light, whether intentionally or not. (See C.M. Webster, 'The Satiric Background of the Attack on the Puritans in Swift's Tale of a Tub,' PMLA, L, 1935, 210-23; 'Swift and Some Earlier Satirists of Puritan Enthusiasm,' PMLA, XLVIII, 1933, 1141-53; 'Swift's Tale of a Tub Compared with Earlier Satires of the Puritans,' PMLA, XLVII, 1932, 171-8. For a more general survey of enthusiasm in religious history, see Ronald Knox, Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion, Oxford, 1950.)
163. Works, I, 96.
164. Works, I, 98.
165. Works, I, 99.
166. See Robert Martin Adams, 'Swift and Kafka,' 153, 155.
167. Works, I, 188.
168. Works, I, 128.
169. Works, I, 189.
170. The most famous, and still the best, treatment of the sublimation theme in Swift is Norman O. Brown's 'The Excremental Vision.'
171. Poems, 466.

172. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 78.
173. Traugott, 'A Tale of a Tub,' 108. See also Claude Rawson, Gulliver and the Gentle Reader, 125.
174. Robert H. Hopkins sees this spirit/wind association as a parody of Hobbesian materialism, but I do not think that his argument deals with the more disturbing aspects of Swift's religious satire, especially the rigorous way he forces the reductive points to their conclusions ('The Personation of Hobbism in Swift's Tale,' 372-8, esp. 376).
175. See Gardner D. Stout, Jr., 'Satire and Self-Expression in Swift's Tale of a Tub,' in Studies in the Eighteenth Century, II, Papers Presented at the Second David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar, Canberra, 1970, ed. R.F. Brissenden, Canberra, 1973, 329-30. See also Frank A. Palmieri, '"To Write Upon Nothing"', 167.
176. Williams, Age of Compromise, 136.
177. Clark, Form and Frenzy, 35.
178. Works, I, 181.
179. Herbert Davis makes the point that the words Swift uses to mock the hollowness of modern religious charlatans "had nevertheless also been upon the lips of saints and prophets and remained for the devout Christian sacred symbols of his faith" ('Literary Satire: The Author of A Tale of a Tub, in Jonathan Swift: Essays on His Satire and Other Studies, 123). See also Clive T. Probyn, Jonathan Swift: A Critical Study, 80, 98, 99.
180. The extent to which Swift really decries "common forms" is debatable. It is an example of his ambivalent attitude towards established order and subversion. At times he is a spokesman for the common forms the narrator of the Tale here despises, at other times a radical subversive, just as he upholds majorities when they represent his view, and pours scorn on the vox populi when they don't. He is, though, hardly the first or the last Irishman to treat majorities and established orders in this fashion.
181. See Nigel Wood, Swift, 53.
182. Traugott, 'A Tale of a Tub,' 114.
183. Robert Martin Adams says: "if there are positive teachings lurking in the book, one is hard put to know what they are" ('Swift and Kafka,' 157.)
184. Reilly, Brave Desponder, 9.

NOTES - CHAPTER 4

1. 'The Brainwashing of Gulliver,' The Listener, 96, Nov. 1976, 578-9.
2. Swift himself declares elsewhere that "The Mind of Man is ... like a Tabula rasa" (Works, I, 250).
3. See Chapter One of this present study.
4. Works, XI, 56.
5. Works, XI, 43.
6. Works, XI, 102.
7. Pat Rogers makes the point that for all his travels and his painstaking observation, Gulliver himself "has very little moral identity" ('Gulliver's Glasses,' in The Art of Jonathan Swift, ed. Clive T. Probyn, 183-4).
8. Works, XI, 149. His exasperation with his rescuers is a perfect example of this problem of readjustment. He cannot understand why one of the crew members doesn't simply hook his finger into the ring on his box and lift him straight on to the ship (Works, XI, 143).
9. Works, XI, 295.
10. See especially Chapter One, 48-51, for the present author's position on the Fourth Voyage.
11. Jeffrey Meyers asserts that "[Orwell] is more widely read than perhaps any other serious writer of the twentieth century" (A Reader's Guide to George Orwell, London, 1975, 159).
12. 'The Gloom of the Tory Satirists,' in Eighteenth Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. James L. Clifford, N.Y., 1959, 18.
13. See Jeffrey Meyers, A Reader's Guide to George Orwell, 17, 132. See also Bernard Crick, George Orwell: A Life, London, 1980, 65, 459; Jenny Mezcims, 'Swift and Orwell,' 189-210.
14. CEJL, IV, 257. Crick also describes Nineteen Eighty-Four as "specifically 'Swiftian satire'," a phrase he lifts from Czeslaw Milosz's book, The Captive Mind (Nineteen Eighty-Four), ed. Peter Davison, with a Critical Commentary and Annotations by Bernard Crick, Oxford, 1984, 7).
15. Martin Price says that "it is difficult to read the last books of George Orwell ... without being frequently reminded of Swift" (Swift's Rhetorical Art, 77).

16. "For both, the creation of a utopia or dystopia was a climactic achievement in a lifetime of political writing, and the form chosen may be seen as one way of putting into literary perspective the urgent concerns of each with the conditions of his own time." (Jenny Mezcicms, 'Swift and Orwell,' 190.)
17. For a discussion of language in Swift and Orwell, see Charles Scruggs, 'George Orwell and Jonathan Swift: A Literary Relationship,' South Atlantic Quarterly, 76, 1977, 177-89.
18. Works, IV, 97-201.
19. 'Politics and the English Language,' CEJL, IV, 156-70. The political, as well as literary, aspects of language dealt with by Orwell in this essay resemble quite closely the arguments about barbarism exposed in Swift's Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue (Works, IV, 5-21). Both seek to establish some control over the abuse of English, and set out programmes for preventing its 'decay'.
20. CEJL, IV, 509-10. Orwell actually suggests that Existentialism may be all right, although Sartre is a windbag (see following note): the implication, however, is clear enough.
21. CEJL, IV, 507.
22. CEJL, II, 299.
23. Works, XII, 109-18.
24. The interpretations of A Modest Proposal are far from uniform, but more recent - and in the view of the present writer more accurate - exegeses suggest that the anger and scorn apparent in the work are by no means predominantly at the expense of the English. Claude Rawson exposes and explores the multiple ambiguities in Swift's attitude and language in the Proposal, and points out that the irony is often more than double-edged and that Swift's attitude to beggars and the Irish poor in his 'straight' tracts is often very close to the Proposer's attitude, so that the relationship between Swift and the ironic voice is disturbingly unclear. Oliver Ferguson argues that Swift blamed the Irish for their own misery. See Rawson, 'A Reading of A Modest Proposal,' in Order From Confusion Sprung, 121-44, esp. 121, 128; Ferguson, Jonathan Swift and Ireland, 167-76. See also David Nokes, A Hypocrite Reversed, 347; Nigel Wood, Swift, 98, 133; Clive T. Probyn, Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study, 12, 18, 21.
25. See John Traugott, 'The Yahoo in the Doll's House,' 147: "rage is the other face of idealism." See also Oliver W. Ferguson, Swift and Ireland, 175.

26. Works, XI, 5-8.
27. The argument over the link between the Irish poor and the Yahoos is still very much alive, but Donald T. Torchiana persuasively argues that the link is a strong one, using Swift's remarks in his tracts and pamphlets on Ireland to back up his thesis, as well as reports of travellers in Ireland during the same period. The language used to describe the Irish, and that used to describe the Yahoos, is almost identical, and the same tone of disgust underlies the descriptions. See Torchiana, 'Jonathan Swift, the Irish, and the Yahoos: The Case Reconsidered,' PQ, LXIV, 1975, 196-212, esp. 201, 208; C.H. Firth, 'The Political Significance of Gulliver's Travels,' 249; Claude Rawson, 'A Reading of A Modest Proposal,' 131-8; Oliver Ferguson, Jonathan Swift and Ireland, 173-6. For different views on the Proposal and the Yahoos, see George Wittkowsky, 'Swift's Modest Proposal: The Biography of an Early Georgian Pamphlet,' JHI, IV, 1943, 75-104; Ann Cline Kelly, 'Swift's Explorations of Slavery in Houyhnhnmland and Ireland,' PMLA, XCI, 1976, 846-55.
28. See Homage to Catalonia; also 'Looking Back on the Spanish Civil War,' CEJL, II, 286-306. Orwell, of course, had later evidence than Spain for such fears about the future of man, both in the rise of Nazi Germany and in the uncovering of the true nature of Stalin's Soviet Union, but these were, it seems to me, confirmations of what Orwell first learned in Barcelona, albeit on a much more terrible scale.
29. CEJL, IV, 241-61.
30. Works, XI, 196.
31. CEJL, IV, 259.
32. CEJL, IV, 246.
33. CEJL, IV, 249-51.
34. CEJL, IV, 248.
35. Orwell's use of the word "pagan" in this context is a criticism of Swift in two ways. Swift is condemned for being reactionary in his politics, always looking back; he is also accused of being a religious charlatan, or perhaps a closet atheist, for Orwell says that Swift did not appear to have any serious religious beliefs at all (CEJL, IV, 249).
36. CEJL, IV, 256.
37. CEJL, IV, 255.
38. CEJL, IV, 261.

39. See Jeffrey Meyers, Reader's Guide to Orwell, 131.
40. Reilly, George Orwell: The Age's Adversary, London, 1985, 243-4.
41. See Stephen J. Greenblatt, 'Orwell as Satirist,' in George Orwell: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Raymond Williams, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974, 107.
42. Animal Farm, 29.
43. Works, XI, 179, 182.
44. John Traugott suggests that Lilliput is the world of childhood games, whereas Brobdingnag is the world of childhood fears: "the stuff of nightmare is the main imagery of this voyage" ('The Yahoo in the Doll's House,' 129-33).
45. Works, XI, 90-110. See Traugott, 'The Yahoo in the Doll's House,' 134.
46. CEJL, I, 301.
47. Homage to Catalonia, 246-7.
48. Animal Farm, 114.
49. ibid., 120.
50. Recent essays and comments by intellectuals of the Left have tended to adopt, on more-or-less a priori grounds, the view that Orwell was a "traitor," that he hid a reactionary nature behind a mask of socialism, and that Nineteen Eighty-Four is, without a shadow of a doubt, the vital evidence upon which such condemnation of the man now rests. Denial of Orwell's credibility as a socialist is thus deemed necessary in order to preserve the (supposed) validity of the "New-Left" version of Socialism. See the criticism of Orwell from the Left, e.g., A.L. Morton, The English Utopia, 274; and, more recently, the "New-Left" anthology, Orwell: Views from the Left, ed. Christopher Norris, London, 1984. See also Raymond Williams's interviews in Politics and Letters: Interviews with New Left Review, London, 1979, 384-92.
51. CEJL, IV, 256.
52. Animal Farm, 38-9.
53. ibid., 111.
54. Although Dickens was a compassionate and passionate reformer, his novels often tend to fudge the issue when it comes to the vital questions. What needs to be done is not often in debate, and is usually the central subject of

the novel, but precisely how it is to be done is almost always unclear. There is a tendency in Dickens - the presentation of the unions in Hard Times springs to mind - to refuse to bestow power on the good or goodness on the powerful, which is, when taken all the way down the line, even more pessimistic than many modern novels, which at least allow a little leeway when it comes to the "how", or, which is the same thing really, the "who."

55. See Greenblatt, 'Orwell as Satirist,' 111. This compares with Gulliver in Lilliput, where the innocence and benevolence of the hero prevent him from destroying the midget city and its inhabitants. Just as Boxer never considers using his redoubtable strength to kick the dogs to death, so Gulliver, despite the fact that the knowledge of what he could do if he wished - "I had Reason to believe I might be a Match for the greatest Armies they could bring against me" (Works, XI, 22) - strikes him early in the Voyage, never seriously considers using his power, even when threatened by the Lilliputians.
56. Reilly, The Age's Adversary, 241-2.
57. CEJL, II, 295-7.
58. CEJL, I, 373-5; II, 57-8, 129, 143.
59. CEJL, III, 457-8, 370; IV, 49. See also Bernard Crick, Introduction to The Lion and The Unicorn, Harmondsworth, 1982, 24.
60. Reilly, The Age's Adversary, 267. Of course it is impossible - and undesirable - to keep the biography and the works entirely separate. Every critic of Orwell and Swift will employ biographical material to some extent in dealing with their works. But this does not justify in any way the use of the life as a mould into which the often uncomfortable substance of the works must at all costs be made to fit.
61. See, e.g., Isaac Deutscher, '1984 - The Mysticism of Cruelty,' in George Orwell: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Raymond Williams, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974, 120. See also Orwell: Views from the Left, ed. Christopher Norris.
62. Reilly, The Age's Adversary, 268.
63. George Woodcock, 'Prose Like a Window-Pane,' in George Orwell: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Raymond Williams, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974, 170.
64. Patrick Reilly suggests that Nineteen Eighty-Four stands in relation to the twentieth century as Leviathan did to the seventeenth, a bugaboo and a scandal that cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged (The Age's Adversary, ix).

65. See, on this question of 'betrayal', the Deutscher essay 'Mysticism of Cruelty'; also A.L. Morton, The English Utopia, 274-5. For a rebuttal of such concepts of betrayal, see Jenny Mezciems, 'Swift and Orwell,' 195.
66. CEJL, IV, 259.
67. See New-Left Review compilation of essays, Orwell: Views from the Left, ed. Christopher Norris.
68. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 92.
69. The "Letter to Sympson" and that to Arbuthnot on his purpose in writing the Travels (Corr., III, 87) indicate that Swift probably did have a reforming zeal of some kind behind the book. The precise degree of this zeal is, of course, debatable, but it remains a fundamental premise of the present argument that the authorial purpose behind the Travels was, beneath the surface fun and frolics, essentially serious. As far as Gulliver's remark is concerned, it can easily be argued that the abandonment of the visionary scheme - indeed, the scheme itself - is Gulliver's, not Swift's. But it was Swift himself who said that he was no longer willing to prescribe "a dose to the dead" (Corr., III, 382), which clearly implies that he once was willing. Defeatism and the futility of words are major themes in Swift, but there are occasional glimpses of a frustration which belies such defeatism.
70. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 98.
71. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 173.
72. ibid., 136.
73. ibid., 10-11.
74. Works, XI, 247.
75. CEJL, IV, 257; II, 39.
76. Claude Rawson compares these two passages on warfare, and suggests that "the effect [of the passage in Gulliver] is instructively different from that of a scene in Nineteen Eighty-Four which seems to make some of the same points, and which (like other things in that novel) may have been distantly modelled on Swift." Winston is "conditioned" by the world of Oceania, just as Gulliver is by eighteenth-century England. The greater realism of Orwell's book is the chief difference, and the reason why Gulliver can be funny where Winston cannot: we cannot stand apart from the narrator, nor "the rest of humanity described ... and there can be no question of laughing anything off." (Gulliver and the Gentle Reader, 15-16.) I would only argue here that the passage - and much else in the book - is more directly modelled on Swift than

Rawson's "distantly" suggests.

77. Peter Gay, The Party of Humanity: Essays on the Enlightenment, N.Y., 1964.
78. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 140.
79. For Winston and Julia to carry out such acts would be like Boxer kicking his oppressors to pieces. Boxer's goodness stems, in large part, from his unwillingness to do this; Winston's (and Julia's) lack of goodness must therefore stem from his willingness to commit atrocities. Perhaps one could go further and say that their willingness to act in this way betrays not so much their own lack of goodness, but rather the insubstantiality of goodness itself, an even more depressing revelation.
80. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 144.
81. ibid., 204.
82. ibid., 204. This is an interest shared by both Orwell and Swift. Although their solutions to the problem differ, they address the same issue. Swift says in Book Three of the Travels that things remain the same, whatever words may be used to describe them, comically underlining the point by showing first a language of nouns, and then a 'language' entirely devoid of words, whereby conversations consist in carrying large sacks of things about, which are produced in turn as a form of communication (Works, XI, 185-6). In the Argument Against Abolishing Christianity we find the same point made more explicitly: "Will any Man say, that if the Words Whoring, Drinking, Cheating, Lying, Stealing, were, by Act of Parliament, ejected out of the English Tongue and Dictionaries; we should all awake next Morning chaste and temperate, honest and just, and Lovers of Truth?" (Works, II, 32). The same would clearly hold true of the reverse qualities, so that Socrates and Sir Thomas More would still remain good men, whatever words might be used to describe them.

Orwell, on the contrary, fears that the destruction of words may inevitably lead to the dissolution of the things themselves, particularly where interpretation is required. For instance, without the word 'freedom', how long can freedom itself continue; will reduction of English to Newspeak achieve this end? Swift suggests, in a passage about lawyers in the Fourth Voyage, that they "have wholly confounded the very essence of Truth and Falshood, of Right and Wrong" (Works, XI, 250), but, although there is apparent agreement with Orwell here, the satiric thrust of the passage suggests otherwise. There is no evidence, here or elsewhere, that Swift thought that human qualities or vices could be altered by twisting the language used to denote them. Orwell says, or at least predicts, that this may well be the case. Even in

disagreeing with Swift here, Orwell betrays a shared concern, one which is, plausibly, derived from a reading of Swift's work. David Nokes points out, in connection with this debate, that the Houyhnhnms have no words for vices, and do not have the vices either. He asks: "But which came first? In the beginning, was there a word or a thing?" (A Hypocrite Reversed, 99.) For a brief discussion of the issues raised in this argument, see George Steiner, "Has Truth a Future?" The Listener, 12 Jan. 1978, 42-6.

83. CEJL, III, 110.
84. ibid., 110. See also "The Prevention of Literature," CEJL, IV, 181-95.
85. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 68.
86. ibid., 212-13.
87. What, one wonders, would Winston give for Gulliver's magician, especially since the closest he comes to obtaining the truth about the past is the conversation with the old prole in the pub? Gulliver gleans a rich harvest from his encounters with the past, whereas Winston suffers the infuriating, and defeating, encounter with a mind not even remotely in possession of its experience, and which can only provide him with useless, fragmented images from a past which neither the old man nor, consequently, Winston can reconstruct in any meaningful or helpful way. (Nineteen Eighty-Four, 72-7; Works, XI, 193-202).
88. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 211-12.
89. ibid., 215.
90. ibid., 216.
91. ibid., 216. This takes us back to Denis Donoghue's point that Swift is saying that there is no human nature, that the "x" factor which we like to think makes us unique as a species is a comfortable, and comforting, myth ("The Brainwashing of Gulliver," 579).
92. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 217. It has been suggested, and Winston himself originally entertains the idea, that the proles are a potential force for the overthrow of the Party, so that the spirit of man could be argued to be embodied in them as much as - if not more than - in Winston. This reading would alleviate the gloom of Winston's eventual defeat, and leave intact the seed of a possible future insurrection. But Winston is on his own in Oceania precisely because the proles are not a force to be reckoned with. Indeed, for all their numerical superiority - they represent 85 percent of the population

after all - they are not a force at all. They share certain animal instincts with Swift's Yahoos, and Winston refers to them in animalistic terms which strengthen the connection - they hear a rocket when Winston does not, but he trusts their instincts and thus preserves his life - but display neither a desire for a rebellion nor the remotest capability of carrying one through. Winston constantly avers that any hope in Oceania must be centred on the proles, but the book provides not one tiny shred of evidence that any such hope will ever prove to be more than blind faith. In theory - if only because of their number - they remain a potential source of insurrection. In practice they are so ground down and lacking in any spark of the rebelliousness which could ignite a revolution that they exist in the book as a symbol at best of nostalgic hope, at worst of despair. The Party ignores the proles because they are not a threat, and Winston's experience among them merely confirms, in a way that deeply depresses and frustrates him, the wisdom of their indifference. In a society where every minute threat is ruthlessly hunted down and destroyed, the condemnation of the proles as utterly insignificant is astonishing. Yet within the book the Party is proved right. What need is there to defend the state against people whose only interest lies in fighting over saucepans and futile - worse still, imaginary - lotteries? There is no rebellion without consciousness and no consciousness without rebellion. In Oceania the wish will never become father to the fact. The reader who believes that the proles could ever oust Big Brother will scour the pages of the book in vain for even the tiniest iota of concrete proof to support such a conviction. (See Patrick Reilly, 'Nineteen Eighty-Four': Past, Present, and Future, forthcoming, 89-97).

93. *ibid.*, 217.
94. *ibid.*, 219.
95. *ibid.*, 226.
96. Orwell himself was aware of this, and, in a letter to Julian Symons, says: "I didn't know another way of getting somewhere near the effect I wanted" (CEJL, IV, 565). See also Jenni Calder, 'Orwell's Post-War Prophecy,' in George Orwell: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Raymond Williams, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974, 150. Jenny Meziems suggests that the rat is a deliberate choice and one that provides an important link with Swift: "the creature of the sewer that, with Swiftian recognition of heights meeting depths, Orwell chose as the ultimate weapon of the Party's political science, when words had failed to persuade and convert" ('Swift and Orwell,' 194).
97. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 230.

98. Jenni Calder, 'Orwell's Post-War Prophecy,' 149.
99. Nineteen Eighty-Four, 233. My emphasis.
100. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 19.
101. ibid., 29-30. This compares with Winston Smith's experience. His mistake over O'Brien and over the representatives of the moral debate about Oceania (and man) in which he is involved is O'Brien's chief corrective lesson in the Ministry of Love. The importance of the blunder in each case is that a major correction in the perception of Winston and Gulliver becomes the prelude to an even more awesome discovery about themselves.
102. Works, XI, 223-4.
103. Works, XI, 225.
104. Works, XI, 268.
105. Works, XI, 269.
106. Works, XI, 276-7. See Herbert Davis, Introduction to Jonathan Swift: Essays on His Satire, 19-20.
107. Works, XI, 279.
108. Works, XI, 279.
109. Works, XI, 238.
110. Works, XI, 264.
111. Works, XI, 266.
112. Works, XI, 267.
113. Works, XI, 267.
114. See Clive T. Probyn, Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study, 57; Patrick Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 52-3.
115. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 39.
116. John B. Moore suggests that the reader is quite clearly intended to identify with Gulliver's tragic dilemma at the close of the Travels, and says that our reaction should be as follows: "Experiences that transform the good Gulliver into a misanthropist would more surely transform us others should we pass through them." ('The Role of Gulliver,' MP, XXV, 1928, 475; see also 480). See also Clive T. Probyn, Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study, 54.
117. Works, XI, 278.

118. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 41.
119. Works, XI, 266-7.
120. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 42.
121. As T.S. Eliot expresses it at the end of Four Quartets:
 "We shall not cease from exploration
 And the end of all our exploring
 Will be to arrive where we started
 And know the place for the first time."
 (Collected Poems, 1909-1962, London, 1963, 222).
122. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 110.
123. See Nigel Wood, Swift, 82-3.
124. Jenny Mezciems, 'Swift and Orwell,' 197.
125. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 97-8.
126. T.S. Eliot, 'Gerontion,' in Collected Poems, 1909-1962, London, 1963, 40.
127. Both Swift and Orwell have been regarded as traitors to their own parties, but, as Jenny Mezciems points out, this is often due to the restrictive nature of the political labels themselves ('Swift and Orwell,' 195).
128. 'Mysticism of Cruelty,' 127.
129. ibid., 128.
130. ibid., 131.
131. ibid., 132.
132. Greenblatt, 'Orwell as Satirist,' 112.
133. ibid., 132.
134. Calder, 'Orwell's Post-War Prophecy,' 143.
135. ibid., 152.
136. George Orwell: A Life, 570-1.
137. ibid., 569.
138. CEJL, IV, 564.
139. ibid., 564.
140. Crick, George Orwell: A Life, 552.

141. Reilly, Literature of Guilt, 99. See also E.M. Forster's remark that "there is not a monster in that hateful apocalypse which does not exist in embryo today" (Two Cheers for Democracy, Harmondsworth, 1976, 75).
142. Frederic Warburg, quoted in Crick, George Orwell: A Life, 566.
143. See Raymond Williams, Orwell, 2nd edn., London, 1984, 95-126, for an example of this kind of argument.
144. In the tradition which Swift follows utopia is static and perhaps totalitarian so that this would neither be a surprise nor a shock to him, merely an acceptable price to pay for escape from the mess of history. But the socialists follow the other utopian tradition, which believes in the potential improvement of life, so that such utopists would undoubtedly be shocked to discover that the end of all their dreaming had become a nightmare. On this issue see Ignazio Silone's article, 'Re-thinking Progress' (Encounter, XXX, 1968, 3-12), where he argues that socialism has inherently totalitarian features.
145. CEJL, II, 33, 304; III, 123, 126, 127, 281. The problem of facing up to the 'death' of God and its consequences is a persistent theme in Orwell's writing. His interpretation of Marx's 'opium of the people' passage (II, 33) is highly illuminating in this respect.
146. It may even be that the most important thing here is that, given the perversity of man, the term itself is tragic or, which is worse, simply another self-deception.
147. Existentialism and Humanism, London, 1948, 26.
148. ibid., 30.
149. ibid., 32-3.
150. ibid., 39.
151. 1985, London, 1978, 89.
152. Existentialism and Humanism, 127.
153. ibid., 128. Sartre rejects absolute values and absolute religion, but suggests that the values themselves can be re-established by man; man should, however, know that they are his, and not God's, values. This means that only the absolute nature of the values is removed: the values remain intact. It is not - in Sartre's view, at any rate - a pessimistic suggestion at all. His words may seem pessimistic, but his intention is optimistic. However, his optimism about man need not be shared by his readers, so that his argument that man makes (and is) his own

future is only optimistic if you believe in man in that sense to begin with. Orwell makes a similar point: "The real problem of our time is to restore the sense of absolute right and wrong when the belief that it used to rest on - that is, the belief in personal immortality - has been destroyed" (CEJL, III, 123).

154. In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Re-definition of Culture, London, 1971, 32.
155. Reilly, The Age's Adversary, 294.
156. "Gulliver's surrender to despair is Swift's call to action" (Ricardo Quintana, Two Augustans, 123).

ABBREVIATIONS USED

<u>Works</u>	<u>The Prose Writings of Jonathan Swift</u> , 16 vols., eds. Herbert Davis et al, Oxford, 1939-74. References to Vol. XI, <u>Gulliver's Travels</u> , are to the revised edition, 1959.
<u>Corr.</u>	<u>The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift</u> , 5 vols., ed. Harold Williams, Oxford, 1963-65.
<u>Poems</u>	<u>Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems</u> , ed. Pat Rogers, Harmondsworth, 1983.
<u>CEJL</u>	<u>The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell</u> , 4 vols., eds. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, Harmondsworth, 1970.
<u>CE</u>	<u>College English</u>
<u>EC</u>	<u>Essays in Criticism</u>
<u>ECS</u>	<u>Eighteenth-Century Studies</u>
<u>ELH</u>	<u>A Journal of English Literary History</u>
<u>HLQ</u>	<u>Huntington Library Quarterly</u>
<u>JEGP</u>	<u>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</u>
<u>JHI</u>	<u>Journal of the History of Ideas</u>
<u>MLN</u>	<u>Modern Language Notes</u>
<u>MLQ</u>	<u>Modern Language Quarterly</u>
<u>MLR</u>	<u>Modern Language Review</u>
<u>MP</u>	<u>Modern Philology</u>
<u>N&Q</u>	<u>Notes and Queries</u>
<u>PMLA</u>	<u>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</u>
<u>PQ</u>	<u>Philological Quarterly</u>
<u>QQ</u>	<u>Queen's Quarterly</u>
<u>REL</u>	<u>Review of English Literature</u>
<u>RES</u>	<u>Review of English Studies</u>
<u>SEL</u>	<u>Studies on English Literature 1500-1900</u>
<u>SP</u>	<u>Studies in Philology</u>
<u>SR</u>	<u>Sewanee Review</u>
<u>UTQ</u>	<u>University of Toronto Quarterly</u>

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