

VIVISECTION:  
ANATOMICAL STRUCTURE  
AND THE SATIRE OF VANITY

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AND THE SATIRE OF VANITY

By  
MICHAEL SINDING, B. A.

A Thesis  
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree  
Master of Arts

McMaster University

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MASTER OF ARTS (1997)  
(English)

McMaster University  
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Vivisection: Anatomical Structure and the Satire of Vanity.

AUTHOR: Michael Sinding, B. A. (McGill University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Joseph Adamson

NUMBER OF PAGES: vii, 82

## ABSTRACT:

I begin this thesis with an examination of the notion of literary structure that Northrop Frye develops through various writings. I relate this to other of his concerns: to the idea of a “centre” to the order of literature, and to the possibility of “scientific” or systematic criticism. In the second chapter I place this notion in the context of more general ideas about structure, and raise the issue of the relation of function to structure. I suggest that the ideas of function that orient ideas of structure may be divided into kinds in a way analogous to the way that kinds of causes have traditionally been distinguished. In the third chapter I undertake a consideration of genre, beginning with a brief summary of the approaches and problems associated with the concept. I move on to an account of Frye’s theory of genres and then present his outline of Menippean satire, or the “anatomy” form of prose fiction (with reference to his discussion of the *mythos* of winter, which describes the principles of satire and irony). An overview of other critical attitudes to the form ends the chapter. In the fourth chapter I present a comparative reading of the “anatomical” works in an effort to discover a partial line of influence and descent, and to determine a abstract common structure, use of which might be considered part of the formal cause of each of the works. Starting from given critical insights, I develop a view of the anatomy as presenting an existential quest, and examine how the theme is associated with certain common formal techniques and patterns of imagery. In the concluding chapter, I analyse further the pattern I have presented, and suggest that developing genre theory requires refining our understanding of the interaction of literary intention with literary structure.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I would like to express my thanks to my supervisor, Joseph Adamson, not only for his assistance and advice in the preparation of this thesis, but also for his encouragement. His genuine enthusiasm for the work inspired me to push its boundaries. I am grateful to professors Alvin Lee and Brian John for agreeing to act as readers for the paper and for their criticisms and insights, which have been incorporated in this final version. I thank my parents for their support and encouragement throughout my education. And finally I thank Melissa Knight, for helping along the whole production with care and good humour, even when it interfered with enjoying the summer.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

## Works by Northrop Frye:

- AC *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (1957)
- EAC *The Eternal Act of Creation: Essays 1979-1990* (1993)
- FI *Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology* (1963)
- GC *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (1981)
- M & M *Myth and Metaphor: Selected Essays 1974-1988* (1990)
- WWP *Words With Power: Being a Second Study of "the Bible and Literature"* (1990)

## Works by other authors:

- AA *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass* (Carroll, Lewis. Ed. Martin Gardner)
- AM *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Burton, Robert)
- C *Candide* (Voltaire)
- CETP *Critical Essays on Thomas Pynchon* (Pearce, Richard, ed.)
- CR *A Carlyle Reader* (Carlyle, Thomas. Ed. G. B. Tennyson)
- DQ *Don Quixote of La Mancha* (Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de)
- E/O *Either/Or* (Kierkegaard, Søren)
- G & P *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (Rabelais, François)
- GR *Gravity's Rainbow* (Pynchon, Thomas)
- GT *Gulliver's Travels* (Swift, Jonathan)
- HTT *A Hand to Turn the Time: The Menippean Satires of Thomas Pynchon* (Kharpertian, Theodore D.)
- LAD *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History* (Brown, Norman O.)
- LR *Language and Responsibility* (Chomsky, Noam)

- M-D *Moby-Dick or, The Whale* (Melville, Herman)
- MS *Menippean Satire: An Annotated Catalogue of Texts and Criticism* (Kirk, Eugene P.)
- PDP *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (Bakhtin, Mikhail)
- PF *The Praise of Folly* (Erasmus, Desiderius)
- PS *The Poverty of Structuralism: Literature and Structuralist Theory* (Jackson, Leonard)
- RW *Rabelais and His World* (Bakhtin, Mikhail)
- SL *Slow Learner* (Pynchon, Thomas)
- SP *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (Culler, Jonathan)
- TL *Theory of Literature* (Wellek, René, and Austin Warren)
- TS *Tristram Shandy: An Authoritative Text; The Author on the Novel; Criticism* (Sterne, Laurence. Ed. Howard Anderson)
- U *Ulysses* (Joyce, James)
- VL *A Visionary Life* (Adamson, Joseph)



1. Structure, *dianoia*, *anagnorisis*.

The *Anatomy of Criticism* was originally called *Structural Poetics*, a title reflecting "the true contextual spirit of the *Anatomy* as a work attempting to provide a coherent system for the study of poetic structure." (VL 60). Princeton University Press insisted it be changed to something more "saleable" (Frye, qtd. in VL 60), advising that the public would never look at anything with such an off-putting title. One might ask how far such a change could be expected to turn an essentially academic work into a runaway bestseller, or how much the new title effected a softening of the impression of the author from clinical sadist to swooning pastoral *belles-lettriste*. In any case it is clear that one of Frye's main concerns is to progress towards the delineation of the 'structure' of literature as a whole, and so of the imagination in one aspect. His work has some affinities with the movement called 'structuralism', but on the whole his ideas about structure in literature are developed independently of the ideas and emphases that characterize that movement (including the 'post-' variety). The meanings associated with the word structure in Frye's work can be difficult to gather together in a neat way, so I would like to spend some time clarifying the concept. It will be important to have a clear idea of what is implied by structure when we come to explore the postulated structures of various works and genres.

*The Great Code* provides a succinct recounting of the essential idea, reiterated so often:

Once a verbal structure is read, and reread often enough to be possessed, it 'freezes.' It turns into a unity in which all parts exist at once, which we can then examine like a picture, without regard to the specific movement of the narrative. We may compare it to the study of a musical score, where we can turn to any part without regard to sequential performance. (GC 62-63)

So the essential meaning of literary structure for Frye is that it is the work of literature seen 'spatially'. To regard a work spatially is an activity that can be accomplished only after the work is fully read, and 'possessed.' What is important is to recognize the difference in the kind of activity the reader is performing, when she reads the work to collect the potential elements of the structure, and when she strives for perception of structure afterwards. This is also the basis of the distinctions between experience and

understanding, reading and criticism.

If we ask what such a structure is a structure *of*, we come to statements like, "the meaning or pattern of poetry is a structure of imagery with conceptual implications" (AC 136). So when Frye seeks to specify the structure of a work he is concerned with the structure of imagery. Generally speaking, structure is opposed to narrative as theme or *dianoia* - Aristotle's word for poetic thought (AC 52) - is opposed to plot or *mythos* - again, Aristotle's term. Thus we find Frye producing epigrammatic formulas such as, "The *mythos* is the *dianoia* in movement; the *dianoia* is the *mythos* in stasis" (AC 83). To condense: the structure is a structure of imagery, which is the poetic thought or *dianoia*. The analogue in structuralist terminology would be that structure is the synchronic as opposed to the diachronic aspect of language. It is *langue* rather than *parole*, system rather than behaviour, competence rather than performance.

This concept of structure first appears in the first essay of the *Anatomy*, in the discussion of Thematic Modes, and is developed in various places throughout the rest of the book. This first appearance is an explication of Aristotle's term *dianoia*, and implies that *dianoia* is related to theme as *anagnorisis* or discovery is related to plot. As the question of how the story is going to turn out relates to *anagnorisis*, so the question of what the 'point' of the story is relates to *dianoia* (AC 52). Frye does not suggest that there is a single determinate structure for each work, and so only one determinate 'point' to each: in order to see how a plurality of interpretations develops, it is helpful to look at his outline of critical perception.

Frye provides a certain amount of description of this process, one of his key distinctions is developed in this relation. The distinction between the "centrifugal" and "centripetal" refers both to different directions of attention and to different kinds of verbal organization:

Our attention as we read is . . . going simultaneously in two directions, outward to the conventional or remembered meaning, inward to the specific contextual meaning. . . . At . . . times there seems to be no . . . secondary structure of meaning outside the words, and this . . . is a sign that what we are reading is 'literary,' which means provisionally a verbal structure existing for its own sake. (GC 57)

That is, in any verbal structure, we seek to integrate the words into the coherent units of sentences, and to see how the sentences hang together to form integrated wholes that make sense to us. In the case of literary works, however, we soon discover that we are dealing with structures whose words and sentences make sense not because their coherence mirrors the coherence of some outside object or system to which they refer, but because of the patterns they act to build up inside the work itself. (To be sure, the shaping of these patterns

may rely at first on outside referents - as several synonyms or different objects that have a cross shape may announce a Christian theme, for example.)

In a more extensive account in "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement", he deals with the transition from following the plot to finding the structure. He says that a shift in the focus of attention that follows the end of the fiction breaks up the plot unity into the discontinuous "memorable" elements (episodes, characters, speeches, symbols, etc.) that become reworked into a thematic unity - which is, again, not an allegorical statement, but the shape of the plot when held in a simultaneous unity without regard to linear progression (FI 22-25). "Hence we need a supplementary form of criticism which can examine the total design of fiction as something which is neither mechanical nor of secondary importance" (FI 30). The 'total design' is a very contentious concept, but perhaps a necessary one. For Frye, this total design will be expressible by, or comparable to, an earlier myth that deals with the same structure of themes: "poets who are thinkers . . . [concerned with] anything that belongs to the larger outlines of what literature can express - can hardly find a literary theme that does not coincide with a myth . . . The relation between myth and literature, therefore, is established by studying the genres and conventions of literature" (FI 33-34). This idea of structure is linked to Frye's interest in cosmology, because as he says, "Ordinarily, if we 'freeze' an entire mythology, it turns into a cosmology" (GC 76), and thus we might say that a cosmology is the structure of a mythology. The myth critic must isolate the aspect of the fiction that is conventional, and which all other works of the same category have in common. The question of how categories are determined becomes crucial here. A category is individuated because it sustains a particular mood or tone which implies a plot-structure that is inconsistent with other sorts of particular moods or tones, as we can sense we are reading comedy well before we reach the end. This does not exactly tell us how we are to 'isolate' individual from conventional aspects, but Frye concludes that "We need to move from criticism of 'effects' to what we may call a criticism of causes, specifically the formal cause which holds the work together" (FI 37).

The spatial perception of verbal structures is a simultaneous perception of a unity. This unity is a pattern of relationships *within* the work, and therefore the external reference of the signs used is subordinated to their potential associations with other signs inside the work. In order to achieve a reasonable view of structure, the

reader first accepts everything within the work as it is, without being concerned with direct correspondence to things outside the work, and then builds up from this first data-gathering stage as complete as possible a picture of how the elements fit together:

Understanding a poem literally means understanding the whole of it, as a poem, and as it stands. Such understanding begins in a complete surrender of the mind and senses to the impact of the work as a whole, and proceeds through the effort to unite the symbols toward a simultaneous perception of the unity of the structure. (This is a *logical* sequence of critical elements . . . I have no idea what the psychological sequence is. . . .) (AC 77)

As for what gets included as part of the structure and what gets left out, Frye in later work says that everything in the work is potentially part of the structure, potentially a significant sign or part of a significant relation; and it is left to the reader to filter out the irrelevant associations:

This something, this simultaneous pattern to be apprehended all at once, is itself a cluster of metaphors, images and events linked together in identity by the previous movement of the story. Sometimes this metaphor cluster is expressible by a diagram, a pictorial design, or a single image. (M & M 8)

Frye is aware that to speak of the 'spatial' organization of a text is to use a metaphor - "The term 'structure,' which we have used so often, is a metaphor from architecture, and may be misleading when we are speaking of narrative, which is not a simultaneous structure but a movement in time" (GC 63). And it is important to note that, although Frye is ever ready to give his own - idiosyncratic, to some - versions of the 'structure' of particular works, he maintains from the beginning that perceptions of structure are stages of an ongoing process of understanding (perhaps moments in a dialectical unfolding): "More exactly, this response is not simply to *the whole of it*, but to *a whole in it*: we have a vision of meaning or *dianoia* whenever any simultaneous apprehension is possible" (AC 77-78). In one of his later formulations we get a fuller picture of the way the perception refines and grows:

The apprehension of a total structure may exist on any level from the simplest to the most profound . . . in something like a play of Shakespeare there is an indefinite sequence of these final apprehensions: as soon as we have reached one, we become dissatisfied with it and try to regroup our forces for a new and, we hope, better understanding. The kind of literary work we describe as a 'classic' could perhaps be defined as one in which the process goes on through the whole of one's life, assuming that one keeps reading. (M & M 6)

This account raises the question of right and wrong, or better and worse, apprehensions of structure, since 'any simultaneous apprehension' can refer to any reader, regardless of experience, knowledge and skill. One

could well ask also about how complete structures need to be, and how they are to be specified (one presumably needs to combine a list of significantly repeated images with an idea of their narrative relations). The argument here rests on three things: the appeal to the experience of reading; the logic of the account; and its virtues with respect to possible alternatives.

As for logic, it could be objected that one cannot strictly speaking ignore the linear progression when working up a thematic unity: one can imagine two works with entirely different themes using an identical body of images, where perhaps one is called *The Falcon's Breakfast*, and the other, *The Death of the Sparrow*. Or, *Macbeth* could be told backwards, producing the same body of imagery with entirely different connotations. Frye might say that it was then a different structure of imagery, because the images would have different relations.

But such objections deal with refinements that could be added, and on the whole I think his view reflects pretty well some basic distinctions of literary experience and study. The better one knows a certain work, the more able one is to see it as a whole, to see how its parts interrelate. The adequacy of this appeal must be referred to the judgment of individuals, but I think some of the factors given are inherent in the logic of experience, without which we would not even have, as such, what we ordinarily call reading experience. It would be impossible to say anything at all about a work without being able to 'grasp' it all at once and see it as a unity in some sense (the alternative would be to see *Paradise Lost* sometimes as a comedy, and sometimes as a tragedy, depending on the pleasantness of the action; or to see *Ulysses* as eighteen stories unrelated to each other). This is an elementary kind of coherence, such as that we assume physical objects possess through space and time.

The focus on structure, on the structure of a work as the essential basis of its meaning, is also linked to the idea of the autonomy of the work and the autonomy of the field of literature. Other elementary options are to locate the source of meaning directly in the writer's consciousness and point criticism to study intention, or to locate it in the consciousness of the reader and point to the study of the affective quality and others aspects of reception. Instead, Frye insists on structure, a move that does not deny the contributions that other factors make to the work, but makes something 'in' the work itself the fundamental priority.

His more recent formulations are interesting in several ways. He returns to Aristotle's word, which he

earlier said related to plot: "It is this final act of understanding the whole, which for a complex work is more ideally than actually present, that has made the word *structure* so pervasive a metaphor in literary criticism, although the traditional term *anagnorisis* seems to me less misleading" (M & M 6). Thus, so to speak, 'what's the point of the story?' becomes identified in some sense with 'how's the story going to turn out?' We might say that the two questions about the processes can be reconciled as 'how is the point of the story going to unfold (in the imagination)?' And here the *anagnorisis* or recognition is, for complex works, at least, perhaps only ideally present. But it must in some sense be really present for less complex works, and for the elementary dimensions of complex works, because the holistic perception is associated with moments of (metaphoric) identification with the structure:

Moments of ecstatic union, or 'peak experiences,' as they are often called, may come and go like flashes of lightning, but such moments are, we said, the frozen or simultaneously grasped aspects of a *mythos* or continuous narrative. (M & M 17)

Frye also speaks of individual experiences of the 'essence' of an art as the resonance of the 'mandala of possibilities' for that art where the work draws its power from everything else we have read, heard, or seen. *Anagnorisis* unites the simultaneous perception of *mythos* or plot with the perception of *dianoia* or theme: the sense of how all the elements hang together to complete the plot implying, perhaps, the sense of how the same images and events hang together to establish the poetic thought.

### 1.1 Structures, Centres and Science.

That last remark about how 'peak experiences' represent perceptions of a total structure leads us into another topic - the question of structural 'centres.' This is highly reminiscent of another passage from Frye, where we can see being drawn together the ecstatic experience of perception of total structure, the idea of a centre of the order of words, and the basis of Frye's notion of literary science:

if literature is nothing more than [a miscellaneous pile of discrete works], any systematic mental training based on it becomes impossible. . . . Total literary history gives us a glimpse of the possibility of seeing literature as a complication of a relatively restricted and simple group of formulas that can be studied in primitive culture. We next realize that the relation of later literature

to these primitive formulas is by no means purely one of complication. . . . We begin to wonder if we cannot see literature, not only as complicating itself in time, but as spread out in conceptual space from some kind of center that criticism could locate. (AC 16-17)

Frye does suggest a center, and it seems that what these lines are getting at is his own perception of the whole structure - not just the shape of a particular work, but the whole of literature, 'frozen' into a symbolic cosmology, that enters into every individual work. His reference to the mental training - one of the cornerstones of his belief in a scientific or systematic criticism - makes clear that it is this possibility of the simultaneous perception of the structure or *dianoia* of all literature upon which he is basing his idea of a systematic criticism.

In a much-reviewed passage, Frye sheds some further light on this center. In the great moments of reading,

we have a feeling of converging significance, the feeling that here we are close to seeing what our whole literary experience has been about, the feeling that we have moved into the still center of the order of words. . . . Unless there is such a center, there is nothing to prevent the analogies supplied by convention and genre from being an endless series of free associations, perhaps suggestive, perhaps even tantalizing, but never creating a real structure. The study of archetypes is the study of literary symbols as parts of a whole. If there are such things as archetypes at all, then, we have to take yet another step, and conceive the possibility of a self-contained literary universe. (AC 117-18)

At this center is a set of universal symbols, symbols drawn from elements so basic to human life (eating, sex, birth, death, etc.) that no human could be totally unfamiliar with them, and that therefore have a potentially limitless communicative power. His later discussions of primary concern are thus related to archetypal criticism. The perception of converging significance relates to these universal symbols in that such perception sees in part the structure that has been created around them, a structure that transcends the individual work. There seems to be, then, another meaning of 'limitless' intelligibility, other than the simple possibility of translation. The center of the structure is a group of the most basic units that are parts of that structure, rather than any particular 'place' within it, although for the reader the recognition experience, which is a kind of center, is located at a point in time. The focus on a system of symbols above and beyond any single work seems a sound basis for criticism, but one wonders about the relation between this structure and the ecstatic perceptions. For surely it is possible for a very poor work to be about these things; or to grasp the structure of such a work without feeling a convergence of anything but inept artistic decisions.

It is interesting to consider the close analogies among the words theory, science and structure (and system)

as Frye uses them. In the essay "Auguries of Experience" he speaks of his conception of theory as being "closer to the Greek *theoria*, a vision or conspectus of the area of literature, an area distinguishable from, though with a context relating it to, the other arts and the other forms of verbal discourse" (EAC 4). So all have a common denominator or 'metaphorical kernel' we might say, of a simultaneous vision of unity, as if of something extended in space. Furthermore, since Frye's senses of the words theory and science do not appear to have any more rigorous connotations than that of 'structure,' the analogies become all the more significant. It would probably not be difficult to make a superficial case for the idea that his versions of the universe of literature, criticism, the mythological universe, particular works, etc., have no more authority than that they are a subjective perception of a structure (a 'mandala vision'), and so need be treated only as we treat other mandala visions. More to the point, though, if the *anagnorisis* of literature as a whole is more ideally than actually present, or if it represents only an approximation or a stage in a serial process that will continue throughout the reader's life, then we must question how reliable the center we think we see is and what this implies for the coherence of the mental training we get from studying literature. We would like to know how to be sure that successive recognitions help to fill out and deepen our sense of the same structure, rather than giving us different structures. (If the apprehensions keep adjusting and the center keeps moving like magnetic north, then once again literary knowledge seems to become too subjective - even if structured - to be studied in such a holistic way.) There seem to be needed standards of objectivity for such perceptions, separate from the intensity associated with the perception.



## 2. Structural Tensions.

Before embarking on a critical study of a set of works and the approach that links them generically, some other perspectives on the idea of 'structure' will be helpful. Leonard Jackson makes a critical survey of the ways in which the movement called 'structuralism' has influenced literary criticism, and points out some of the confusions surrounding the concept. He defines the movement, in a broad sense, as

the practice of studying phenomena as different as societies, minds, languages, literatures, and mythologies, as total systems, or connected wholes - that is, **structures** - and in terms of their internal patterns of connection, rather than in terms of their historical sequence of development. It is the study of how the structures of these entities affect the way they **function**. (PS 20)

This intellectual trend began with Ferdinand de Saussure and his *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), was extended by Claude Lévi-Strauss into the areas of anthropology and mythology, and has since been greatly diversified and mutated in many other areas, including criticism, psychology, and history.

As the movement had its own peculiar emphases and positions, it is important to try to get clear on the basic content of the term itself (so far as there is one), apart from how it has variously appeared. It is one of those terms that seems simple, but is nonetheless used in so many ways in so many contexts that an explicit statement about it is a very helpful touchstone. Or, as Frye says, like the word *nature* in Aristotle, *substance* in Spinoza, or *time* in Bergson, "One often feels that a full understanding of such a word would be a key to the understanding of the whole system" (AC 335). At least, an improved understanding of such a word can only help us understand the system. Jackson offers a couple of common-sense definitions of the word, the first of which is relatively concrete: "A structure is a set of parts which are connected together" (PS 21). Thus, a box of Meccano parts is a set, and once something is built out of them, that thing is a structure. The second definition is relatively abstract: "A structure is the set of connections between parts, in a set of parts which are connected together" (PS 22). In this sense, things *have* structures rather than *are* structures. To specify the structure, it suffices to specify the connections between the parts; the parts need not be specified beyond what is required for this. Thus, different things, made with different parts, may have the same structure.

Perception and description of structures as such is limited only by human ingenuity. And so, "any real object may have more than one structure. There may be many ways of dividing it into parts, and many different ways in which these sets of parts are connected" (PS 27). But this does not mean that any structure is as good as another. We may look for (and find) structures in any group of elements, but some groups will be more tractable than others in this enterprise, and others will best be regarded as mere collections of elements. As Jackson points out, words and sounds in a language each form a set with definite internal relationships, which govern the ways the set's parts can be used. And, "It is the existence of these fixed relationships which makes a language into a structure with parts rather than a collection of bits; and which determines the nature of the smaller structures - sentences, noun-phrases and so forth - which can be made out of the bits" (PS 32-33).

And it is worth remembering the simple point that a specified structure is always abstract, even if it accurately describes its object and explains how it works. The structure is not the thing itself:

however many structures it may have, the object is not exhausted by its structures. A combination of fifty abstract structures is no more a real object than is a single abstract structure. Real objects are made out of real parts: this goes for cranes, societies and people. Take the real parts away and there is nothing left . . . though . . . it is still possible to **talk** about that non-existent abstract structure. . . . The discipline that talks about abstract structures is called logic and mathematics (PS 27).

This is part of Jackson's objection to post-structuralist theories that begin from Saussure's claim that "in language there are only differences without positive terms" (qtd. in PS 51), and go on to dizzying flights of metaphysical negation.

## 2.1 Structure and Function.

Jackson is not the only one to see function as intrinsic to an understanding of structure. In the literary sphere, Jonathan Culler has attempted to outline the principles of a structuralist poetics, and one of those principles is that, "First of all, in the study of literature the notion of structure has a teleological character: the structure is determined by a particular end; it is recognized as a configuration which contributes to this end" (Culler, SP 243). And his notion of literary function is that it is basically aesthetic. That is, it focusses on

meanings and effects that are intuited:

When one speaks of the structure of a literary work, one does so from a certain vantage point: one starts with notions of the meaning or effects of a poem and tries to identify the structures responsible for those effects. Possible configurations or patterns which make no contribution are rejected as irrelevant. That is to say, an intuitive understanding of the poem functions as its 'centre', governing the play of forms: it is both a starting point - what enables one to identify structures - and a limiting principle. (SP 244)

This principle is connected to the idea that such a poetics seeks to determine the 'literary competence' that educated readers acquire, and employ in understanding or creating new works.

This approach is taken over from Chomsky's ground-breaking approach in linguistics. The speaker's 'linguistic competence' is his or her tacit knowledge of the grammar of the language, which underlies the capacity to both understand and produce novel utterances. It is this that the linguist must study: "As Chomsky says, enunciating the fundamental principle of linguistic analysis, 'without reference to this tacit knowledge there is no such subject as descriptive linguistics. There is nothing for its descriptive statements to be right or wrong about'" (SP 23). Thus, the literary competence that Culler would like to study must consider effects about which there is a high degree of consensus: "If linguistic analysis were to propose meanings which speakers of the language could not accept, it would be the linguists who were wrong, not the speakers. Much the same is true in the study of the poetic function of language: poetic effects constitute the data to be explained" (SP 74). Poetic effects are much more difficult to characterize than grammatical factors, and it seems doubtful that it is possible to do so in any very definite way. Culler does not produce any thorough suggestions geared to such a knowledge, and I do not know of any other attempts to do so. He does suggest a sort of method for identifying salient effects:

The poetic function is still a communicative function, and to test whether patterns isolated are in fact responsible for particular effects one may attempt to alter the patterns to see whether they change the effects in question. It is not, of course, always easy to test claims in this way, since effects may be difficult to grasp or isolate; but the more difficult it is to perceive changes in effect, the more implausible the claim that certain patterns play a crucial role in the poetic text. (SP 68)

Perhaps any attempt to 'scientize' criticism is bound to sound like a report of the Academy of Lagado when it gets to a certain point. But here Culler is also insisting that the poetic function is communicative. The meaning and effects he speaks of, vague as they may be, are considered to fall under the general functional rubric of

communication.

It would assist the reader if Culler could spell out more what is thought to be communicated by poetry, and how it is considered to work. But Jackson too claims that there is a basic communicative function, for language in general, as well as for poetry. Although it is obvious that language can be used for other things - play, experiment, etc. - Jackson believes these are secondary next to the overarching purpose of communication. We see this because of the close relation between structure and function. Despite arguments to the contrary,

It would be almost impossible to make the structural design of a car, or of a sentence, intelligible, without assuming a basic set of engineering or of linguistic functions. Structure and function do not reduce to each other; but in these cases they do very strongly interact. There are certain functions of a car, or a sentence, that are, as it were, implicit in its structure and cannot be changed by the conscious or unconscious intentions of its user. (PS 30)

This too ought to be more fully developed in order to be convincing, but the main point is clear. He also warns of the tendency to confuse structural with functional description, even in the most commonsensical descriptions of things like cars and stories: "most descriptions of mechanical objects...explain both what the machine consists of and how it works" (PS 28). He attributes the impenetrability of some structuralist and post-structuralist writing to this confusion (intensified by the analogical expansion into literature, psychology, anthropology, sociology, etc.).

One of the people who would disagree with Jackson on this is Noam Chomsky. He believes that proposals to define instrumental ends for language fall flat due to being false or trivial when tested against common instances of language use. Thus, if 'communication' is expanded to include thought, as communication with oneself, then the concept is on its way to vacuity. He asks the 'ontogenetic question' of how the thing develops in the individual, in order to show the irrelevance of functional factors at that level. There is a role for functional explanation at the level of evolution, but the individual does not develop the language capacity (and *a fortiori* for the poetic capacity, one would think) because it is convenient for communication - this is determined by genetic processes, which traffic in causes rather than reasons. Thus, "there is no sensible way to invoke functional notions as explanatory concepts at the synchronic or ontogenetic level, so far as I can see" (LR 87).

We might very well like to know where Frye would stand on such questions as these. Given the prominence

in his account of the idea of literature as a 'disinterested use of words' and works as 'autonomous verbal structures,' and his general demotion of intention as a determining factor of structure, it appears that Frye is more concerned with working out the structure of literature without reference to any direct presumed function. And given the above outline of his approach to structure, which refrains from attaching any definite function to the work at hand, it seems that he is of the opinion that functions are unnecessary at the synchronic level. Unlike Culler, he does not seem to believe that a secondary orientation is needed to select from the mass of repeated items - other than the focus on a 'significant pattern of imagery'. But his description of this process makes it seem like an automatic response.

Asking the 'ontogenetic question' of why the thing has developed in the way that it has - regarding a particular literary work - the kinds of functions to which the answer will refer will be analogous to those of which Chomsky speaks, and will not contribute to an understanding of structure: the function of the work, for the artist, is to realize the vision he or she has of it, the design or archetype in the mind. One can give reasons for producing a work and not just causes, but personal motives as such are not ontogenetic and still tell us nothing of the design of the given work. In specifying the structure, then, functional questions can only usefully be raised about parts rather than the whole. To ask about why any given detail is such as it is, is to ask how it contributes to the creation of that vision; what its function is *within* rather than outside of the work, its place or role in the structure.

At this point, it will be useful to introduce a set of distinctions among kinds of causes that I believe corresponds to distinctions among kinds of function. A function is an idea of an end something is meant to accomplish; and as a cause is an idea of how an effect is accomplished, they have in common the concern with action directed towards an end or effect. Different kinds of causes imply different conceptions of function, and a particular concept of function leads one to attend to particular kinds of causes. Traditionally, there are four kinds of cause, the efficient, final, formal, and material. The efficient cause is the power or agent that effects a result; the final cause is the purpose or end for which a thing is produced; the formal cause is the abstract or ideal form according to which a thing or event is produced or brought about; and the material cause is the means by which a formal cause is achieved. Culler's focus on effects is a focus on a final cause, then, as is Jackson's concentration on the communicative function of literature. But Frye, as noted above, takes it as a

basic tenet that what is needed is a criticism not of effects but of the formal cause that holds the work together.

It is still possible to speak of the social function of literature, and of the writer, and of the critic. But this is at the level of the 'species', so to speak, and for Frye, this is always after having developed previously a notion of what the structure of literature and the imagination is, and it is this structure that is related to these concerns: because the central myth of literature is that of the quest, which aims at resolving the frustration of desire, "The social function of the arts, therefore, seems to be closely connected with visualizing the goal of work in human life" (FI 18). There are some other claims Frye makes about what the arts do, how they work, and what they give us. But these are more ideas about what such things in fact do, rather than what they are meant to do, or what guides their creation.

With these conditions and provisos in hand, we may proceed to an inquiry into genres.

### 3. Generic Structure.

In order to help determine the validity of this aspect of Frye's procedures, I shall, as well as examining his claims about the nature of genre, study a group of works that fall into the category of the 'anatomy'. These works are explicitly identified by Frye as having this form (whether in a 'pure' state or mixed with other forms), except for one, *Gravity's Rainbow*, which appeared later than Frye's *Anatomy* but has the features that Frye says define the form.

It might be thought a grossly circular strategy to take a set of works isolated by a taxonomist as having particular features, to examine that set for common thematic properties, and then to justify the classification by pointing to the common properties discovered. But circularity can be avoided as long as the analyst keeps in mind the necessity for relating thematic properties to discernible formal features. The problem of the 'hermeneutic circle' has never seemed to me particularly daunting when it comes to practical matters, however pleasantly dizzying it may be to contemplate in theory. My intention here is not merely to rationalize Frye's categories, but to investigate them from within to test their solidity and integrity, their scope, and their utility.

I shall essentially be attempting to treat the anatomies the way Frye treats literature: as an identifiable entity with a particular structure. This means the attempt to take a particular area of the genre of prose fiction, and consider it 'spatially' with a view to identifying parts and their relations. It is revealing to compare Frye's account of the structure of anatomies with his accounts of the structures of particular works. Naturally, the latter have much better-defined structures. With an individual work it is possible to divide it into an ordered set of sections, or phases, or parts, even if it is not already divided into chapters or books or verses or cantos, and even if the structure attributed to it does not match the explicit divisions of the work itself. (A good example is Frye's description of *Paradise Lost*.) Typically, these structures are geared to thematic matters, and Frye allows his sense of theme, based on imagery, mythological context, genre and tone to take precedence over the work's own divisions.

With a genre, or a form within a genre, if it were possible to provide some structure or other that covered the

narrative organization of all works belonging to it, this would be an extremely powerful argument for the archetypal approach (treating literature as a synchronic system or organism). But narrative is not so pliable and Frye characterizes forms, like *mythoi*, in terms of general themes and imagery rather than in terms of narrative (although character-types are important in his account). This is consonant with his picture of the evolution of one's sense of a text's organization from plot-structure to theme-structure.

### 3.1 Genre Theory.

There are many views of what a genre is and why it is, and we can only scrape the surface here. But it will be helpful to consider some of the basic problems and alternatives associated with the concept. In their Theory of Literature, Wellek and Warren point out that the history of criticism displays any number of ways of grouping works into literary kinds, and any number of principles underwriting those groupings. Most broadly, one can say that generic classification overlooks commonalities based on time and place and seeks to determine "specifically literary types of organization or structure" (TL 226).

If one asks what the use is of generic classifications - why we cannot just read and write without cumbersome preconceptions - the answer is twofold: the genre is part of the work, and the genre is part of our response to the work. The conventions that operate in the writer's mind - consciously or not - shape the character of the work, and may in turn be shaped by the mind of the writer. Wellek and Warren quote N. H. Pearson as saying that genres "may be regarded as institutional imperatives" (TL 226), and add that they exist as an institution exists. The writer can act or express him or herself through the institution, be as detached as possible from it from within it, or enter it fully and reshape it. Thus Milton was deeply concerned with the abstract idea and laws of the epic, but adjusted these to suit his thematic purposes.

So, simply in order properly to appreciate and understand a certain work, it is often necessary to have some knowledge of the norms of organization that have entered into its creation and are reflected in it. Again, only a knowledge of the principles of the classical epic will allow the reader to appreciate how well Milton has used them, or see how he has adapted them to present his own subject. This knowledge allows the reader to situate



Milton's work with its models, and determine the relative significance of aspects of the text itself (we know that the beginning *in medias res* is an epic convention, and this helps us in deciding how to regard this artistic decision).

This gives us a clue as to another, independent, benefit of such study. Eugene Kirk writes, "Recognizing a work's generic status is not, by itself, an ultimate goal of literary study. Genre becomes important when one discovers why some form was appropriate for the persuasive or expository task at hand" (MS x). The aim is to understand the nature of the relation of literary form and function, and understanding particular cases of this can in turn enrich the generalizations of the theory of genres.

Wellek and Warren find problematic the question of whether every work belongs to some kind. They contend that the analogy with nature would suggest that this is the case, but that the more useful question would be whether every work is closely enough related to other works so that its study is helped by the study of the other works. They point out the evolving nature of genres, then make the distinction between "more-or-less ultimate categories" and "historical kinds". This distinction raises some questions, since they mention Aristotle's ultimate categories as drama, epic and lyric, yet claim that most modern critics would have different ones: they would divide imaginative literature into "fiction (novel, short story, epic), drama (whether in prose or verse), and poetry (centring on what corresponds to the ancient 'lyric poetry')" (TL 227), and then designate tragedy and comedy as the historical kinds. However, Frye, for one, sees tragedy and comedy as among a set of ultimate pregeneric types:

We have thus answered the question: are there narrative categories of literature broader than, or logically prior to, the ordinary literary genres? . . . Tragedy and comedy may have been originally names for two species of drama, but we also employ the terms to describe general characteristics of literary fictions, without regard to genre. . . . If we are told that what we are about to read is tragic or comic, we expect a certain kind of structure and mood, but not necessarily a certain genre. The same is true of the word romance, and also of the words irony and satire. . . . We thus have four narrative pregeneric elements of literature which I shall call *mythoi* or generic plots. (AC 162)

Wellek and Warren, on the other hand, believe that the term genre should be reserved for what they take to be the historical kinds - tragedy and comedy - and that a term for their ultimate categories "is difficult to manage - perhaps not often, in practice, needed" (TL 227). I agree that 'genre' should refer to historically developed forms, but in what follows I shall be adhering to Frye's view that tragedy, comedy, romance and satire are 'more

ultimate' than the categories of fiction, drama and poetry. But this disagreement need not be settled here, and it is certainly at least in part a question of definition rather than of fact. It is worth remembering that the parties at least agree that there is a difference between ultimate categories and historical types, even if they disagree about which are which, and about how each are to be differentiated.

They go on to recount the various principles that have been proposed for distinguishing genres (whether the traditional trinity or newer schemes), including Plato's and Aristotle's 'manner of imitation'; that which considers divisions of time and linguistic morphology; that of 'temperament'; that of grammatical structure; and that of manner of narration. There is also the option of avoiding the difficulty by rejecting the distinctions and turning to the 'literariness' common to all. (Both 'manner of imitation' and what is tangentially mentioned, a basis of performance, are similar to Frye's notion of the 'radical of presentation'.) They conclude that "Such explorations of the basic kinds...though 'suggestive' are scarcely promising of objective results. It is open indeed to question whether these three kinds have any such ultimate status, even as component parts variously to be combined" (TL 228).

Following a survey of Neo-Classical theory, which attends somewhat to topics like purity of kind, hierarchy of kinds, duration of kinds and evolution of kinds, but fails to deal with the basis for differentiations, Wellek and Warren bring forth some positive recommendations:

Genre should be conceived, we think, as a grouping of literary works based, theoretically, upon both outer form (specific metre or structure) and also upon inner form (attitude, tone, purpose - more crudely, subject and audience). The ostensible basis may be one or the other (e.g. 'pastoral' and 'satire' for the inner form; dipodic verse and Pindaric ode for outer); but the critical problem will then be to find the *other* dimension, to complete the diagram. (TL 231)

Genres are known to contract or expand in reference, and according to both thematic and formal poles. Thus the elegy begins as a "tender personal poem written in end-stopped couplets" (TL 232) that narrows into a lament for the dead but expands with respect to restrictions on metre. In the case of the anatomy, Frye observes that it "appears to have developed out of verse satire through the practice of adding prose interludes, but we know it only as a prose form, though one of its recurrent features...is the use of incidental verse" (AC 309). Further, "The word 'satire,' in Roman and Renaissance times, meant either of two specific literary forms of that name, one...prose and the other verse. Now it means a structural principle or attitude, what we have called a

*mythos*" (AC 310). Here the genre appears to have expanded in terms of both form and theme. This protean quality may tempt the critic to give up on genre study, with the consideration that repetitive structural patterns, and the expectation of them, have disappeared or dwindled into insignificance. But Wellek and Warren advise against it, preferring to say that the conception of genre shifts but does not disappear in the nineteenth century, that - perhaps due to the expansion of audience - genres multiply, and decline or change more rapidly.

They recommend that the conception of genre should emphasize the formalistic side, since form is more 'literary' than subject-matter classifications that could as well be used for non-fiction (e.g. the political novel; the novel about factory workers). Thus, for example, Aristotle considers the propriety of metres and media to the aesthetic purpose of each kind, and "The next level of 'form' above 'metre' and 'stanza' should be 'structure' (e.g. a special sort of plot organization)" (TL 233). Examples of this kind of form-element include the devices of Greek-descended epic and tragedy - beginning *in medias res*, the 'peripety' of tragedy, the unities - although there are also classical devices that seem less structural than thematic. (After the eighteenth century, this structural level becomes increasingly difficult to locate in a significant proportion of literature, although more clearly-definable genres continue to exist, such as the romance novel and the detective story.)

Classical theory was prescriptive rather than descriptive, but the prescriptions were based on a concept of aesthetic function, which involved factors such as the special capacities of the art and the emotions appealed to. Hence, they were apparently oriented around the ideal of a concentrated effect, using terms like 'purity', 'unity', 'simplicity', and promoting focus on a single emotion, plot, theme, class of characters and kind of diction. Modern genre theory is descriptive, does not limit the number of possible kinds, and recognizes the possibility of 'mixed' genres and the creation of new kinds. It is interested, Wellek and Warren claim, "in finding the common denominator of a kind, its shared literary devices and literary purpose" (TL 235). Total repetitiveness is dull; total novelty is inconceivable. So the literary work exists somewhere in between. The genre, they tell us, "represents, so to speak, a sum of aesthetic devices at hand, available to the writer and already intelligible to the reader" (TL 235).

They go on to identify a number of questions pertinent to genre theory. One of these is the question of the relation of primitive forms to later developments in literature. One could hold that new art merely canonizes previously sub-artistic forms; or that complex forms develop by compounding of simpler units. Another

question is that of the continuity of genres. How does one demonstrate the formal continuity needed to claim generic unity and succession? How do literary periods or national literatures affect generic classification? Can they distinguish sub-genres or are they genres in themselves? In deciding these questions, how much depends on formal similarity and how much on intention? Such problems are centrally germane to the possibility of a genre history.

### 3.2 The Anatomy Per Se.

Frye arrives at his discussion of the anatomy by beginning with the 'psychology of creation.' He sketches a view of the operation of the formal cause - the ideal design - of a work. In the author's mind, "some kind of controlling and coordinating power, what Coleridge called the 'initiative,' establishes itself very early, gradually assimilates everything to itself, and finally reveals itself to be the containing form of the work" (AC 245-46). This is not a unity but a complex of factors, including theme; the sense of unity of mood that determines appropriateness of imagery; and some integrating rhythm. The intention to produce a poem normally includes the genre, a "specific kind of verbal structure." The writer is "incessantly deciding that certain things, whether they can be critically accounted for by himself or not, belong in his structure, and that what he cuts out in revising does not. . . . But as the structure is complex, so these decisions relate to a variety of poetic elements, or a *group* of initiatives" (AC 246).

The basis of generic distinctions in literature is the "radical of presentation" (AC 246-47). Words may be acted, spoken, sung or chanted, or written for a reader. "The basis of generic criticism is in any case rhetorical, in the sense that genre is determined by the conditions established between the poet and his public" (AC 247). One might also say that this is the way works are *ideally* presented. It is important to be able to recognize the interaction of multiple radicals of presentation. The purpose of generic criticism is "not so much to classify as to clarify such traditions and affinities, thereby bringing out a large number of literary relationships that would not be noticed as long as there were no context established for them" (AC 247-48).

Looking at the way current writing descends from early forms, we can see that the stance of direct address

gradually changes to a stance of assertive writing. This fact is related to a change in the ascendant radical of presentation: "In fiction prose tends to predominate, because only prose has the continuous rhythm appropriate for the continuous form of the book" (AC 250). There are two rhythms in every work, the sound-rhythm and the sense-rhythm, and literary prose results from "the use within literature of the form used for discursive or assertive writing" (AC 263), which is a combination of grammatical and logical consistency.

As for the sound-rhythm associated with this quality of sense, "The rhythm of prose is continuous, not recurrent, and the fact is symbolized by the purely mechanical breaking of prose lines on a printed page" (AC 263). So prose is at its 'purest' when it is unobtrusive and "presents its subject-matter like plate glass in a shop window" (AC 265). (Frye's use of the metaphor of 'transparency' here may have a thematic implication, which we will come to later on.) But in rhetorical prose, the subject-matter is somewhat distanced by metrical concerns. As the two purposes of rhetoric, ornament and persuasion, are at odds with one another, the effect on the audience can be neutralized by the very ornament that gives the words their power of eliciting agreement:

A tendency to long sentences made up of short phrases and coordinate clauses, to emphatic repetition combined with a driving linear rhythm, to invective, to exhaustive catalogues, and to expressing the process or movement of thought instead of the logical word-order of achieved thought, are among the signs of prose *melos*. (AC 266)

Many of the anatomists exhibit these traits, with Swift being a fairly clear exception. Frye goes on to consider how far this perspective, which considers the relation of *lexis* or verbal pattern to music and spectacle, can give new light on traditional generic classifications (AC 282).

The anatomy is found in the discussion of "Specific Continuous Forms (Prose Fiction)" (AC 303). If the word genre refers mainly to the basic divisions distinguished according to radical of presentation, then specific forms such as the anatomy would perhaps be better called 'forms' or 'sub-genres.' But conventional usage makes pretty well any discernible tradition a genre, so as long as we remember that radical of presentation is an essential feature in determination of genre, the word should not cause too much confusion. Frye's divisions of prose fiction are further specifications of a manner of presenting the material, or an authorial stance. But as such a presentational stance can be complex or can change over the course of a work, "The forms of prose fiction are mixed, like racial strains in human beings, not separable like the sexes" (AC 305). Frye uses the oppositions personal/intellectual and introverted/extroverted to define the basic attitudes towards subject-

matter and treatment, respectively:

The novel tends to be extroverted and personal; its chief interest is in human character as it manifests itself in society. The romance tends to be introverted and personal: it also deals with characters, but in a more subjective way. (Subjective here refers to treatment, not subject-matter. The characters of romance are heroic and therefore inscrutable; the novelist is freer to enter his characters' minds because he is more objective.) The confession is also introverted, but intellectualized in content. Our next step is evidently to discover a fourth form of fiction which is extroverted and intellectual. (AC 308)

That fourth form is the anatomy.

The anatomy is said to have originated in the 'Menippean satire' (the name coming from the Greek cynic Menippus), which was developed by Petronius and Apuleius. It appears to have begun as a verse satire with prose interludes, but gradually became a mainly prose satire, often with verse interludes. The intellectual aspect of anatomies comes out in the fact that they tend to deal in 'mental attitudes' rather than in fully-rounded people, thus giving rise to caricature and parody-intellectualism. The most concentrated instances present human life in terms of a single intellectual pattern. Anatomies can therefore be seen as satires on human nature itself, or universal satires.

However, as 'satire' has come to mean a general structural principle or attitude, we must turn to Frye's theory of myths to find a general characterization of it. Irony and satire correspond to the *mythos* of winter, which deals with the 'conflict of interests,' as it were, that people find in trying to represent irrefragable experience, if only to themselves, in a coherent form: "As structure, the central principle of ironic myth is best approached as a parody of romance: the application of romantic mythical forms to a more realistic content which fits them in unexpected ways" (AC 223). Unlike pure irony, satire is irony directed at an object: "Satire demands at least a token fantasy, a content which the reader recognizes as grotesque, and at least an implicit moral standard...the satirist has to select his absurdities, and the act of selection is a moral act" (AC 224). Frye works out six phases of the *mythos* - three mainly satiric and relating to comedy, and three mainly ironic and relating to tragedy - in considerable detail. Here he discusses narrative and thematic patterns, character types and rhetorical techniques. But as we are dealing with one particular genre of satire (probably belonging generally to the second and third phases described) rather than with satire as a structural principle or pregeneric category, I shall confine myself as much as possible to treatments of the genre.

This is the essence of Frye's view of the anatomy, but others have developed the study of the genre in their own ways, both ante- and post-Frye, and a look at some of these studies will round out our picture of this form.

Eugene Kirk discusses the appropriateness of Menippean form to various functions, claiming that the prominent reason for adopting the form was "the beguiling of a less-initiated audience" (MS xiii). There are other reasons an author could have for following the genre, such as

its ease of composition, its permissive organizational principles, its capacities for display and digression, its convenient fictions . . . for achieving imaginary revenge upon an adversary, its tradition of facile caricature, and its breadth of possibilities for impersonation. . . . The genre was also imitated because of its historical associations with abuse, with disrespect for incompetent authority, or with adherence to some theological or academic position maintained in the genre previously. . . . Other writers seem to have wanted the protection of anonymity or pseudonymity. (MS xiii)

As for attempts at formal description, he warns,

There never was 'one kind' of Menippean satire, not even in the writings of Menippus himself - for Menippus parodied broadly the different ancient forms of learned discourse. Contaminations, fusions, and separations of form attend most of the history of Menippean satire, as the age and its occasions might happen to require. (MS xiv)

But while there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of Kirk's ideas of function, they operate at the level of final rather than formal causes - basically secondary and external effects that are evident once the initiative has appeared and the thing has been worked into shape. These may be part of the initiative at some lower level or periphery, but to take them as central would imply that both author and audience are vindictive simpletons. It would be analogous to say that such a book was written in just this way in order for it to be used as a doorstep, or in order to make money, or to show off. The mention of abuse and disrespect does give an idea of a possible aspect of the initiative, though.

Kirk describes Menippean style, structure, elements, and theme as follows: the style is characterized mainly by unconventional diction; structurally, it is a medley, usually alternating prose and verse; topical elements include outlandish fictions and extreme distortions of argument; in theme, it is essentially concerned with right learning or right belief, which often calls for ridicule or caricature of belief systems, along with occasional exhortation to learning.

In his study of Pynchon as a Menippean, Theodore Kharpertian offers a lucid summary of other views of the genre. He observes that, as satire has roots in phallic rituals intended to encourage fertility, "In its primitive beginnings as epigrammatic imprecation, therefore, satire embodies a binary opposition of fertility and sterility and is allied by its desired effect with the generative forces of humankind and earth" (HTT 25). This too is a final cause, but it has the advantage of being stated in imaginative terms that might well enter into the basic literary motivations associated with an initiative.

As for structure, modern scholars of classical literature consider "seriocomic (from the Greek *spoudogeloion*) prose and verse, extensive parodies, popular proverbs and speech, encyclopedism, fantastic narratives, and epideictic variety" (HTT 29) as formal Menippean conventions. Kharpertian claims that Frye's elaboration of the conventions is less formal than characterological, although this judgment ignores Frye's treatment of narrative, dialogue-structure, and expression of exuberance in exhaustive erudition. Philip Stevick defines it as essentially an oral form, which accounts for tendencies towards an encyclopedism (the inclusive nature of dialogue), and the impression of perversity in attempting to "escape the limitations of print" (regression to an oral culture) (HTT 30). The variety of the anatomy is motivated by the variety of impulses, including mimetic, parodic, comic and encyclopedic. The enumeration of these impulses is a useful analysis, and one wonders if the variety could be rooted in something more unified.

Swigger argues that encyclopedism is the ambition of literature to achieve the status of knowledge. But he distinguishes parody from serious ambition by parody's critique of the ambition as hopeless or dangerous, and this fails to explain the presence of knowledge-critiques in serious encyclopedism, and the presence of as much genuine knowledge (as well as advocacy of learning) in the parodies as in the earnest works. He seems to me to overlook the distinction between knowledge as *savoir* and as *connaître*. Elliot Braha distinguishes Menippean satire from anatomy and from encyclopedic narrative: anatomy may not be satiric, and may lack narrative form; official encyclopedism implies mental confidence, while Menippean satire exuberantly parodies it. But if an anatomy both lacks narrative form and is not satiric, it is difficult to see how it belongs to literature at all, rather than to discursive writing. I would grant that the term anatomy is somewhat misleading because of the number of earnest anatomies that preceded Burton's. And Braha's distinctions fail to distinguish between official encyclopedism as we have it in the Encyclopedia Britannica and sincere but literary encyclopedism as



we have it in *Paradise Lost*.

Bakhtin adverts to Menippea's origins in oral carnival folk genres, which show three basic themes: free, familiar contact; mésalliances; and profanation. It thus manifests a subversion of official seriousness, and results in three original characteristics: concentration on the present; a critical relation to legend dialectically interrelated with an experiential and freely imaginative base; and stylistic multiplicity. It is the most important of the seriocomic genres. Bakhtin provides fourteen characteristics, which Kharpertian reduces to eleven: comedy; fantasy; philosophy; naturalism; trileveled construction (heaven, hell and earth); abnormal psychology and morality; indecorous scenes; oxymoron; utopianism; parody and multiplicity; and topicality. Bakhtin argues that Menippean satire belongs to a 'dialogical' tradition that is opposed to a 'monological' one that is associated with institutional absolutism, dogmatism, and repression. I believe Bakhtin provides a thorough picture that is in keeping with the goal of characterizing genre in a way that can be plausibly related to artistic initiative, and that consequently his mixture of formal and thematic elements is unified and convincing. I am not sure that 'subversion of official seriousness' is a fully adequate description of the impetus of the genre, and perhaps further development of the theme of 'testing an idea' would complement this usefully.

Julia Kristeva claims that this kind of satire, with the rest of the 'dialogical tradition,' is ambivalent: it is representative and antirepresentative; it explores experience within language as against merely representing experience; and it is subversive of official authoritarianisms (such as Aristotelianism, formal logic, Christianity, Renaissance humanism, rationalism, the autonomy of subject and object). I do not know enough about the theory to make an informed judgment, but a very thorough study would be needed to demonstrate the existence of a distinct dialogical tradition that is subversive of the monological, and that can support such sweeping categories and judgments.

Kharpertian presents his own view, invoking anthropological and etymological definitions, and concludes that

In terms of form and function, then, there are four essential satiric conventions: attack, fertility, variety, and delight. Attack and variety are formal; fertility and delight, functional. Attack and fertility, as form and corresponding function, are derived from the iambic invectives of the Greek phallic rites; similarly, variety and delight are derived from the Roman development of *satura* from Ennius's miscellany of poems and perhaps ultimately from *saturae*, a form of primitive drama. (HTT 33)

As the principal convention of satire is attack, the genre's description can be distilled to the binary principle of antithesis, "that contrasts the sterility of the actual to the fertility of the desirable and opposes the writer to his object or objects of attack " (HTT 34). And as the attack arrives primarily in rhetorical techniques, "so variety is manifested primarily in parody" (HTT 36), although comedy and fantasy are also significant elements.

Kharpertian adds a reader-response twist, observing that the multiplicity of visions represented by this variety suggests the resistance of experience to the imposition of reductive simplifying patterns. And, as it stands in antithetical relation to habitual reductions of experience, "the reformative impulse of Menippean satire, its ancient and original goal of terrestrial fertility, is synonymous in fiction with perceptual fertility" (HTT 41).

Whether or not attack is a formal quality is a difficult question. It would seem at first glance to be a function, but then it is hardly possible to describe satire at all without reference to this feature of it. One might say that the formal quality is mockery: that mockery of something in the fiction implies attack on something outside the fiction, but this turns us to the question of what constitutes mockery. I am not sure that this use of the idea of antithesis adds much to the description, since the writer is always opposed to his objects in some sense (the opposition of the satirical protagonist is more to the thematic point, I believe). Binary oppositions have a way of turning into reductions of experience, too. And the retention of the ideas of sterility and fertility as the basic satiric categories is perhaps egregious: intellectual satire may be more involved with truth and falsehood, or good sense and madness.

To conclude, it is clear that all theories of Menippean satire acknowledge certain prevalent characteristics. These include the mixture of prose with verse; the variety of forms (presented parodically); unconventional diction; popular speech; an oral or Euphuistic quality; a tendency to encyclopedism; a fantastic quality that includes both grotesquerie (carnavalesque reversal) and utopianism; and a concern for right learning that includes both a search for knowledge and a parody of 'knowledges.' I shall be attempting to outline a structure of imagery, themes and techniques that takes these into account.

#### 4. The Reading: Abducting the Skeleton (or, Bodysnatching).

This reading will be, like Frye's, a mixture of inductive and deductive processes. Like inquiry generally, both methods appear to be essential, and C. S. Pierce has called this process 'abduction'. In part I seek to develop further thematic associations from those mentioned by other theorists, as they can be corroborated in the texts; and in part I take my cue from the texts, attending to the predominant effects and themes within them, and seeking reverberations in the other 'members of the corpus', so to speak. In all cases I shall be attempting to both develop and to simplify the elements of form in order to get at the core of the genre, if there is one. The various themes should be articulated as fully as possible, within the limits of the demand for relevance to the entire body of texts, yet also linked together and simplified as closely as possible.

##### 4.1 Satire as Judgment, Encyclopedia, Quest.

As already noted, if we look into the anthropological roots of satire, we find that it begins with Greek phallic rituals meant to effect a division between the sterile and the fertile. Although an etymology, or even an anthropological genealogy, does not in itself necessarily establish a function, there is certainly some correspondence of the traditional function with what satire by its nature accomplishes. Satire makes something ridiculous (it is impossible to conceive of a satire that does not do this), and to ridicule something is to reject it in the mind. The rejection may be partial or provisional - to grasp the potential horror of avarice is not to believe money-making is wrong in principle, or to resolve to give up on it tomorrow - but there is, at the least, an implied reconsideration of value. And the recognition of false or confused attributions of value requires the existence of a standard on the basis of which the revaluation can work. The standard (of real values, or conditions for value) may be only vaguely intuited, or largely hidden from the subject, but the fact that the judgment is possible shows that there is some access to such a standard. So satire necessarily presents a critique

of mistaken value, and potentially presents a reorganization of genuine value. To approach satirical texts in this fashion is to work 'deductively', and if this carries the danger of circularity, it also offers the opportunity to present a more integrated picture of the 'logic' of satire - the close interrelations among the various themes and concepts that are developed in different ways by these works.

This tells us what satire does, and if we ask what satire is, the answers we get most frequently are parody and irony. In a broad sense, satire of this kind works by effecting a 'reduction' or 'reversal' in the estimation of the object. There are a number of techniques available, for conveying to the reader the idea that the accepted valuation of the thing presented is being disrupted. Mikhail Bakhtin has suggested that the roots of Rabelais's methods of reversal are in the 'carnival' phenomenon - a sort of suppressed mode of existence, or alter ego of everyday life, that persisted up to the late middle ages. Carnival provided an entire other set of ways of behaving and an entire other system of images, which express a particular 'philosophy' of holistic life. Here individuals are essentially embedded in a collective, where the bodily or earthly is the basic reality, but is grotesque, because bodily boundaries are continually transgressed. People thus live in the lives of others (parents and children, etc.), and death and degradation are ambivalent, always offering regeneration. Crowning and uncrowning, praise and abuse, life and death are implicit in each other, and so are also ambivalent. Time presents these unending cycles of death and rebirth, so that any one point in it, and any given state of affairs, is characterized by 'jolly relativity,' always incomplete, always in a state of becoming. This world-view is fundamentally antagonistic to the dreary and repressive 'official philosophy' of the age.

It may not be necessary to trace all satirical phenomena to such anthropological matters. The Freudian theory of repression provides, on an individual basis, much the same picture of a concealed bodily life with its own organization and symbolic system. But it is true that in many of the other satires there are present many similar elements. Mental and spiritual phenomena are put on a par with physical. Because the problem of belief is so important, belief and value systems of all kinds come in for rough treatment, since part of the process of testing them is to see how they stand up to mockery and debunking.

Discussion of the 'motivation' of satire is rather hypothetical, but some kind of intuition of absurdity would seem necessary, and this requires comparison of some state of affairs with some other, intelligibly related, state of affairs that renders the first absurd or grotesque. There is a norm of some kind, though perhaps implicit,

incomplete, and only vaguely sensed. The norm need not be a lofty one, although it will presumably be considered more 'real', as even the dedicated Marxist may feel the need for a sandwich before overthrowing the cafeteria bosses. It may be some other system, some version of common sense, the realities of the body and sense perception (as in Rabelais), or the leveller of death. The more intense and thorough satires will tend to be concerned with the latter part of this list. A critical exploration of values - embodied in theories or professed beliefs or behaviour - requires a maximization of the freedom of the author, with respect to both form and content, and this leads to outrages in both form and content.

Menippean texts, then, might be compared in terms of the satiric function of denouncing and debunking, which thereby implicitly sanctions, and thereby implicitly divides the world into rejected and embraced parts. In their concern for 'right learning' and true values, they could be compared by how much and how they reject the world, and how much and what they endorse. In this relation, it is possible to see a loose chronological progression in the works, where the rejection of vanities, of relative worldly values, is expedited by the presence of a powerful ally that can be sided with: Christianity. It is surely no coincidence that Rabelais was for a time a monk, Erasmus a Doctor of Sacred Theology, Burton the rector of Segrave, Swift the Dean of St. Patrick's, Sterne a priest, Kierkegaard a theology student and Christian philosopher, Carlyle a student in the ministry (for five years), and Carroll a deacon. The later works, we find, are on the whole much darker and more sinister, exposing more of the woolly human security blanket to the sheep dip of satire, with the threat of *finding nothing* at all to cling to once the layers of vanity have been melted away. When elementary belief is less stable, more of human life and human nature is inspected, and more indicted.

The sermon form, as a complaint or denunciation and a prophecy of the destruction of evil, is similar to the cursing associated with the earliest ritual 'satire' mentioned, that divides the fertile from the sterile. Bakhtin argues that it was the 'diatribe', an "internally dialogized rhetorical genre" (PDP 98), that was the definitive influence on the early Christian sermons. Therefore, we have a onesided dialogue separating the fertile by condemning the sterile as the root or essence of cursing/blessing, diatribe, sermon and satirical attack.

The urge to find a real value or values, or a source or basis of real value, sends the disgruntled being on a restless search that may expand, when frustrated, into a survey encompassing all areas of human life. The need to recognize and root out the false, and stake out and preserve the true extends to everything that can be

experienced and known. This is the 'encyclopedic tendency' so often noted in Menippean satires, which makes them 'anatomies' of anything, and potentially everything, connected with human society. As universal satires, many of them become savage assaults on human nature itself. While it is obvious from the mere mass of many of these books that they contain more of human knowledge than your average novel, they are not really comparable with encyclopedias as we know them. The canonical encyclopedias, such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, are on a scale far beyond what would be possible for a single writer of fiction, even given a lifetime, and are concerned with relatively superficial information on a huge range of subjects. (As such, the 'straight' encyclopedia presents to the satirist the funny image of a vast trivial digression organized only by an artificial alphabetic principle.) If the anatomists are encyclopedic, it is with respect to human things: to the range of possible experience and emotion, to the kinds of knowledge rather than the content of knowledges, to the possibilities and failures of value. We might say that they are symbolically encyclopedic.

Furthermore, this searching quest, being driven by a difficult and obscure matter, often leads in difficult and obscure directions. The surface appearance of things in general rarely offers any intimation of value to the inquisitive mind, and so the protagonist (sooner or later) turns his or her attention to what is beneath the surface, what is concealed, in the hope of discovering something of value - things or forces or energies that are hidden from the world, but which may be the realities underlying the world's multifarious loves and hates. Thus, the concern for truth and falsehood of value is related to the problem of appearance and reality, which in turn is related, in the human sphere, to secrecy and repression.

#### 4.2 Sources.

The *locus classicus* in the Christian tradition for this sort of search for value is the book of Ecclesiastes. Frye writes that it is the "center of the conception of wisdom in the Bible...whose author, or rather chief editor, is sometimes called Koheleth, the teacher or preacher" (GC 123). Satire's sermonistic or preaching quality has already been noted. In this connection, the person who takes the role of preacher or giver of wisdom is a kind of father-figure, a symbolic element to be taken up later. Ecclesiastes is not, I think, an anatomy - it has not the variety of forms, the colloquial free play, or the distinct parodistic quality - but there are certain affinities. The

frustrated predicament of the preacher hunting around for something that is not 'vanity' borders on the comic. The tone is hard to judge, but there also seems to be humour in his dutiful application of his energies to what was once called dissipation, after he determines that it is the only logical course of action. Also, the reduction of experience to a set of variations on the single intellectual category of vanity presents as concentrated a pattern as any anatomist could ask for. Frye explains, "This word (*hebel*) has a metaphorical kernel of fog, mist, or vapor...It thus acquires a derived sense of 'emptiness,' the root meaning of the Vulgate's *vanitas*" (GC 123).

The transience of life and the world means that nothing can have more than a heavily qualified value. Any pretensions to worldly glory are immediately dismissed:

For *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is* in the days to come shall be forgotten. And how dieth the wise *man?* as the fool.  
Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit. (Eccles. 2.16-17)

Further, death forces upon people the recognition that their bodily nature is on a level with their wisdom and their works and their estimation in the world's eyes, since all pass away equally:

I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.  
For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all *is* vanity.  
All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. (Eccles. 3.18-20)

This perception, which may encounter some opposition when sinking in, radically alters any received value structure. For Christians, it strikes a blow for religion, since it is the best argument against idolatry, or allying oneself with the things of this world.

This ushers in two lessons: first, that given the real equality of men that general death demonstrates, any inequalities in fact become absurd, and insofar as they cause suffering, wrong. That any human life (no matter how good or successful) results in death rules out all results as indices of value: what people in fact end up having cannot be interpreted as just reward. This conceptual separation of result from reward leads to a social vision that puts first priority on the removal of suffering anywhere, rather than the organizing of rights attached

to relative ends, and thus is drawn to the lowest and most unnoticed groups and people:

So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of *such as were* oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors *there was* power; but they had no comforter. (Eccles. 4.1)

The second lesson is also due to the distinction between result and reward. It is that death also makes life precious, since it shows us that there might have been nothing at all, and that what there is can therefore be regarded as a sort of gift - an unwarranted good. Freedom from the world means enjoyment of it floats free too, and then becomes an obvious imperative:

Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour all the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun. (Eccles. 8.15)

The reader is urged to turn to whatever work is at hand rather than cry after cosmic destiny, and to enjoy whatever particular pleasures are found along the way. That nothing can have more than a conditional value means that the things of the earth are to be used and not worshipped. "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man," is the message. It is not so much that there is nothing good to be found in life as that those goods can become idols if not regarded in the light of death, so to speak:

Truly the light *is* sweet, and a pleasant *thing it is* for the eyes to behold the sun:  
But if a man live many years, *and* rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity. (Eccles. 11.7-8)

The emphasis may be on the first half of this, as with Rabelais, or on the latter, as with Swift; but the estimation of vanity is the same.

Surprisingly many of these satirists make reference to Ecclesiastes, and especially to the famous phrase, 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity'. Frye suggests, "Whenever we find explicit mythologizing in literature, or a writer trying to indicate what myths he is particularly interested in, we should treat this as confirmatory or supporting evidence for our study of the genres and conventions he is using," (FI 34-35) and I shall attempt briefly to follow this lead.



Referring to Solomon's phrase, Erasmus's Folly asks, "what else do you think he means but that, just as I have told you, human life is nothing but a sport of folly?" (PF 106). Of course, there are a great many other Biblical references in the book, but according to the translator Hoyt Hopewell Hudson, "Solomon and Saint Paul are her best witnesses" (PF xxiv). And, we are told, beyond 'fool literature', "A still more important influence in shaping this book was a favorite author of Erasmus's, Lucian" (PF xvii). Solomon is perhaps too melancholy for Rabelais's impatience, although he is mentioned towards the end of Gargantua's letter to Pantagruel (G & P 196). He was an Erasmus enthusiast, though, and Burton calls him "that French Lucian" (AM 199). Bakhtin writes, "[one] source of the Renaissance philosophy of laughter is Lucian, especially his image of Menippus laughing in the kingdom of the dead. Lucian's work ... had an essential influence on Rabelais" (RW 69). In his Prologue, Cervantes explicitly repudiates the technique of mentioning his own sources, worrying that his story is

barren in invention, lacking in style, poor in conceits, and devoid of all learning and instruction, without quotations in the margins and notes at the end of the volume, when I see that other books, no matter how fabulous and profane they may be, are so crammed with sentences from Aristotle and Plato and the whole mob of philosophers as to astound their readers and win for their authors a reputation for scholarship and eloquence . . . . Nor do I even know what authors I follow in it, so as to place their names at the beginning in alphabetical order, as they all do, commencing with Aristotle and ending with Xenophon and Zoilus or Zeuxis, although the one was a libeler and the other a painter. (DQ 42-43)

That is, he repudiates these until a friend convinces him to fake the references. But he is more concerned to parody popular romances such as *Amadis of Gaul* and *Orlando Furioso*. It would be hard to determine relative influence in so extensive a citation list as Burton's, but he quotes Erasmus frequently, and in "Democritus to the Reader" gives, instead of a few lines, an entire paragraph for us to "hear the testimony of Solomon," to the effect that "men are so misaffected, melancholy, mad, giddy-headed," (AM 32). Further on, he mentions Solomon at the head of a list of satirical authors, recommending that,

They that laugh and contemn others, contemn the world of folly, deserve to be mocked, are as giddy-headed, and lie as open as any other. Democritus, that common flouter of folly, was ridiculous himself, barking Menippus, scoffing Lucian, satirical Lucilius, Petronius, Varro, Persius, &c., may be censured with the rest. Let the shapely man deride the bandy-legg'd, the white man the blackamoor. Bale, Erasmus, Hospinian, Vives, Kemmisius, explode, as a vast Ocean of Obs and Sois, School Divinity . . . . Much learning hath crackt their sconce. (AM 94-95)

This gives a clear idea of the general line of descent of this satirical style until this point. Moreover, as it demonstrates an awareness of the progression, if not of the exact manner of progression, this tells us that Burton had a certain attitude and purpose in mind when he aligned himself with these models (by calling himself Democritus Junior). The influence of Lucian on Swift is frequently noted by critics. Sterne recognizes some of his companions, ambivalently, in a letter: "I deny I have gone as farr as Swift - He keeps a due distance from Rabelais - & I keep a due distance from him -" (TS 461). He also mentions Varro (TS 131) Lucian (TS 139) Erasmus (TS 238), Burton (TS 247, 407, 409, 413, 421,) Voltaire (TS 11). He quotes Solomon in the sermon on conscience (TS 89-98), and thinks of his book as in the vein of "Cervantik Satyr" (TS 465). The later members in the tradition become a little harder to trace, but Carlyle was deeply influenced by Goethe and German Idealism. He refers to Swift (CR 163), and to *Tristram Shandy* several times (CR 167, 184). He mentions Byron, Napoleon and Voltaire, apparently epitomes of secular defiance and associated with Satan. Melville was influenced by Rabelais (quoted in the "Extracts") and Burton, and knew Goethe and *Sartor Resartus*. He includes a sermon by Father Mapple, and Chapter XCVI of *Moby-Dick* contains a meditation on "unfathomably wondrous Solomon" (M-D 543) which sets him above Rabelais. There are not many references to Ecclesiastes in volume I of *Either/Or*, although there is much discussion about how meaningless, boring and sad life is, and a sense of the impossibility of love and the desirability of death. The main influences are Hegel, Goethe, the Bible, and classical writers, and it would be useless to try to distinguish among the minor ones. But in volume II, B actually likens A's manner and matter to Solomon:

[I]f I had expressed all this in a conversation, you would undoubtedly find it hard to refrain from the sarcastic comment that I am sermonizing. But still you cannot actually blame my presentation for suffering from this fault or for being just what it perhaps ought to be when one speaks to a hardened sinner such as you are; and as for your lecturing and your wisdom, they often remind me of Ecclesiastes...and one would actually think that you occasionally chose your text from it. (E/O II: 150)

The *vanitas vanitatum vanitas* phrase is quoted (E/O II: 166), and further references are made to vanity. Kierkegaard's A opens his meditations with a story from Lucian (E/O I: 19) and refers to Swift early on - "Old age fulfills the dreams of youth. One sees this in Swift: in his youth he built an insane asylum; in his old age he himself entered it" (E/O I: 21). B likens A to Don Quixote (E/O II: 141). Carroll was less influenced by this tradition, it seems, and his story was begun *extempore*, "in a desperate attempt to strike out some new line of

fairy-lore" (AA 22), and develops on the basis of random encounters, logical games, puns, and parodies of various bits of doggerel popular at the time. Joyce was likely familiar with all of these, although his chief debt is probably to Sterne. Pynchon appears to have been influenced by Joyce and Melville, and he mentions Lewis Carroll and Alice (GR 468). There is only an incidental mention of vanity, but an attempt has been made to understand the form of *Gravity's Rainbow* by regarding it as a "New Jeremiad" (Smith and Tololyan in CETP 169-86). In sum, it is clear that many of the writers understood themselves as continuing a certain satirical tradition, and many of them associate their visions with that of Koheleth, although this in itself does not tell us much about what qualities were understood as essential to this tradition. This self-consciousness about tradition seems to reach a peak - at least so far as the immediate evidence shows - in Burton. The hegemony of the novel in modern times has given the later works a more diverse heritage, and a more thorough study of influences would help to settle the matter.

Lucian's image of Menippus alone in his laughter in the kingdom of the dead recalls another important classical influence already mentioned briefly, that of Democritus. Erasmus refers to Democritus, "the laughing philosopher," several times (PF 2, 35, 67, 70). Burton called himself Democritus Junior, and we might as well use his description to introduce the philosopher. He was

a little wearish old man . . . averse from company in his latter days, . . . a famous philosopher in his age, coeval with Socrates . . . . After a wandering life, he settled at Abdera . . . there he lived at last in a garden in the suburbs, wholly betaking himself to his studies and a private life, saving that sometimes he would walk down to the haven, and laugh heartily at such variety of ridiculous objects, where there he saw . . . . [C]oming to visit him one day, [Hippocrates] found Democritus in his garden . . . under a shady bower, with a book on his knees, busy at his study, sometimes writing, sometimes walking. The subject of his book was melancholy and madness, about him lay the carcasses of many several beasts newly by him cut up and anatomized, not that he did contemn God's creatures, as he told Hippocrates, but to find out the seat of this black bile, or melancholy, whence it proceeds, and how it was engendered in men's bodies, to the intent he might better cure it in himself, and by his writings and observations teach others how to prevent and avoid it. (AM 13-15)

It is on Hippocrates' approval of this that Burton takes his pseudonym and makes bold to imitate and, "because he left it unperfect, and it is now lost, as a substitute for Democritus, to revive again, prosecute and finish, in this treatise" (AM 15. Cf. 38-42ff., where the story is repeated). This is the lineage of the symbolic equation of the satirist with the anatomist. It should be noted that Burton uses Solomon's favorite word when recounting

Democritus's answer to Hippocrates's query of why he laughed: ". . . at the vanity and fopperies of the time, to see men so empty of all virtuous actions . . ." (AM 39). The phrase "cut up" still means to satirize, and "cut down" to reduce in stature. The objects of satire are cut up, not purely from malice, but in order that the satirist may come to understand his or her own madness and melancholy, so badly aggravated by contemplation of these creatures. This reference is not overlooked by Rabelais, either: the Dizain to the author, before the prologue of the second book, says, "I can see a new Democritus/ Mocking the deeds done in the life of man" (G & P 166). The heroes of Swift and Voltaire seem to be more in the line of weeping Heraclitus than laughing Democritus. Sterne quotes Erasmus's deflection of blame for his levity to Democritus (TS 238), and refers again to him (TS 338). The figure of the solitary laugher returns in an important way in Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*, although he mentions Myson and the devil as the basic instances. Part of the book's final conclusion is B's question to A, of whether he really laughs when he is alone. This growing isolation of the satirical protagonist seems to be an important aspect of many of the works. In the prologue to the third book, Rabelais likens his writing to Diogenes's thrashing of his tub "in order not to seem the one lazy idler among a people so feverishly busy" (G & P 283). Carlyle is indebted to Diogenes: "what may the unchristian rather than Christian 'Diogenes' mean? Did [my father] . . . intend, by such designation, to shadow-forth my future destiny, or his own present malign humour?" (CR 183). But Teufelsdröckh's defiance seems to have more in common with Faust. Carroll's characters seem more melancholy when they are alone, and there does not seem to be any clear indication of direct influence on Joyce or Pynchon, although it is said that Nora Barnacle had trouble sleeping because of Joyce's giggling as he wrote.

#### 4.3 The Anatomies' Operation.

While the latest works, with their increasing dissociation from mainstream spirituality, can be instructive for understanding the positive aspect of the process, the search for genuine values, it is the nineteenth-century authors who are most directly probing of the soul or psyche and so present the clearest picture of the conceptual/thematic aspect of this side of the process. If we look at the most personal (or 'introverted') of the

works, those mixed with what Frye calls the confession form, we can detect a more definite kind of 'subjective' organization than is evident in the others. That is, there is what could be called a doxastic quest delineated in Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* and in Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*, and these will be our reference points for the logic of the quest. 'Existential quest' might be a better term because the concern for 'right learning' here crucially relates belief to will and action. As Kierkegaard writes, "Doubt is thought's despair; despair is personality's doubt" (E/O II: 211). I offer an extremely abstract sketch of what seems to me to be the logic of the quest, which reflects the logic of Ecclesiastes outlined above. One of the Diapsalmata that begin Kierkegaard's A's writing says, "the only thing I see is emptiness, the only thing I live on is emptiness, the only thing I move in is emptiness. I do not even suffer pain" (E/O I: 37); and he chooses as an epigraph for his whole work a poem that reads, "Grandeur, savoir, renommée,/ Amitié, plaisir et bien,/ Tout n'est que vent, que fumée:/ Pour mieux dire, tout n'est rien [Greatness, knowledge, renown,/ Friendship, pleasure and possessions,/ All is only wind, only smoke:/ To say it better, all is nothing]" (E/O I: 18). A's single-minded response to this state of affairs is boredom: "People with experience maintain that proceeding from a basic principle is supposed to be very reasonable; I yield to them and proceed from the basic principle that all people are boring" (E/O I: 285). I shall keep in mind that the goal of the study is to suggest the shape of a genre, and that no work can be reduced to the sense of another. In the spirit of the anatomy, digressions will be made along the way to develop the associations of imagery and technique.

The search for value is a search for things (activities, relations, etc.) that are ends-in-themselves, things whose worth cannot be exploded as illusory by mockery or irony: the 'shift of perspective' does not achieve a vision wherein such things are seriously diminished in value. The process may begin without any positive conception, but simply with doubt, with an intuition that people hold dear the things they ought not. The extreme version of this is rooted, perhaps, in the consciousness of death, as it is this awareness that seems to render meaningless anything that is subject to it. This fact appears as an insult, an outrage, and conveys a sense of absurdity when held against expectations and claims about an order or meaning in life. Despite the appearance of orderly design in the universe, there is a fatal flaw: all human beings will die, and we know we will die. The only absolute or ultimate end of life is apparently nothingness, extinction, and therefore nothing any human being can do or be will have any more than relative value as means for some relative end. But

without any absolute end on which to hitch the value of the relative end, all relative ends and values are as good as none at all. The knowledge of this taints all perception, and in everything we know of the world we can see nothing that can hold the relative value we project on it. As Coleridge writes, with reference to *Tristram Shandy*,

There is *the idea* of the soul in its undefined capacity and dignity that gives the sting to any absorption of it by any one pursuit, and this not as a member of society for any particular, however mistaken, interest, but as a man. Hence in humour the little is made great, and the great little, in order to destroy both, because all is equal in contrast with the infinite. (qtd. in TS 485)

Absorption in singular pursuits is submission to the tyranny of the hobbyhorse, the paranoia, and the system.

Thus there is a certain amount of understanding that those things that are ends-in-themselves partake in some sense of the infinite; but this 'infinite' is a function of the attitude or vision of the observer. Both Kierkegaard and Carlyle talk a great deal about the infinite, and it becomes clear that the perception of or participation in an infinite is a matter of establishing a certain kind of relation with the universe. Establishing and maintaining this certain kind of relationship places particular demands on the individual. It is in the most extreme instance a confrontation with the nothingness of death, and the emptiness of value that death establishes in the world. It is in the next instance a recognition that in relation to this absolute emptiness, any particular thing or value is infinite, because it exists in spite of the reality of the nothingness: the fact that any thing should even exist, never mind any perceptible value, is miraculous in this relation, as the distance between zero and one is in a sense infinite. Finally, it is potentially an identification with this infinite, or with something that allows the individual to overcome the claims of relative values.

The successful outcome of the quest depends on a successful confrontation with death; and to succeed in confronting death means, apparently, to accept death without desiring it: in modernist psychological terms, the self is negated by destroying the ego with death; death is defeated by rejecting its power along with the ego. The ego is not killed, however, so much as rendered powerless, and accepted as a burden. Consciousness of death remains, but the ego (that sees everything in measured relation to usefulness for its own power over the rest of the world) is removed from control of the will. The self that remains sees things through the eyes of the broken ego, as it were, *in their infinitude in relation to the nothingness at their foundation (from which they come and towards which they move)*. As Rabelais says, "philosophy is nothing other than the contemplation of

death" (G & P 375).

The concern for doubt and its goal of certainty seems to lead to the creation of protagonists who combine characteristics of innocence, melancholy, and self-righteousness. The doubt of the sceptics tends to isolate them in melancholy, but those who are sure of themselves may be so either because they have not thought to doubt, or because they have arrived at a belief in which they can have faith. Erasmus's Folly is an innocent, and sure of her praiseworthiness. No one is really melancholy in Rabelais (or no one who matters), although Panurge's agonized indecision draws him close to it. The great erudition of the others lends them their certainty, and this seems to underpin their offhand violence and feats of physical prowess, as well. The voice of the author, in the prologues, show us the connection of physical exuberance and violence with intense belief:

*I offer myself, body and soul, tripe and bowels, to a hundred thousand basket-loads of fine devils in case I lie in so much as a single word in the whole of this History. And, similarly, may St Anthony's fire burn you, the epilepsy throw you, the thunder-stroke and leg-ulcers rack you, dysentery seize you, and may the erysipelas, with its tiny cowhair rash, and quicksilver's pain on top, through your arse-hole enter up, and like Sodom and Gomorrah may you dissolve into sulphur, fire, and the bottomless pit, in case you do not firmly believe everything that I tell you in this present Chronicle! (G & P 168-69)*

Paradoxically, this passage also shows us the connection of this exuberance with literary discourse, where belief as such is simply excluded as an issue. Burton and Swift (or Democritus Jr. and Gulliver) are clearly melancholics, although the singlemindedness of their quests gives them an air of purity, too. Candide and Doctor Pangloss, as the names indicate, are innocents, as are a few companions, and almost the entire rest of the world is not so much self-righteous as savagely and unrepentantly self-centered. Tristram Shandy is an innocent, even an unborn one for quite a while, as are Uncle Toby and Trim. Walter Shandy is slightly absurd in his self-assurance, and one feels that a garrulous sort of anger prevents his frustrations from causing him any serious depression. Carlyle, Kierkegaard and Melville all give us profoundly melancholy protagonists. Teufelsdröckh is also a sort of innocent in his lonely quest, although he reaches a point of Faustian pride. The other two books give us contrasting characters to complicate things. Kierkegaard's 'A' was actually conceived as a Faust figure: the commentary on *Either/Or* tells us that "Emanuel Hirsch makes a good case for the idea that Kierkegaard's first writing plan was a series of letters by a pseudonymous Faustian doubter" (E/O I: 662).

He combines melancholy with self-righteousness driven to the point of demonic defiance. In contrast is 'B,' innocent in appearance insofar as he is a family man who defends the 'ethical' and the purity of 'first love.' But he shows he is familiar with A's moods, and his certainty is based on a conscious choice of faith over and above the esthetic temptation of despair. Melville gives us Ishmael, who is something of a misanthrope, but is cured, apparently, by the spectacle of the once again Faustian, demonically proud Ahab. Minor companion characters in *Moby-Dick* are often innocents such as Queequeg and Pip. Alice is of course an innocent, although both books are tinged with a melancholy sense of the transience of this state. The characters she meets are either melancholy, like the Mock-Turtle, the Gnat and the White Knight, or, more commonly, possessed of a sanctimonious energy that is innocent in its unselfconsciousness. The violent outbreaks of this energy border on the Rabelaisian (the examples are legion, but perhaps the Queen of Hearts is an exemplar). Stephen Dedalus is a Hamlet figure, and, like 'A', arrogant in his melancholy. Mr. Bloom provides a contrast with an innocence and a tentative self-possession, both of which seem to spring from his more pragmatic attitude rather than any intellectual penetration. Tyrone Slothrop's foolish innocence is important in the book, and seems to be related to his American heritage, but he learns self-doubt as he gets deeper into the convoluted plot. The other characters are more divided, between some kind of faith and some kind of cynicism or corruption. More or less innocents are Tantivy, Roger Mexico, Geli Tripping, Franz and Leni Pökler, Stephen Dodson-Truck, Tchitcherine, Enzian and possibly Bianca, and the pigs; more or less melancholics, or perhaps cynics, include Katje, Pointsman, Prentice, Jamf, Thanatz, and Greta; and Blicero and Gottfried show innocence devastated by Faustian arrogance. There are a few confidently energetic, almost Rabelaisian figures, such as Seaman Bodine, Frau Gnabh, and Major Duane Marvy.

As mentioned, the sceptics become more and more isolated as their rejection of accepted values puts them out of touch with society. The other side of this coin is a reconciliation with society, and the father-son relation seems especially important here, where the intellectual quester is ready to listen to a teacher or preacher who could reveal a meaning or truth that would resolve his doubt. This is not as obvious in Erasmus, but as author he takes the role of preacher, and the pun in the Latin title of the book, *Encomium Moriae*, which addresses it to Thomas More, suggests that Erasmus and More may have thought of each other as mutual mentors in wisdom



and faith. The title of Rabelais's book clearly sets out the importance of the relationship, and the first book opens with a discussion of Alcibiades's praise of his master Socrates. Burton seems to be among the most solitary of the anatomists, but his pseudonym suggests a retrospective paternity. Also, his vast quotation bespeaks a reverence for elder wisdom and authority that could be seen as filial. Voltaire's *Candide* and Pangloss fit the pattern nicely, and Tristram and Walter Shandy are the central focus of Sterne's work. In fact, that Mr. Shandy spits out snippets of Burton in his paroxysms of wisdom may suggest that Sterne looks at Burton as a spiritual father. The relation between *Uncle Toby* and Trim is a parallel, too.

As for the nineteenth-century works, *Teufelsdröckh* is essentially alone, but is tormented by the question of whom the universe 'belongs to', God or the Devil, a conflict emphasized in his name's etymology. This can be taken as a conflict between good and evil father-figures. Carlyle's concern for heroes and hero-worship seems cognate. Kierkegaard's B is obviously a potential father-figure for his A. There seems to be a definite self-reference in these types, as well, as his own relation to his father was powerfully significant. John Updike points out that there is not a single mention of his mother in all of Kierkegaard's work, and according to him, a central nerve of the philosopher's thought is "the identification of God with his father, whom he both loved and hated, who treated him cruelly and who loved him" (Updike 114). The incarnation of God the father in Jesus, and the incarnation of the spirit of Jesus in his apostles is probably the archetype of the transmission of wisdom, values and the spirit that guides action. Kierkegaard later used the same teacher-student relation mentioned by Rabelais to express his opinion of his work:

There was a young man as favorably endowed as an Alcibiades. He lost his way in the world. In his need he looked about for a Socrates but found none among his contemporaries. Then he requested the gods to change him into one. But now - he who had been so proud of being an Alcibiades was so humiliated and humbled by the gods' favor that, just when he received what he could be proud of, he felt inferior to all. (E/O I: xviii)

But the father figure is ambivalent. Kierkegaard was also tormented by his father's admission of having cursed God, and Updike relates this awareness to Kierkegaard's own attack on Christendom. In Melville, Ahab is the tyrannical father, and Pip becomes a kind of son to him. The rest of the crew are potential 'sons,' but they are destroyed by his obsession, and Ishmael remains more or less an observer, slightly distanced. Although women are generally more prevalent and powerful in *Alice*, it seems clear that Carroll cherished his fatherly role

towards young girls, and he has revealed that his own father's death was "the greatest blow that has ever fallen on my life" (AA 9). The White Knight is fatherly, if eccentric, and is widely considered a 'portrait of the artist'; and the possibility is left open that the Red King dreamed the second story. This and *The Praise of Folly* are the only anatomies with young women protagonists, but, unlike the latter, there is no hint of any positive wisdom in *Alice*. Quite unlike Kierkegaard, Carroll "was orthodox in all respects save his inability to believe in eternal damnation... 'My life is so strangely free from all trial and trouble,' he once wrote, 'that I cannot doubt my own happiness is one of the talents entrusted to me to "occupy" with, till the Master shall return, by doing something to make other lives happy'" (AA 10). The contrast between the two is so diametrical, in respect of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, idyll and anguished dread, attitudes to the Master and to damnation, and conception of duty to society, that one is fascinated with the points at which they converge: their awe for their fathers, their interest in logic and their adoration for 'virginally pure' young women.

In the twentieth century we have the relationship of Bloom and Stephen in *Ulysses*, which parallels that of Odysseus and his son Telemachus (who in the *Odyssey* is watched over by Athena, goddess of wisdom). In *Gravity's Rainbow*, the tyrannical relationship is most prevalent, with Tyrone being sold by his father Broderick Slothrop as a human guinea pig for IG Farben. Later on the Oedipal conflict gets more explicit, with a hallucinated or fantasized television show where the villain "is this typical American teenager's own *Father*, trying episode after episode to kill his son. And the kid knows it. Imagine that . . . . He's a cheerful and a plucky enough lad . . . . That ol' Broderick's just a murderin' fool . . ." (GR 674). There is also the terrible demonic relationship between Blicero and Gottfried, which ends in ritualistic murder. Weissman is "the father you will never quite manage to kill. The Oedipal situation in the Zone these days is terrible" (GR 747).

Kierkegaard has some few other remarks on fathers and sons which bear special interest here. For him, fatherhood is related to evocation of mental energy, which underpins duty, command and the idea of the rule. B brings out these concepts in a discussion of his relationship with his father, and his father's effect on his education. He says he owes an eternal debt to his father's earnestness, and that, "What matters in upbringing is not that the child learns this or that but that the mind is matured, that energy is evoked" (E/O II: 267). The memory of his father is his fondest recollection, but the essence of it is duty: "the main thing is the total impression of duty, and not at all the multiplicity of duty" (E/O II: 268). The sense of the father's will becomes

a metaphysical principle, a felt presence. Even if he had been able to avoid school, he tells us,

I would never have dared to do it or have really wanted it. It would have seemed to me as if my father's ghost would appear and follow me about in school, for here again I would have had an infinite impression of what constituted my duty, so that no amount of time would ever erase the recollection that I had offended against his will. (E/O II: 268)

The role of the father is to exemplify the idea of duty for the son - not merely to impose a rule, but to lead the son to a perception of the personal claim of ethical rule on his conscience. Ideally, there is a stage of ethical maturing where the sense of duty as an externally imposed command is transformed, by an intensifying of perception, into a recognition of universal duty as an aspect of duty to self. More specifically, the spirit of his father is embodied in the study of Latin. The slightly neurotic element in the child's vision is not suppressed:

The unconditioned respect with which I regarded the rule, the veneration I felt for it, the contempt with which I looked down on the miserable life the exception endured, the to my eyes righteous way in which it was pursued in my exercise book and always stigmatized - what else is this but the distinction that is the basis of all philosophic reflection? Under this influence, when I reflected on my father, he seemed to me to be the incarnation of the rule; what came from elsewhere was the exception insofar as it was not in harmony with his command. (E/O II: 269)

It is in this sense of internalization or incarnation of principles of action that one can become one's own father, and this is symbolically the final development of these themes of moral education:

When a person has felt the intensity of duty with all his energy, then he is ethically matured, and then duty will break forth within him . . . . Let the casuist immerse himself in finding out the complexity of duty; the primary question, the only salutary thing, is always that a person with respect to his own life is not his uncle but his father. (E/O II: 266)

Norman O. Brown will find something much less salutary in what he calls the *causa sui* project.

The solitude of many of the heroes comes from the incongruity of their demand for sound belief with the reflex of doxastic conformity so prevalent in society - a kind of sacrifice of mental integrity to social and material convenience. As Kierkegaard writes, "For the person in despair, this movement is evident; it is no rhetorical expression but is the only adequate one when he sees on the one side the whole world and on the other side himself, his soul" (E/O II: 221). Solitary restlessness leads to the identification of many characters as 'wanderers,' and to the technique of digressiveness. Burton tells of himself,

I have lived a silent, sedentary, solitary, private life, with myself and the Muses in the University as long as Xenocrates in Athens, nearly to old age, to learn wisdom as he did, penned up most part in my study . . . . I had a great desire to have some smattering in all . . . . This roving humor . . . I have ever had, & like a roving spaniel, that barks at every bird he sees, leaving his game, I have followed all, saving that which I should, and may justly complain, and truly (for who is everywhere is nowhere) . . . that I have read many books, but to little purpose, for want of good method. (AM 13)

In "The Author's Abstract of Melancholy", Burton explains his own manic-depressive moods as the consequence of solitary imagining that never solidifies into a fixed relation with reality. Carlyle's Teufelsdröckh is an orphan, also known as 'the Wanderer,' and Joyce also associates Bloom with the Wandering Jew. Ishmael is also an orphan, as the last word of the book confirms, and Melville even thought of his books as orphans, ideally sent into the world without forebears. Kierkegaard concentrated intensely on the individual and the idea of the individual, and, on the strength of what we read in *Either/Or*, it appears that his breaking his engagement to Regine Olsen had much to do with this concern. A relates solitude to integration and freedom; B sees this view as a delusion:

You no doubt know of the insane man who had the fixed idea that his apartment was full of flies so that he was in danger of being smothered by them. In the anxiety of despair and with the rage of despair, he fought for his life. In the same way you, too, seem to be fighting for your life against a similar imaginary swarm of flies, against what you call 'the congregation.' (E/O II: 99)

B evokes another Democritean image and relates loneliness, the pursuit of wisdom, the misanthropic and the diabolic:

There was in Greece a wise man . . . . 'It is said of Myson that he was a misanthrope and that he laughed when he was alone. When someone asked him why he did so, he answered: Simply because I am alone.' You see, you have a predecessor; you will aspire in vain to be included among the number of the seven wise men . . . . [T]he person who laughs when he is alone cannot possibly have a friend, and for two reasons: partly because as long as the friend is present he cannot laugh, and partly because the friend is bound to fear that he is merely waiting for him to leave so that he can laugh at him. So, you see, the devil must be your friend. I could almost be tempted to ask you to take these words literally, for the devil is also said to laugh when he is alone. To me there is something very disconsolate in an isolation like that . . . . (E/O II: 320-321)

B's final challenge to A is, "Do you really laugh when you are alone? You do understand what I mean; I do not mean whether it sometimes or even frequently happens that you laugh when you are alone, but whether you find your satisfaction in this solitary laughter" (E/O II: 326). If he does not, then this will prove to B that A does not exactly reject everybody, but that the restlessness with which he seeks the infinite makes him unjust to

people. The impetus to isolation is a consequence of the satirical vision that suggests that it is ultimately incomplete.

Gulliver is separated from normal existence from the start, and as he gradually becomes more grieved at human nature, even when he does get home he never regains intimacy with his family. Candide quickly becomes lost in the world, although he regains a community with a decent enough existence at the end. Pangloss's dauntless optimism in the face of atrocity may be a kind of variant on the 'laughing philosopher' Democritus or Menippus. In the *Alice* books, Alice never really becomes close to anyone but the White Knight, and Carroll's shyness was one of the things that prevented him from seeking the priesthood. Sterne's Tristram is unborn for a good deal of the book. Stephen Dedalus is somewhat alien even to his student-friends, as Bloom is from the community, and from Molly's body. In Joyce's *Portrait*, Stephen declares that "silence, exile and cunning" will be the only weapons he allows himself. Pynchon's Slothrop travels back to England alone, where there are "Atlantics aplenty" between his American behaviour and English standards, where "At first Slothrop, quaintly gentlemanly, didn't talk at all" (GR 22). At the end of his adventures, he becomes refined into thinner and thinner time-slices, begins to cease to 'exist for others', and is 'scattered' instead of being 'assembled.' Pynchon himself is well-known for his invisibility and silence towards the public. Rabelais would seem to be an exception to this pattern. His heroes are all already giants, and we might say that his book presents not so much a quest for wisdom as a demonstration of the possibility of success, and the attendant joy in the intellectual sphere. Rabelais may have an insight that would have helped the others when he says, "For all ancient philosophers and sages have reckoned two things to be necessary for safe and pleasant travel on the road of wisdom and in the pursuit after knowledge; God's guidance and the company of men" (G & P 710).

The convention of pseudonymity or anonymity is strangely popular among anatomists, and seems to relate to the themes of isolation or lostness, and repression. The author's keeping his identity secret separates him personally from the public, but makes the experience and application of the work more universal. The intellectual orientation may also be involved, as the adoption of a mythical or invented persona tends to suggest impersonality, which is also a desired quality of argument. François Rabelais becomes Master Alcofribas Nasier; *Don Quixote* is said to be received from Cid Hamete Benengeli; Burton is Democritus Junior; Carlyle clothes himself in the persona of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh; and Kierkegaard took extreme measures to ensure he

would not be connected with the 'editor' Victor Eremita. I do not want to exaggerate patterns, but it may be of interest that Erasmus speaks through Folly; that Lemuel Gulliver is the ostensible narrator of his Travels; that Candide names both book and protagonist; and that Moby-Dick begins with the sentence, "Call me Ishmael" (M-D 23). It is easy to forget that Lewis Carroll is a pen-name for Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. Stephen Dedalus and Tyrone Slothrop have a certain reference to their creators, but no more so than is to be expected, perhaps. It is Pynchon's notorious aversion to publicity that makes him such an 'anonymous' author.

There may also be some explanation in the anthropological roots of satire. Fred Norris Robinson points out that the English were in awe of the alleged power of the early Irish poets to kill with their words (in Paulson, ed.). Many have suggested that later developments in satire still retain this quasi-magical function of 'cursing' - a form of attack that tends to split the world into two parts, the company of the accepted and the company of the rejected. If later satirists still feel something of this ancient effect, it would make sense for them to speak from behind a mask, to help them avoid the danger of retributive cursing. The universal satirists of Menippea might also want to emphasize the generality of the attack by distancing it from a particular context. They must certainly have been conscious of the condemnation implied in their work.

But these books show a special kind of self-consciousness about the power of names generally, which I think is part of the sense of play that is important to them. We see this in the catalogues and in the unconventional diction, especially. Mr. Shandy's theory (mentioned by Carlyle), gives us a clear account of *nominal paranoia*: "His opinion, in this matter, was, That there was a strange kind of magick bias, which good or bad names, as he called them, irresistibly impress'd upon our characters and conduct" (TS 36). Thus Trismegistus ('thrice-greatest') is the greatest of names and will inspire to the greatest deeds, and Tristram ('the sad one') is likewise the worst. The nice knock-down argument Mr. Shandy uses in his defence is that no one could be persuaded, materially or otherwise, to name their child Judas. Tristram knows his father's theory is demented, and yet there is *something* to what he says. It is still true that no one would name their child Judas, and there are other names that people will not use just as there are words that are not appropriate in some contexts. In fact, Updike relates that, after Kierkegaard incited a journal, the *Corsair*, to persecute him, "Astonishingly, the very name Søren, up to then the most common male baptismal name, became a byword for

the ridiculous, and Danish parents...took to admonishing their children, 'Don't be a Søren'" (Updike 111). If we consider the great number of dashes and asterisks in Sterne's work, put in to cypher out an inappropriate word, and the great play with lewd puns (such as the ongoing substitution of nose for penis), we can see that the Shandean theory is important to Sterne's game. Not only is reference to the 'material bodily lower stratum' suppressed, but also direct reference to essential parts of religion. No one - in Protestant cultures, anyway - would name their child Jesus, either. There may be different reasons for these different kinds of avoidance, but one might say that what they have in common is suppression of that great splitting of the world that satire adumbrates, the apocalyptic event that reveals the hidden order of things. Such suppression is therefore related to the mental repression that sacrifices a vision of reality to convenient ideologies. Naming is also related to the power of analysis, that cuts through the surface to find real causes. What is avoided still exerts force, and the technique of digressiveness reflects avoidance fueled by this energy, whereas the catalogues seem to reflect confrontation with this energy. And as unconventional diction means words that are unnatural, monstrous, this is also evocative of concealed forces, whether the name is explicitly referential or not. Such verbal prodigiousness can be ambivalent, as Bakhtin points out with respect to Rabelais's oaths and his praise-abuse, and may restore some of the lost power of words to help people know and identify with each other:

Wherever conditions of absolute extra-official and full human relations are established, words tend to this ambivalent fullness. It is as if the ancient marketplace comes to life in closed chamber conversation. Intimacy begins to sound like the familiarity of bygone days, which breaks down all barriers between men. (RW 421)

As Burton indicates above, spiritual wandering is related to the technique of digressiveness. Here Kierkegaard indicates another association of digressiveness. The esthetic view is fascinated with the arbitrary, the conditional, and with momentary sights of the infinite in finitude. The implication is that the esthetic life remains disorganized and aimless, because its interest focusses on discrete pieces of experience rather than on the structure of experience:

Even though one stays clear of official posts, one should nevertheless not be inactive but attach great importance to all the pursuits that are compatible with aimlessness; all kinds of unprofitable pursuits may be carried on. Yet in this regard one ought to develop not so much extensively as intensively and, although mature in years, demonstrate the validity of the old saying: It doesn't take

much to amuse a child. (E/O I: 298)

Thus the esthete becomes an ironic connoisseur of just those interests that Coleridge claimed were absurd by reason of their dissimilarity from the soul:

Arbitrariness is the whole secret . . . . One does not enjoy the immediate object but something else that one arbitrarily introduces . . . . One enjoys something totally accidental; one considers the whole of existence from this standpoint; one lets its reality run aground on this. . . . It is very advantageous to let the realities of life be undifferentiated in an arbitrary interest like that. Something accidental is made into the absolute and as such into an object of absolute admiration . . . . The accidental outside a person corresponds to the arbitrariness within him. (E/O I: 299)

The delight in the accidental is here that of a rather jaded wanderer, without real hope for finding anything new. But the idea of delightful wandering is important in these works, and the great freedom the authors take is part of their exploration of values. And this provides the opportunity for an intuition that freedom is itself a great value: a condition of play, and probably for anything else that is an end in itself.

In his reading of the Wisdom phase of the Bible, Frye draws out the relation between work and play, saying that the Preacher's work ethic does not recommend activity for its own sake but points to "the release of energy that follows the giving up of our various excuses for losing our way in the fog" (GC 125). He observes that, in

the tremendous Vulgate phrase *ludens in orbe terrarum*, *playing over all the earth* . . . we finally see the real form of wisdom in human life as the *philosophia* or *love* of wisdom that is creative and not simply erudite. We see too how the primitive form of wisdom . . . finally grows, through incessant discipline and practice, into the final freedom of movement where, in Yeats's phrase, we can no longer tell the dancer from the dance. (GC 125)

At certain points we feel that the authors are just telling themselves a story for their own diversion, enjoying their freedom of creation, and testing the limits of literary play, that 'purposeless purposiveness' that Kant said is the characteristic quality of art. According to Kierkegaard, the beautiful has its teleology within itself (E/O II: 272), but in some of these catalogues (Burton's and Rabelais's; Joyce's in the Tavern scene; Pynchon's in the Banana Breakfast and the Disgusting English Candy Drill and the Balloon Pie-Fight with Rocket-Limericks) we feel that the writer is seeing just how purposeless he can be, how far he can divert the teleology of his own work into a tributary whose design is a mockery of design. Bakhtin comments on one of the forms of 'unpublicized speech' in Rabelais:



One of the popular forms of comic speech was the so-called *coq-a-l'ane*, 'from rooster to ass.' This is a genre of intentionally absurd verbal combinations, a form of completely liberated speech that ignores all norms, even those of elementary logic . . . . It is as if words had been released from the shackles of sense, to enjoy a play period of complete freedom and establish unusual relationships among themselves . . . . It was, so to speak, the carnivalization of speech, which freed it from the gloomy seriousness of official philosophy as well as from truisms and commonplace ideas. (RW 422-26)

Similarly, analyses of Burton frequently speak of the Euphuistic style, the essence of which is said to be a vocal or oral pattern, which uses rhetorical devices in order to advance devices of sound-design (Apple 21-22). This can create a pleasantly anesthetic effect through which information can be poured (Apple 24), and which adds to an epic quality of the book. Sentence rhythm is subordinated to the paragraph rhythms more conducive to opinion:

This tendency for authorial intrusion in a work of an essentially 'oral' nature is the most obvious stylistic characteristic of the anatomist . . . . Burton's style grows by the inclusion of lists and authorities. The structural principle . . . seems to be entirely oral, what sounds good fits, but the rhythm does not have to be continuous. This seems to be one of the distinguishing features of the anatomy as opposed to the novel. (Apple 25)

The impetus of intellectual doubt travesties conventions and leads to the liberation of sound and thought to become play. Digressiveness may be an aggravation of everything that is beside the point, but it is part of a conviction that what is supposed to be the point really is not.

Touching again on the issues of literary influence and the father-son relation, it is curious that in one image, Burton combines the consciousness of influence or derivation with another theme that will become significant, that of the giant:

I can say of myself, whom have I injured? The matter is theirs most part, and yet mine, whence it is taken appears (which Seneca approves), yet it appears as something different from what 'tis taken from; which nature doth with the aliment of our bodies, incorporate, digest, assimilate, I do dispose of what I take. I make them pay tribute, to set out this my Macaronicon, the method only is mine own, I must usurp that of Wecker: We can say nothing but what hath been said, the composition and method is ours only, & shows a Scholar . . . . Though there were many Giants of old in Physick and Philosophy, yet I say with Didacus Stella: A dwarf standing on the shoulders of a Giant may see farther than a Giant himself; I may likely add, alter, and see farther than my predecessors. (AM 19-20)

Gigantic and monstrous beings figure importantly in most of these works. In relation to the theme of the

existential quest, they represent a hidden creative force that may be discovered lurking beneath the veils of vanity, but one which is potentially destructive. Loyalty to or recognition of such a force can be a great benefit, but to try to identify with it, possess it or compete with it, can be devastating. Simple awareness of it may inspire to feats of great energy, and as many of these books have been called 'monstrous' in one way or another, we may surmise that they reflect some intuitions of monstrous proportions. This too is linked to the theme of the father, as a father is a giant to a boy, and the great Western father, God, is a sort of monstrous omnipotent giant who can determine salvation or damnation. The giant or monster is an overturner of orders, and is associated with the power of the bodily to wipe out pretensions of the mind. Burton associates the wisdom of antiquity with 'Giants of old', and with food that is assimilated by the body. Nothing new can be said, and thus learning is reincarnation, the old entering into the new as food supplies the body. If we transfer this process to the other image, we have a dwarf eating a giant, or a giant being remade within the dwarf.

The anatomies are monstrous with respect to both content and form. Although he refers to the Giants who made war on the gods to attain immortality (PF 47), Erasmus shows no great interest in these images. It may be significant that Erasmus's is one of the most orderly of the anatomies. Rabelais's giants are famous and cherished paragons of erudite corporeality. Don Quixote battles windmill-giants. Burton describes many monstrous things, but is not over-concerned with particular monsters, except perhaps in the sense of human nature. Swift's Brobdingnagians are perfect examples of an excess of living flesh; his Lilliputians and Yahoos are other varieties of monstrosity. Sterne's book contains no giants, although there is something monstrous about such a loquacious foetus. Kierkegaard's A encounters titanic forces in the primeval forest as he muses about his girl, and these become most active as he finally rushes to his cottage for his rendezvous with her. Melville gives us Moby-Dick with Ahab running a close second. Carlyle seems not to have been especially interested in titans per se, but the vision of the universe as some sort of colossal being under a vast suit of clothes is analogous. Carroll's world is replete with malformations and permutations of people and things, as well as a certifiable monster, the Jabberwock. Generally, however, Alice herself is a greater physical force than the rest. Joyce lets things out of their daytime lairs in the Nighttown episode, and his Dubliners have ancestral roots in Homeric terrors. In the 'Cyclops' episode, the Citizen is an insular giant in every way, and Joyce calls the technique here 'Gigantism.' Pynchon gives us midgets, titans, the god Pan (GR 720-21), avenging and

observing angels, King Kong, and the Rocket, a "bright angel of death" (GR 760).

Rabelais's priestess Bacbuc advises the company,

It is only right therefore that, in almost all languages, the Ruler of the Underworld has been known by epithets implying riches. When your sages devote their labours and studies to a diligent examination of this lore, having first implored that sovereign deity, whom the Egyptians of old called in their tongue Isis - that is to say the Veiled, the Hidden, the Concealed, by which name they begged and prayed her to manifest herself and appear to them - she will enlarge their knowledge both of herself and her creatures, and give them a good Lantern for guide. (G & P 710)

This indicates the relation of the quest for wisdom with hidden underworld powers - what we know as the unconscious. Frye comments on titanic imagery in his discussion of the lower part of the *axis mundi* image.

The 'titanic' world of primeval giants and devils is usually considered evil, but there is a 'creative descent' that

brings us down to the origins of human wisdom and power . . . . [The] hero of lower wisdom is Prometheus, the titan who created man, in some accounts, and the defier of the gods, who . . . brought to man the fire that made his civilization possible . . . . [O]ur most familiar picture of Prometheus is of the crucified titan tortured by a malicious sky-god, in other words a tragic figure like the Jesus of the Passion. (WWP 277)

This suggests that titanic powers are analogous to the id repressed by the ego, and what Frye goes on to say confirms this. He mentions Swift, Kierkegaard, Melville and Apuleius within a few pages in this connection, but spends more time specifically on *Moby Dick*:

The professed quest is to kill Moby Dick, but as the portents of disaster pile up it becomes clear that a will to identify with (not adjust to) what Conrad calls the destructive element is what is really driving Ahab . . . . [L]ike other creative descents, it is partly a quest for wisdom, however fatal the attaining of such wisdom may be. (WWP 284-85)

We hear echoes here of *Teufelsdröckh*, of *A*, of Captain Blicero. Frye remarks on the place of childhood fantasy in the exploration of the unconscious world:

It is hardly surprising to find infantile elements in such descent narratives . . . in view of the central importance of childhood experiences in forming the structure of the unconscious. But the infantile tends to block off the quest for the renewal of wisdom and energy which is the real object of the descent, and substitute for it a renewal of dependence on parental projections. (WWP 287-88)

The reflective and discursive quality of many of these books may rule out any physical quest to correspond to the imaginative one: Erasmus, Burton, Sterne, Carlyle, Kierkegaard, present us with situations where the

profundity of movement is almost totally mental. Those who do go somewhere often pass through a world that is so weird as to be imaginatively harrowing even if relatively joyous (as in Rabelais), getting bounced from one utterly alien encounter to another. Rabelais, Swift, Voltaire, Melville, Carroll and Pynchon give us this situation. In between are *Don Quixote* and *Ulysses* (and *Moby-Dick*, in a sense), where it is accepted that the strangeness of the situation is rooted in the perceptions of the characters. The exterior quests, however, do not often sound the usual high note in their climaxes.

As for form, many of the books have been called some variation of monstrous, whether simply due to their size, their accumulation of so many different techniques, their 'disorganization' and apparently chaotic rushing hither and yon. Frye writes,

The usual critical approach to the form of such works [as *Moby Dick* or *Tristram Shandy*] resembles that of the doctors in Brobdingnag, who after great wrangling finally pronounced Gulliver a *lusus naturae*. It is the anatomy in particular that has baffled critics, and there is hardly any fiction writer deeply influenced by it who has not been accused of disorderly conduct. The reader may be reminded here of Joyce, for describing Joyce's books as monstrous has become a nervous tic. I find 'demogorgon,' 'behemoth,' and 'white elephant' in good critics; the bad ones could probably do much better. (AC 313)

To reinforce Frye's point, a Danish critic obligingly calls *Either/Or* a monster:

Heiberg stated that 'like a lightning bolt out of a clear sky, a monster of a book has suddenly plunged down into our reading public; I mean the two big, thick volumes of *Either/Or*, by Victor Eremita, consisting of fifty-four full, closely printed sheets [864 pages]. . . . The book may be called a monster, for it is impressive by its very mass. . . .' (E/O I: xviii)

It is not difficult to see why monstrosity comes to mind. As these books claim absolute freedom of invention, they tend to parody, twist, extend, and yoke together conventions from any type of writing at all. This miscellany appears as a continual changing of form, or no form, or contrary to nature. Although there is often a deeper logical plan, this voracious surface may not be appreciated. One of Carlyle's reviewers was less flattering: "*Sartor Resartus* is what old Dennis used to call 'a heap of clotted nonsense,'" (CR 333). Granted, Carlyle himself had hardly a more definite idea of the book: "It is put together in the fashion of a kind of Didactic Novel; but indeed properly *like* nothing yet extant: I used to characterise it briefly as a kind of "Satirical Extravaganza on Things in General". . . . My own conjecture is that *Teufelsdröckh*, whenever

published . . . will add touches of (almost the deepest) spiritual interest, with others quite the opposite feeling" (CR 121). Some of the response to Sterne had the good sense not to make invidious comparisons: "[It] affects (and not unsuccessfully) to please, by a contempt of all the rules observed in other writings, and therefore cannot justly have its merit measured by them" (TS 473). A monster has its own laws. Of those who are less sanguine about understanding, some at least see its value in spite of it: "This a humorous performance, of which we are unable to convey any distinct ideas to our readers" (TS 472).

Thomas Pynchon has a particular affection for titans, and went out of his way to write an article on what he called 'The Badass.' He evokes the figure in relation to 'Captain Ned Ludd,' the mythical founder and leader of the loom-framebreakers, and by metonymy the enemy of all Technology. Ludditism is thus a variant expression of the satirical rejection of artificial systems that in imposing their orders on people neglect the claims of the order that is already there. (What makes the twentieth century an especially tense time for this vision is the undeniable ascendancy of science and success of technology.) Pynchon writes,

There is a long folk history of this figure, the Badass. He is usually male, and while sometimes earning the quizzical tolerance of women, is almost universally admired by men for two basic virtues: he is Bad, and he is Big. Bad meaning not morally evil, necessarily, more like able to work mischief on a large scale. What is important here is the amplifying of scale, the multiplication of effect. . . . When times are hard, and we feel at the mercy of forces many times more powerful, don't we, in seeking some equalizer, turn, if only in imagination, in wish, to the Badass -- the djinn, the golem, the hulk, the superhero -- who will resist what otherwise would overwhelm us? (Pynchon 1984)

We can see here the peculiar maleness of this interest, and the idea of an 'equalizer' not only suggests the revenge of powers that vanity neglects at its peril (the body; death), but is the result of a sympathy with the powerless. Pynchon talks about *Frankenstein* - significantly sub-titled *The Modern Prometheus* - and *The Castle of Otranto* as instances of the 'Luddite novel'. The "luddite value" of these, he says, is in the "attempt, through literary means which are nocturnal and deal in disguise, to deny the machine." These terms evoke the secrecy or repression of the unconscious, a theme we have already mentioned briefly. (Pynchon associates the pseudonymity of the authors with this idea of nocturnal disguise.) In a sentence that is sure to set Pynchon critics salivating, he writes, "Alfonso, like Frankenstein's creature, is assembled from pieces...all of them...quite oversized -- which fall from the sky or just materialize here and there about the castle grounds, relentless as

Freud's slow return of the repressed" (Pynchon 1984). The creation of these giants is identified with the return of the repressed, which is, further, identified with the idea of 'assembly' so important to Rocket and Rocketman. Assembly, then, is a reversal of analysis. He suggests that the popularity of such Gothic fiction comes from deep yearnings for what came to be called the Age of Miracles - an earlier 'mythic' time. And once again, he tips his hand and offers a clue to his own work:

To insist on the miraculous is to deny to the machine at least some of its claims on us, to assert the limited wish that living things, earthly and otherwise, may on occasion become Bad and Big enough to take part in transcendent doings. By this theory, for example, King Kong (?-1933) becomes your classic Luddite saint. (Pynchon 1984)

In a discursive passage in his fiction - familiar in the anatomy - Pynchon opines on "the great black scapeape we cast down like Lucifer from the tallest erection in the world" (GR 275), through Freudian Gavin Trefoil:

He had not meant to offend sensibilities, only to show the others, decent fellows all, that their feelings about blackness were tied to feelings about shit, and feelings about shit to feelings about putrefaction and death . . . . Why wouldn't they admit that their repressions *had*, in a sense that Europe in the last weary stages of its perversion of magic has lost, *had* incarnated real and living men. . . . (GR 276-77)

This ties together, as neatly as possible, the titan, repression, blackness, excrement and death. At the beginning of his book, in a striking anticipation of Pynchon, Burton gives us another succinct thematic statement. He connects the monstrous with fantasy, of quite particular form: "Methinks I hear, methinks I see/ Ghosts, goblins, fiends: my phantasy/ Presents a thousand ugly shapes,/ Headless bears, black men, and apes," (AM 9). He then also associates this fantasy with solitude and with his own monstrousness: "'Tis my sole plague to be alone/ I am a beast, a monster grown" (AM 10); and with identification with the lowest and the outcast, and with excrement: "I'll change my state with any wretch,/ Thou canst from gaol or dunghill fetch" (AM 10).

The books with the greatest interest in the titanic are also the most explicitly excremental (Rabelais, Swift, Joyce, Pynchon), and this connection can be understood if we consider that the greater the intensity of the satiric acid, the deeper the descent, the more profound the reversal, the more we will come in contact with these elemental forces of disruption. Combining the above passages from Pynchon, we get to the view that repressed feelings about death can offer access to the miraculous, can enable life to become big and bad enough to deny and transcend the machine. In the introduction to *Slow Learner*, Pynchon also mentions his fondness for the

"apocalyptic showdown" (SL xxix), a theme that combines two of our basic elements, apocalyptic splitting and titanic beings. Hence the return of the repressed becomes a kind of romantic quest, where one is obliged to take a side, against the Badass or against the machine. A Freudian/Brownian reading emphasizes the battle for dominance in the imagination: "Western man bred technology out of his drive to dominance - sexual, social, and material - and now the Frankenstein monster returns to dominate man's sexual fantasies and functions, narrowing them to the exclusively genital" (Wolfley in CETP 115). And Pynchon is earnest about the dangers of the machine, pointing out that "modern Luddite imaginations have yet to come up with any counter-critter Bad and Big enough, even in the most irresponsible of fictions, to begin to compare with what would happen in a nuclear war" (Pynchon 1984).

Pynchon owes much to Freud and much, it seems, to Norman O. Brown's Life Against Death, which treats of these basic themes in relation to 'the psychoanalytic meaning of history.' I offer a brief sketch of his complex of topics in order to establish the basic relations among them and suggest their implications for the anatomies. He analyzes the various implications of the Oedipus complex into what he calls the *causa sui* project, the attempt to become one's own father, or to become God. This neurosis is based on the repression of the knowledge of death, and is an attempt to reverse time and escape death by returning to the womb: by trying to destroy and replace the father one tries to become self-sufficient, and overcome time and history. The awareness of death begins with the awareness of separate existence. Each stage of breaking away from life as part of a totality, beginning with birth, is experienced with anxiety, as a potential death. To try to return to the womb is thus to seek to regain a primal unity, but to replace the father is to take control over one's origin and so to control the primal unity and exist outside of time. As this description suggests, this project is regressive. The real primal biological unity was that of life and death, and Brown, following Boehme and Berdyaev, equates the loss of this unity as Original Sin, the Fall that divided the primal unity represented by the hermaphrodite. We will have occasion to revert to the idea of original sin. To use some of the original terminology:

'All the instincts, the loving, the grateful, the sensual, the defiant, the self-assertive and independent - all are gratified in the wish to be the *father of himself*.' . . . The Oedipal project is . . . a product of the conflict of ambivalence and an attempt to overcome that conflict by narcissistic

inflation. . . . [I]t plainly exhibits infantile narcissism perverted by the flight from death. (LAD 118)

For Brown and Freud, the wish to become one's own father is or can be the essence of self-destruction. We shall return to these matters.

Regression is linked to fantasy, because the wish that motivates regression is a kind of fantasy, and because fantasy is itself a substitute-gratification, "the hallucinatory reanimation of memory, a mode of self-delusion substituting the past for the present" (LAD 164). Fantasy figures heavily in these works, generally in the unconcern for representational verisimilitude, and more specifically in the dreamlike, surrealist quality of so many scenes. Fantasy is considered an essential element of satire, because it represents a situation where more than one norm is implicitly operating. And fantasy and the descent into an unborn world of strange forms is also an exploration of the repressed unconscious. In fact, with their freedom of form and ready entrance into a twisted refraction of our world, universal satires are not only formal monsters but psychic prodigies as well: "literary 'order' does not come easily and is never fully in charge. In a sense, the anatomy is the 'id' of the novel housing not only ancestral memories but the impulse to run away with sound and matter, to place everything that flickers through the mind upon the page, to burst the limits of syntax with the sheer energy of the intellect" (Apple 28). This judgment is based on the view of technique as meant to present the operations of the mind in action:

'settled relations' in society, settled relations in language . . . [are] not available in the anatomy which takes as its structural principle the jumbled topography of a man's thoughts rather than the measured modulations of his words. . . . To follow this kind of reasoning leads one to suggest the anatomy as one of the earliest precursors of the 'stream of consciousness' technique in modern literature. (Apple 26, 26n)

Stream of unconsciousness would be equally appropriate. Similarly, we recall that Stevick argues that the anatomy is "essentially an oral form with tendencies towards an encyclopedism that is rooted in the inclusive nature of dialogue . . . 'an act of willful perversity, a printed attempt to escape the limitations of print, a joyful regression to oral culture'" (qtd. in HTT 30).

In this connection it is interesting to note how Kierkegaard's *A* refers to himself as like a woman about to give birth, and *Tristram Shandy* has so much trouble getting born. *A*'s estheticism is associated with secrecy,



the interesting, and with an interest in titanic hidden forces in nature, linked to female virginity:

The motion of the waves lulls me; their slapping against the boat is a monotonous lullaby; the clouds' hasty flight and the variation in lights and shadows intoxicates me so that I dream wide awake. . . . Longing and impatient expectancy toss me in their arms; longing and expectancy become quieter and quieter, more and more blissful: they coddle me like a child . . . her image drifts past me like the moon's. (E/O I: 325-26)

A works himself into 'dreaming wide awake' in hopes of a vision of his virgin target, by putting himself into a sort of infantile relation with nature. This is an impression of the infinite, and it is just this kind of infinite he hopes to evoke in Cordelia, in order to have her become obsessed with a fantasized image of himself. The closer he comes to possessing her, the more he returns to images of titans and numinous forces of nature. In one letter he pictures their union as the rebirth of a titanic hermaphrodite:

When we stay together, we are strong, stronger than the world, even stronger than the gods themselves. As you know, there once lived a race upon the earth who were human beings, to be sure, but who were self-sufficient and did not know the intensely fervent union of erotic love. Yet they are powerful, so powerful that they wanted to assault heaven. Jupiter feared them and divided them in such a way that one became two, a man and a woman. If it sometimes happens that what was once united is again joined in love, then such a union is stronger than Jupiter; they are then not merely as strong as the single individual was, but even stronger, for the union of love is an even higher union. (E/O I: 443)

Freud uses this myth at the end of Beyond the Pleasure Principle, and Brown uses it in relation to original sin. Burton notes the psychoanalytic nature of his work: "I have anatomized mine own folly. And now, methinks, upon a sudden I am awaked as it were out of a dream, I have had a raving fit, a phantastical fit, ranged up and down, in and out" (AM 103); and he excuses his satiric tendency by suggesting he may have 'nodded': "it is no great sin if over a long work, sleep should steal at times" (AM 104). Alice's trip down the rabbit hole is a dream, and could be taken for a return to the womb. It would be easy enough, too, to think of Carroll's storytelling, essentially attached to young girls as it is, as a means of regressing - note how things move backwards through the looking-glass. Thus fantasy and the esthetic 'interesting' is involved with regression or return to a repressed world filled with monstrous images.

This may give us another hint about the forms. Sublimation, the diversion of repressed energies, is connected with mental pursuits of all kinds, with building systems, "Castles in the air,/ Void of sorrow and void

of fear" (AM 8). Brown gives the radical Freudian view, "All thinking is nothing but a detour, departing from the memory of a gratification and following byways till it reaches the cathexis...of the identical memory [of a loved reality]" (LAD 163). These satires may not go that far, but they do ridicule any kind of intellectual system that exceeds its domain and presumes to explain life. Carlyle declares himself "neither Pantheist nor Pottheist, nor any Theist or *ist* whatsoever, having the most decided contempt for all manner of Systembuilders and Sectfounders -" (CR 342). Sterne writes of Mr. Shandy's notions, "-he was all uniformity; --he was systematical, and, like all systematick reasoners, he would move both heaven and earth, and twist and torture every thing in nature to support his hypothesis" (TS 38). Sublimation reinforces repression.

In spite of the impression of chaos there are nonetheless in many of these works highly schematic forms of organization. Erasmus uses Aristotle's form for a eulogy; Burton uses Partitions, Sections, Members and Subsections; Swift examines small and great, mind and body. Carroll uses playing cards in his first book and bases the movement of the second on a game of chess. Joyce used an elaborate system of parallels; and Pynchon uses science, astrology, tarot and kabbala. Often, we feel that the writing, in terms of both narrative and rhetoric, is spilling out over these neat patterns that are supposed to govern the work, and this implicitly ridicules human efforts to cram all the incongruous facts of experience into rigid systems.

Johnson said of *Gulliver's Travels*, "When once you have thought of the big men and the little men, it is very easy to do all the rest" (qtd. in GT 10). But this careful planning is not a crutch, nor automatically 'anal-sadistic' or proto-fascist, nor solely parodic. An elaborate structure can provide constraints that allow the artist to be maximally creative, just as poets often impose a metrical form on themselves in order to make variation and improvisation possible; and just as the grammatical rules of a language make possible the formation of novel sentences. One might as well say of Joyce that once he had thought of the big Greek and the little Irishman, the part of the city, the hour of the day, the organ, the art, the colour, the symbol, and the technique, it must have been very easy to do all the rest. Further, a self-imposed structure frees the author from pressure to accept the received conventions of creation. But such freedom can bring with it its own demands for a more specific order. Pynchon remarks in the introduction to *Slow Learner* that surrealism was a strong influence on him, but that he had to learn the need to manage this procedure with care and skill:

[A]ny old combination of details will not do. Spike Jones, Jr., whose father's orchestral recordings

had a deep and indelible effect on me as a child, said once in an interview, 'One of the things that people don't realize about Dad's kind of music is, when you replace a C-sharp with a gunshot, it has to be a C-sharp gunshot or it sounds awful.' (SL xxxi)

So there is a relation between fantasy and structuring on the level of design, as well. Frye observes that "From primitive cultures to the *tachiste* and action paintings of today, it has been a regular rule that the uninhibited imagination, in the structural sense, produces highly conventionalized art" (FI 27).

Linked to themes of fantasy, repression, and monsters is that of Bakhtin's 'carnavalesque reversal', or the general reductiveness of satire, that brings things down to a bodily level, or shows that the mind ignores or defies the demands of the body at its peril. As Burton writes, "I do anatomize and cut up these poor beasts, to see these distempers, vanities, and follies, yet such proof were better made on man's body, if my kind nature would endure it: who from the hour of his birth is most miserable, weak, and sickly; when he sucks he is guided by others, when he is grown great practiseth unhappiness, and is sturdy, and when old, a child again, and repenteth him of his life past" (AM 41). And he justifies his work by aligning himself with exactly this tradition of sanctioned reversal, using Democritus's plea: "It was written by an idle fellow, at idle times, about our Saturnalian or Dionysian feasts, when as he said, 'there is no danger in freedom:' servants in old Rome had liberty to say and do what they list" (AM 102-103) Here we return to the more general unveiling, negating, or splitting function of satire. A genuine philosophical dialogue or analysis operates with the same terms and the same senses understood by both sides; satire reinterprets the meanings according to bodily symbolism, as Bakhtin shows. Sometimes this is quite benign, as in this parody of popular Hegelianism:

Has not the logical trinity been advanced in the most ludicrous way? And therefore it did not astound me that my shoemaker had found that it could also be applied to the development of boots, since, as he observes, the dialectic, which is always the first stage in life, finds expression even here . . . in the squeaking. . . . Unity, however, appears only later, in which respect *his* shoes far surpass all others, which usually disintegrate in the dialectic. . . . [S]ince he as an orthodox shoemaker proceeded from the thesis that the immediate (*feet without shoes - shoes without feet*) is a pure abstraction, he took it [the dialectical] as the first stage in the development. (E/O I: 463)

But often there is a more intense evocation of the 'material bodily lower stratum,' with those parts of the body that connect the inside with the outside world.

One of the basic bodily functions that undercuts the mental is the sexual urge (the image of the

hermaphrodite recurs fairly often, to represent this). Kierkegaard recognizes an incongruity between the pretensions of thinkers and the erotic imperative: "I have thought of gathering material for a book entitled: *A Contribution to a Theory of the Kiss*. . . . [I]t is curious that there is no book on this topic. . . . Can the reason for this deficiency in the literature be that philosophers do not think about such things or that they do not understand them?" (E/O I: 416). And Burton complains in the Preface to his *Partition on Love-Melancholy*,

There will not be wanting, I presume, one or other that will much discommend some part of this Treatise of Love-Melancholy . . . [as] too light for a Divine, too Comical a subject, to speak of Love-Symptoms, too phantastical, and fit alone for a wanton Poet, a feeling young love-sick gallant, an effeminate Courtier, or some such idle person. . . . [S]ome again out of an affected gravity, will dislike all for the name's sake before they read a word . . . and seem to be angry that their ears are violated with such obscene speeches, that so they may be admired for grave Philosophers, and staid carriage . . . yet in their cogitations they are all out as bad, if not worse than others. (AM 611)

But this is often more explicit, even if indirect, and such is Sterne's main focus. The opening of his book sets the tone, where Tristram's conception is botched by an interruption of his father's schedule by his mother. This might be an archetype of Bergson's definition of the comic as the imposition of the mechanistic on the organic:

As a small specimen of this extreme exactness of his, to which he was in truth a slave, --he had made it a rule for many years of his life, --on the first *Sunday night* of every month throughout the whole year . . . --to wind up a large house-clock which we had standing upon the backstairs head, with his own hands. . . . [H]e had likewise gradually brought some other little family concerns to the same period, in order, as he would often say to my uncle *Toby*, to get them all out of the way at one time, and be no more plagued and pester'd with them the rest of the month. (TS 4-5)

Kierkegaard's B quotes A's use of the same image in a scornful glance at such excesses of pragmatism, or, as he would call it, the erotic degraded by habit:

How disgusting it is to see the dullness with which all such things are done in marital life, how superficially, how apathetically they take place, almost on the stroke of a clock, much as in the tribe the Jesuits discovered in Paraguay, a tribe so apathetic that the Jesuits found it necessary to have a bell rung at midnight as a pleasant reminder to all married men to attend to their marital duties (E/O II: 140)

In the first chapter of *Candide*, Cunegonde observes "Doctor Pangloss in the bushes, giving a lesson in experimental physics to her mother's waiting-maid, a very pretty and docile brunette" (C 5), which inspires her to the inquiries that get Candide expelled from the castle. Carlyle, like Kierkegaard seriously concerned with the integrity of his philosophy, is fairly circumspect, but his view that "In all speculations they [thinkers] have

tacitly figured man as a *Clothed Animal*; whereas he is by nature a *Naked Animal*; and only in certain circumstances, by purpose and device, masks himself in Clothes" (CR 126) is significant, as is his conception of the visible universe as clothing for a naked infinite. Melville is also serious about thought, but seems to portray the dominance of willfulness and physical violence, rather than sex, in the mind. The chapter "A Squeeze of the Hand," however, seems to mock the idea of compassionate love as morbid sublimation, while at the same time rejecting any "attainable felicity" for the intellect or fancy: "In thoughts or the visions of the night, I saw long rows of angels in paradise, each with his hands in a jar of spermaceti" (M-D 533). In *Alice* there seems to be no conscious sexual content, but there certainly are reversals, and much of the humour comes from the strange reasonings of strange creatures, almost always propelled along with conceited aggression: "How the creatures order one about, and make one repeat lessons!" thought Alice. 'I might just as well be at school at once.'" (AA 138-39). And what she does repeat never comes out right.

Satire of this sort is sometimes also called 'bringing down to earth,' and not only are there symbols of earth but also of the grotesque body, and in certain writers a concentration on the symbolism of excrement. This is most extreme in Rabelais and Pynchon, obviously important in Swift and Joyce, and relatively occasional in the others, although still present. Erasmus wrote "*Merdardus*, a scatological attack on the Franciscans, [which] stigmatizes a Friar Medard who had called Erasmus 'Doktor Esel,' or 'ass.'" (Kirk 74). Before picturing himself as a dwarf upon a giant, Burton recognizes the complaint that some writers are thieves, and "scrape Ennius' dung-hills, and out of Democritus' pit, as I have done. By which means it comes to pass, that not only libraries & shops are full of our putrid papers, but every close-stool and jakes are well supplied with privy-poetry" (AM 18). Even Kierkegaard makes a glancing reference to this region of the lower stratum:

If any sympathy with explorations of this kind could be expected in our age, I would pose this question for a prize essay: From an esthetic point of view, who is more modest, a young girl or a young wife. . . . [I]n Greece such problems were not treated casually and light-mindedly, and yet everyone knows that Venus has an extra name on account of [a contest for the most beautiful posterior] and that everyone admires the statue of Venus that has immortalized her. (E/O I: 434)

Joyce takes up the same reference, but sends Mr. Bloom to inspect more closely the statue of Venus Callipygus.

Two of the basic symbolic associations of excrement are with death and with sin. The reduction of the mind

or ego to the bodily, with a knowledge of death that accompanies it, is so strongly denied and resisted that the symbolism of earth and dust does not seem to do it justice. We have mentioned Pynchon's association of excrement and death, and Pynchon's source was probably Norman O. Brown. Brown's "Studies in Analogy" begins with Swift, and he claims that Swift's theme is "the conflict between our animal body, appropriately epitomized in the anal function, and our pretentious sublimations, more specifically the pretensions of sublimated or romantic-Platonic love...what is exposed is the illusion in the head of the adoring male, the illusion that the goddess is all head and wings, with no bottom to betray her sublunary infirmities" (LAD 186). He observes that we cannot get a full understanding of Swift without reference to repression and sublimation, because the adoring male's problem is of course not ignorance. Brown discusses the 'anal stage' of infantile development. As a result of various symbolic meanings that get attached to the anal product, "some of the most important categories of social behavior (play, gift, property, weapon) originate in the anal stage...and...never lose their connection with it" (LAD 191). In Swift the flight from death is culture-wide and turns into a stampede of sublimations. "Swift's wit, pursuing his 'Physico-logical Scheme' for satirical anatomy, 'dissecting the Carcass of Humane Nature,' asks where all this windy preaching comes from, and his answer gives all the emphasis of obscenity to the anal factor . . ." (LAD 197). If we accept that preaching is germane to satire, we can see a self-reference here, an insight into the separation of worlds that preaching outlines.

Frye reiterates these themes, but emphasizes that excretion is related in spiritual thought to the apocalyptic splitting into two worlds: "It may seem tactless to bring up the image of excretion when discussing apocalyptic visions, but excretion is a part of the food concern, and I suspect that it is the metaphorical kernel of the ultimate separation of heaven and hell. . . . Dirt always has some psychological connection with excretion, and is linked to whatever we want to separate ourselves from" (WWP 262). And as the thing that we most want to separate ourselves from, and that we feel will separate us from the world, death is a primary association: "Excretion has also a close mythical connection with death, the dead body being . . . something to be cast off and left behind. . . . Swift certainly had an excremental vision: nobody has any business setting up as a major satirist without one. . . . [E]xcretion equalizes humanity just as death does" (WWP 263) Frye also explains the connection of scapegoat rituals with this apocalyptic/excretory complex: "To kill death is to bring to life, and to drive out a scapegoat is another ritual expressing a hope of a permanently new unity in life, where death is

excluded, or, again, excreted" (WWP 264). Rabelais's Gargantua seconds this interpretation of scapegoats as personifications of death:

'It's the absolute truth that the frock and the cowl draw on themselves the opprobrium, the insults, and curses of the world, just as the wind called Caecias attracts the clouds. The conclusive reason is that they eat the world's excrement, that is to say, sins; and as eaters of excrement they are cast into their privies - their convents and abbeys that is - which are cut off from all civil intercourse, as are the privies of a house.' (G & P 125-26)

Frye also adds that "baptism becomes the physical image of spiritual cleanliness, the separating of the true individual from the excreta of original sin" (WWP 263), but we still have not seen the logic of the connection of death with sin. We can find this connection in ideas about the devil.

In a thorough examination of the imagery of Luther's theology, Brown observes that both the devil and the attacks on the devil have an overt 'anal character.' And as Luther's devil is so powerful, so all-pervasive, the excremental vision is essential to his spirituality.

The whole realm of visible reality, the world and the flesh, belong to the Devil... in Luther's new *theologia crucis* the Christian, like Christ himself, must voluntarily submit to crucifixion by the Devil. 'To take up the cross is voluntarily to take upon oneself and bear the hate of the Devil, of the world, of the flesh, of sin, of death.' . . . For hell, Luther said, is not a place, but is the experience of death, and Luther's devil is ultimately personified death. . . . 'Whoever is not destroyed and brought back by the cross and suffering to the state of nothingness, attributes to himself works and wisdom, but not to his God. . . . But whoever is annihilated by suffering (*exinanitus*) ceases to do anything, knowing that God is working in him and doing all. . . . I say die, i.e. taste death as though it were present.' (LAD 215-16)

It seems that here the acceptance of the very idea of value, of an absolute good, leads to an absolute rejection of the world. Nothing in the finite world is an essential good, so it is a world of death, and a kind of insult, a degradation to the human who feels that there must be some meaning in the world. And we have here the connection with sin, too. This conception is that of original sin, which has the structure of the *causa sui* project: the world is sinful because the person who lives in it, or assumes a right to it, instinctively usurps the place of God: with knowledge of death, the human control over and enjoyment of the various valued things leads to an intuition or fantasy that the enjoyer is the creator of the enjoyment, not a creature himself. But the only way to 'reject' the entire world in which one lives is to die. According to these symbols, this means to identify with excrement in some way: to ingest excrement or death, as Rabelais and Luther suggest, or to take a

trip down the toilet, as Slothrop does (he finds the harmonica he followed down the toilet just before he experiences his mountain-top epiphany, while "plucking the albatross of self" (GR 623)).

The essential thing to be achieved through these symbols is reach a state of nothingness, to be annihilated, to experience the presence of death. Kierkegaard and Carlyle use the imagery of self-annihilation rather than excretion, but in both cases the embracing of death means accepting the burden of original sin: life in the body, in the world, in death. In the remarkable three central chapters of *Sartor Resartus* we see a whole spiritual growth. From feeling "as if the Heavens above and the Earth beneath were but the boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I palpitating, waited to be devoured" (CR 240); to the question, "What *art* thou afraid of? . . . . [W]hat is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? . . . [C]anst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee?" (CR 240-41); to the Everlasting No that says, "'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'" (CR 241). Rage burns itself out, and, renouncing all hope, he feels "to die or to live is alike to me; alike insignificant" (CR 253). From this Centre of Indifference, he awakes "to a new Heaven and a new Earth. The first preliminary moral Act, Annihilation of Self . . . had been happily accomplished . . ." (CR 253). He comes to the "Divine Depth of Sorrow" (CR 255), and realizes that the problem of the Origin of Evil touches every soul at some time. He tries to express it that "Man's Unhappiness . . . comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite" (CR 255-56). He then realizes that man is only happy when he thinks he has more than he deserves, and therefore the less you feel you deserve, the happier you'll be: "'So true is it, what I then said, that *the Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator*. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, Unity itself divided by Zero will give Infinity. Make thy claim of wages a zero then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time write: "It is only with Renunciation . . . that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin'" (CR 256-57).

For Kierkegaard, B's marriage is his reconciliation of the esthetic within the ethical (by means of the religious), and a symbol of overcoming the despair and irresolution of A: "Like a true victor, the married man has not killed time but has rescued and preserved it in eternity. The married man who does this is truly living poetically; he solves the great riddle, to live in eternity and yet to hear the cabinet clock strike in such a way



that its striking does not shorten but lengthens his eternity" (E/O II: 138). B speaks of depression as a "hysteria of the spirit" that results from the failure of a person's spirit to be transfigured in itself and acquire a higher form, to move from immediacy to self-consciousness, from multiplicity to unity. "As immediate spirit, a person is bound up with all the earthly life, and now spirit wants to gather itself together out of this dispersion, so to speak, and to transfigure itself in itself; the personality wants to become conscious in its eternal validity. If this does not happen, if the movement is halted, if it is repressed, then depression sets in. One can try a great many things to consign it to oblivion . . . but the depression continues" (E/O II: 188-89). This depression is linked to original sin: "But even the person in whose life this movement occurs most calmly and peacefully and at the right time will still always retain a little depression, but this is linked to something much deeper, to hereditary sin, and is rooted in this, that no human being can become transparent to himself" (E/O II: 190). The idea of transparency is metaphorically similar to cleanliness and also to the change to nothingness that Luther and Carlyle urge.

B advises A to "choose despair" as an act that takes full concentration of the soul, because "any human being who has not tasted the bitterness of despair has fallen short of the meaning of life, even if his life has been ever so beautiful, ever so abundantly happy. You do not perpetrate a deception on the world in which you live; you are not lost to it, for you have vanquished it . . ." (E/O II: 208). To choose despair is to give up on the self as immediate spirit, and to give up on enjoyment as the goal of existence. So doing, one is able to then choose oneself as free spirit and thereby both acquire a history and create a purpose, for this act of absolute choice manifests the absolute difference between good and evil (one chooses choice, in a sense: the choice is the condition for good and evil to exist, and so 'creates' them). Since thought always works in relative terms, it never works in the categories of good and evil, because good and evil only exist insofar as they are willed (E/O II: 223-24). This is a clear instance of an apocalyptic separation of the world, preceded by an act of self-negation. Kierkegaard explains that what he means by choosing oneself absolutely is expressed in the phrase "I repent myself out of the whole of existence" (E/O II: 224). Repentance is the proper expression of love for God. "Repentance specifically expresses that evil essentially belongs to me and at the same time expresses that it does not essentially belong to me" (E/O II: 224). More than Carlyle, Kierkegaard distrusts the mystic's attitude, because for him full acceptance of God implies full acceptance of the conditions of life. "The mystic

chooses himself in his perfect isolation; for him the whole world is dead and exterminated," (E/O II: 241) but the mystic's choice is abstract, and does not determine an ethical relation to existence. "The Christian view attributes everything to sin," (E/O II: 240), but for the mystic such judgments are metaphysical, and "Even when he declares that finiteness is sin, he is saying just about the same thing he says when he calls it vanity" (E/O II: 248). For Kierkegaard, this attitude, which I have associated with satire, is esthetic, and inconsistent with engagement with the world.

It seems to me that the root of all of this is the 'flight from death' as Brown suggests, whether or not later linked with anality. But in order to make sense of the entire complex, then, we need to postulate something in a person that explains the fear of death and the denial of death. The human is the animal that represses because it is the animal that is conscious of death; but why does death-consciousness automatically trigger repression? Only, I think, because humans also have some intuition of value as a reality; or more traditionally, of the good, as something real, that can be experienced - and therefore some sense of the absolute loss of that reality as intolerable. People could get along with just enough sense of their wants and needs to stay alive, but it is something more that we want that the knowledge of death offends against. So what death threatens is not a value relative to some end. Self-preservation instincts do not explain this repression: if fear of death is selfish in some sense, that self-centredness can be seen as part of an instinctive duty to, or reverence for, self.

Bakhtin, however, connects reversals with a debasement that is implicitly regenerative because of its place in the holistic world of becoming: *earth is both grave and womb; the generative organs are identical with, not just associated with, the excremental; death is inseparable from birth.* For Rabelais, it seems, sin is continually purged as excrement is, by the reversing movements Bakhtin describes. Of the episode of the swabs, he says,

it is not surprising that . . . with its constant movement from top to bottom, [it] brings us finally into hell. . . . True, we are brought not so much to hell as to heaven, since Gargantua spoke of the beatitude of demigods and heroes, that is, of the ancient underworld. . . . This travesty of the basic teachings of Christianity is, however, far removed from cynical nihilism. The material bodily lower stratum is productive. It gives birth, thus assuring mankind's immortality. All obsolete and vain illusions die in it, and the real future comes to life. . . . The downward movement that penetrates all Rabelaisian images is ultimately directed toward this gay future. At the same time the author mocks the pretenses of the isolated individual who wants to be perpetuated and who is ridiculous in his senility. (RW 378)

In his world, the apocalyptic split is less pronounced, or perhaps simply less anxious, as one can at best attain

only the knowledge of the real nature of this separation, and not, in this world, join either side absolutely. Original sin is understood, accepted, and lived in, although continually battled. The world is thus rather more ironic, for Rabelais. But as Kierkegaard says, the essential thing is that energy is invoked.

There is a 'demonic' confrontation with death, too, a response that may use identical images but with a reversed meaning. That is, intuition of the rule of death in the world can lead to a desire to die. Burton's *Abstract* again furnishes an example: "My pain's past cure, another Hell,/ I may not in this torment dwell,/ Now desperate I hate my life,/ Lend me a halter or a knife" (AM 10). The problem of the death-wish is prevalent in Pynchon, and Brigadier Pudding's coprophagy represents the failure to overcome it. Suicide is the obvious corollary to 'self-annihilation,' and in Pynchon there is a faction of black "rocket-troops" bent on committing racial suicide. There is a song rationalizing this ("Sold on Suicide"), which "represents a pretty fair renunciation of the things of the world" (GR 320), but which, since it continually grows by adding lines about newly renounced things, uses the technique of digression to indefinitely postpone the act. Here digression is not play (purposiveness directed to no end), but a contradictory mess of a purpose of death (purposelessness) and an endless deferral of resolution (purposiveness) to that end. Kierkegaard's *A* fantasizes delivering an "Extempore Apostrophe" before a "Fellowship of the Dead," declaring, "too familiar with the wretchedness of life and the perfidiousness of existence, we resolved to come to the aid of universal law and obliterate ourselves if it does not forestall us. . . . [E]very one of us is too proud for that, because we all regard death as the greatest good fortune. . . . [W]ith this glass I toast you, silent night, the eternal mother of everything. . . . [O]pen up once again to gather in everything and keep us all safe in your womb!" (E/O I: 167-68). The society's single passion is sympathy with the secret of reflective sorrow: "When one looks long and attentively at a face, sometimes another face, as it were, is discovered within the face one sees. . . . The face, which is usually the mirror of the soul, here takes on an ambiguity. . . . [A] special vision . . . lulls the individual into a sort of pleasant lassitude in which he finds a sensual pleasure in pouring out his sorrow, similar to the sensual pleasure in bleeding to death" (E/O I: 174-75). This suggests a regressive erotic pleasure in the release of repression, where the release is an end in itself. Less ironic, perhaps, is the remark that "the talk that suicide is cowardice is for most men nothing but a leap over a stage - those shrewd and proud fellows who have never known that it requires

courage! Only he who has had the courage to commit suicide can say that it was cowardly to have done it" (E/O I: 466).

When Gulliver is told he will have to leave the island of the Houyhnhnms and return to the Yahoos, he collapses and is taken for dead. When he awakes, he replies, "in a faint voice, that death would have been too great an happiness" (GT 329). Voltaire links attachment to life with original sin: "a hundred times I wanted to kill myself but I still loved life. This ridiculous weakness is perhaps the most disastrous of our inclinations; for is there anything sillier than to desire to bear continually a burden one always wishes to throw on the ground; to look upon oneself with horror and yet to cling to oneself; in short, to caress the serpent which devours us until he has eaten our heart?" (C 48-49). On the first page of *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael explains his seafaring as suicidal, and claims the desire is general: "With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings toward the ocean with me" (M-D 23). Ahab's actions confirm this. Bloom's father committed suicide, and in the graveyard Bloom reflects on death, doubting the afterlife and believing in the primacy of life over obsessions with death. At the end of the book he comes home and kisses Molly's buttocks, but this too has a life-affirming tone, and there may be a Rabelaisian sensibility at work here (he brings Molly "the works of Master Francois Somebody supposed to be a priest . . ." (U 619)).

This brings us back to the idea of original sin. For Brown, original sin was the splitting of the hermaphrodite, the division of the primal unity of life-and-death into two parts. But original sin resulted in the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, so there is a connection between the father-figure driving out the sinful (from something like a virgin womb), and excretion: humanity is identified with what is separated from God. Birth into the human world is a death, or is birth into death. And if the *causa sui* project is a root of the problem, then the desire to become one's father, or God, is also to try to destroy death, but paradoxically results in the father's casting the child into a world of death, identifying man with death. Death-consciousness is simultaneous with separation of worlds and casting humanity into the sinful, unclean part. And since original sin is knowledge of good and evil, it seems that this apocalyptic or analytic knowledge is also simultaneous. Carlyle's hero, Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, contains in his name the meaning of original sin. Attempts to express

the 'allegorical' meaning of the myth of the fall, such as this, may seem to end up in confused dialectical theories, where one is never sure if the dialectic movement is tautology, overingenious paradox, or merely false. Original sin seems to be a result of death-consciousness, which is a result of self-consciousness, which has something to do with sex (a power of creation); and a result of human freedom; and both death-consciousness and freedom are related to the separation of worlds. But as to which of these came first, if there is an answer, we may simply be unable to work it out.

Original sin is dirt that cannot be cleansed by human power; the incarnation, God's entry into the world, leads to the removal of human sin by God's taking it on Himself. Essentially, God trades places with man, becomes a scapegoat and accepts death. The world remains split, but man can now join the clean part, at least in spirit. The entrance of spirit leads to the expulsion of death and allows man to be born, or reborn - to escape regressiveness. Kierkegaard's B uses the terms of the Genesis story to describe the return involved in repentance (and again, the notion of two worlds that are and are not the same is crucial):

If I wanted to be clever, I could say here that the individual knows himself in a way similar to the way Adam knew Eve, as it says in the Old Testament. Through the individual's intercourse with himself the individual is made pregnant by himself and gives birth to himself. The self the individual knows is simultaneously the actual self and the ideal self, which the individual has outside himself as the image in whose likeness he is to form himself, and which on the other hand he has within himself, since it is he himself. . . . That is why the ethical life has this duplexity, in which the individual has himself outside himself within himself. . . . This image is like a person's shadow. . . . (E/O II: 259)

In the third step, apocalypse, the whole world is raised from death and cleansed by making the devil the scapegoat. Death, sin, and the devil are aligned with excrement and rejected so that all the actual dead and sinful can regain the original unity. The father's spirit, after entering into earth and death, returns to the father with earth cleansed by the casting-out of death and sin. This is a rather abstract reconstruction of the myths that Menippean satires, I believe, take us to. Many of the satires do not get this 'complete' in the sense of succeeding against doubt. The conflict is not resolved; we see only the orphan seeking a father-leader.

With this we return to the fundamental process of splitting of worlds. The activity of dividing the world is a kind of analysis, and images of division, separation, disintegration and anatomizing will of course be important. At the beginning of the anatomy proper, Burton writes,

If hereafter, anatomizing this surly humour, my hand slip, as an unskilful prentice I lance too deep, and cut through skin and all at unawares, make it smart, or cut awry, pardon a rude hand, and unskilful knife, 'tis a most difficult thing to keep an even tone, a perpetual tenor, and not sometimes to lash out; not to write satire is the difficulty, there be so many objects to divert, inward perturbations to molest, and the very best may sometimes err. . . . (AM 104)

Rabelais actually performed public anatomies, and we have such episodes as "Xenomanes' Anatomy and Description of Lent" (G & P 513ff.), and many others where the body is disintegrated in various ways. Swift's reference to anatomy has been noted. He also says, referring to an alleged anatomy, "I laid open his brain, his heart, and his spleen: but I plainly perceive at every operation that the farther we proceeded we found the defects increase upon us in numbers and bulk" (TT, 128). Sterne wrote to a critic who had objected to a certain reference in his work, "But why cowardice? 'because 'tis not courage to attack a dead man who can't defend himself.' - But why do you doctors of the faculty attack such a one with your incision knife? Oh! for the good of the living. - 'Tis my plea" (TS 463). Melville shows us in sordid detail the butchering of a whale. Kierkegaard used the phrase *dissecta membra poetae* (the dismembered limbs of the poet), meaning the actors who are 'mere fragments' in the play the poet produces, as the working title for *Either/Or* (see E/O I: 491, and II: 480). And his A says, about his maxim 'you will regret it either way,'

These words Either/Or are a double-edged dagger I carry with me and with which I can assassinate the whole of actuality. I just say: Either/Or. Either it is this or it is that; since nothing in life is either this or that, it does not, of course, exist. . . . One can explain everything away - indeed, one can help oneself superbly. That is, a person always lives in such a way that he has a few elements of everything in himself; thus no devil can make him out: either he is a deceiver, and there are some indications of that, or he is not, and there is some evidence of that - ergo, he does not exist at all. (E/O I: 527-28)

Joyce's apportioning of body parts to each of his chapters is a kind of dismemberment, and Stephen's nickname is "Kinch, the knifeblade" (U 4). Most gruesomely, but most tellingly, Kierkegaard gives us in his journals the image of God anatomizing human beings to signify the removal of will needed for a person to be an instrument of God:

Certainly with other forms of torture there are doctors present to estimate how long the tortured man can hold out without losing his life. Yet mistakes can happen, and the tortured man can die before their eyes. This never happens with one who is omniscient. . . . One shudders to read what an animal must suffer which is used for vivisection; yet this is only a fugitive image of the suffering involved in being a Christian - in being kept alive in the state of death. (qtd. in Updike 113)

The father-figure carves apart the person in order to maintain the separation of worlds, and the suffering of this is living death. Sterne is very far from Kierkegaard, but this analysis of the will is obviously an elementary function of conscience, of which Sterne preaches.

If the quest fails or is left incomplete, it tends to end, symbolically, in a hero who is not reintegrated after being disintegrated. One could put it that the analysis never achieves a new synthesis, and this aspect of the satirist's solitude links digressiveness to anatomical images. Kierkegaard's A connects his solitariness with a determination not to be disintegrated:

One must always guard against contracting a life relationship by which one can become many. That is why friendship is dangerous, marriage even more so. They do say that marriage partners become one, but this very obscure and mysterious talk. If an individual is many, he has lost his freedom. (E/O I: 297)

B argues back that solitariness is a mistake, and actually leads to a disappearance of the person:

[S]o often it is said that it is easier to bear all such things if one stands alone in the world. It is probably true, up to a point, but in this kind of talk a huge falsehood is often hidden, for why can a person bear it more easily - because he can throw himself away more easily, can do damage to his soul without involving anyone else, can forget God, can let the storms of despair drown out the shrieks of pain, can become dulled within, can almost take pleasure in living among human beings as a ghost. (E/O II: 124)

But he too has a sense of the dangers of disintegration:

Are you not aware that there comes a midnight hour when everyone must unmask; do you believe that life will always allow itself to be trifled with . . . ? . . . Or can you think of anything more appalling than having it all end with the disintegration of your essence into a multiplicity, so that you actually become several, just as that unhappy demoniac became a legion, and thus you would have lost what is the most inward and holy in a human being, the binding power of the personality? (E/O II: 160)

I do not want to oversimplify complex visions, but I believe there is a distinct similarity with Slothrop's scattering, following his paranoid wanderings:

There is also the story about Tyrone Slothrop, who was sent into the Zone to be present at his own assembly - perhaps, heavily paranoid voices have whispered, his time's assembly - and there ought

to be a punch line to it, but there isn't. The plan went wrong. He is being broken down instead, and scattered. (GR 738)

Disintegration of the hero, or *sparagmos*, is a traditional mythical fate; but the hero who dies fulfilling the quest is reborn in his or her followers: "Some believe that fragments of Slothrop have grown into consistent personae of their own. If so, there's no telling which of the Zone's present-day population are offshoots of his original scattering" (GR 742). But here the emphasis is on an 'existential' disintegration, which is more subjective and complex. Slothrop's friends, especially Bodine, try to "hold on" to him, to go on seeing him as an "integral creature" (GR 740). Bodine associates his scattering with the tearing apart of John Dillinger's belongings at his death, and says that, like Dillinger, "what we need isn't right reasons, but just that *grace*. The physical grace to keep it working . . ." (GR 741). His scattering seems to be the result of his recognition, in a mountain-top epiphany, of a kind of ongoing self-betrayal: "Might be he was starting to implicate himself, some yesterday version of himself, in the Combination against who he was right then" (GR 624). His allegiance to that better self - "brave and in control" (GR 624) - that is being betrayed makes him more and more committed against his old selves, and so less and less visible to the people who have known him. This is a very ambivalent and highly-argued aspect of the work, but I believe there is warrant for a non-pessimistic interpretation.

Many of the quests seem to 'come to nothing' in their search for value, and these present images of final dissolution. But some of the protagonists come to nothing in a good way. That is, the satirical gaze directed upon the self seems to tend towards a conclusion of some kind of self-negation. Other quests end with images of disintegration or dissolution: the shattering of the Pequod; Alice's throwing of the cards and overturning the dinner table; Pynchon's exploding Orpheus Theatre; the sermon at the end of *Either/Or* that warns of destruction of a city by an angel in the Day of the Lord.

Burton's book does not present a quest as such, which makes literary analysis somewhat problematic. I think there is an implicit separation in the work: the only anti-melancholic principle Burton advances with any consistency is that of moderation. Typically, he will pick up a topic (drinking, hunting, love, thinking, etc.) and describe effects on the individual, as documented in any number of authorities. But these are presented according to attitudes to the thing that are too indulgent, and also attitudes that are too restrictive, and thus he



gently ridicules both and commends a middle course as the healthiest. It may be that Burton had a sense, like Kierkegaard's B, of the extraordinariness (the religious resonance) of the ordinary, and so did not seek to present his melancholy world as a place where life and death battle as such. But it may be too that his melancholy got the better of him, and all that that entails, as outlined in the Abstract. He concludes the final subsection ("*Cure of Despair by Physick, good counsel, comforts, &c.*"), however, with an admonition to sodality and to action - "Be not solitary, be not idle" (AM 970) - and a counsel against doubt: "Dost thou wish to be free from doubt? dost desire to escape uncertainty? be penitent, then, while still sound, of wholesome mind; being so, thou art safe, I tell thee, because thou hast been penitent whilst thou mightest have been sinning: so saith Austin" (AM 971). This is a positive end to the spiritual-doxastic inquiry, and in the conclusion he returns to some images of cutting: "The last section shall be mine, to cut the strings of Democritus' visor, to unmask and show him as he is...I have laid myself open (I know it) in this Treatise..." (AM 973).

Interestingly, along with Pynchon, Carlyle, and Kierkegaard, Burton recognizes the need for activity in overcoming doubt: at some point one must stop looking for reasons and put faith in what most recommends itself. Pynchon spoke of a physical grace needed beyond right reasons. Carlyle insists, "But indeed Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay properly Conviction is not possible till then;...'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action'" (CR 259). And although Teufelsdröckh's whereabouts are unknown, it is strongly hinted that he will be proselytising for his philosophy. Kierkegaard's B warns A of this, again with reference to a disintegration image:

[E]ven [death] is not a human being's most difficult task, but life. . . . [T]here comes a moment when in reality the thing to do is to begin to live, and . . . it is dangerous then to have become so fragmented that to collect himself involves enormous difficulty - indeed that he is compelled to do this in such haste that he cannot pull everything together and ends up being a defective specimen of a human being instead of an extraordinary human being. (E/O II: 327)

Some other works focus on marriage as an appropriate symbol of a spiritual and physical commitment that calls for a conviction beyond what can be ascertained by reason. Rabelais concludes with the word "Drink" and Panurge's commitment to marry. Kierkegaard's B defends the 'validity' of marriage, and ends with an invitation to A to visit, and a sermon on the impossibility of rightness in relation to the divine. *Ulysses* ends with Os and Yesses and a warm reminiscence of a marriage proposal. *Gravity's Rainbow's* final words are also an invitation,

to sing a hymn of hope for renewal. Contrarily, once A has enjoyed Cordelia, after months of excruciating deliberation, he wishes only to be rid of her and never to see her again. Gulliver, on his return home, cannot bear the presence of his wife and children. Yet in spite of the preponderance of melancholy, despair, degradation and bodily symbolism in these satires, it should be clear that to conclude that their only point is that mental and spiritual life is a lie, would be murkiness and not clarity.

## 5. Recovery.

Looking back over our analysis, we can see that the features of Menippean satire identified by various critics can be found generally, although not without exception, in the set of works on the table. It is possible on this basis to suggest that some are more 'central' to the genre than others, and that those others partake more of the conventions of other genres. This argument avoids circularity, if we keep in mind that one of the goals of genre theory is to account for the range of possibilities in literature, and that something is missing if we leave out Menippean satire. Once again, those features are: the mixture of prose with verse; the variety of forms (presented parodically); unconventional diction; popular speech; an oral or Euphuistic quality; a tendency to encyclopedism; a fantastic quality that includes both grotesquerie and utopianism; and a concern for right learning that includes both a search for knowledge and a parody of 'knowledges.' We may, conversely, suggest that those features common to most of the works studied are most central to the genre, and those that are more restricted are incidental. I shall return to this presently.

In discussing the relation between form and function, it is important not to confuse what we could call internal function (the function of a convention as an aspect or indication of theme), with external function (the more generalized function of a convention or a work conceived as an effect that follows upon the reading of it). This is the analogy from the distinction between formal and final causes that is so important in understanding 'structure.' As the structure is the 'spatial' organization of the work, it is related to the formal cause, or the 'total design' that is part of the literary initiative by which a writer seeks to bring a vision into concrete being.

I have also suggested that the imagery and thematic concerns of the anatomies taken as a whole suggest another kind of structural organization. That is, there is an existential quest, which can be discerned clearly in some of the works and sketchily in others, which is built around the problem of grasping 'value.' This means overcoming profound 'vanity' (unfounded and relative values) and achieving mental and spiritual conviction of

some sort. This certainty is more like faith than belief, as it is based on experience (although not everyday experience) and linked to free and meaningful action. As I have analyzed it, this quest means a confrontation with death, which is the fact at the root of the intuition of vanity, and therefore also the fact that if properly confronted can help uproot the intuition of vanity.

One of the basic imperatives we noted for genre study is that of description in terms of both inner and outer form, or thematic and formal properties. Taking the features given, it is possible to arrange them in a loose ranking, from those more specifically formal to those more specifically thematic. A criteria of formality could be the kind and degree of knowledge needed to recognize the feature - indicating the complexity of semantic content, one might say. Thus, the 'most formal' feature will be the mixture of prose and verse, as this could possibly be identified simply visually, without even knowing the language in which the work is written. Similarly, a variety of forms could be identified by reference to typographic conventions. Unconventional diction, popular speech and catalogues could be determined at the level of individual words, without reference to sentences. Euphuism, or an oral quality, could be determined at the level of sentences, without reference to narrative. Fantasy can be determined at the level of narrative, as can topical reference to contemporary events, as can a concern for right learning. Parody of forms, and encyclopedism, must be determined at the level of the forms: in order to know that one is reading a formal parody, one must grasp the form as a unified whole; and one must grasp the book as a whole in order to know that, like an encyclopedia, it aims at comprehensive knowledge. Each of these 'levels' requires a certain amount of outside knowledge as well: knowledge that typographical convention can specify certain rhetorical forms, for instance, or knowledge of reality enough to know what is fantasy. Perception of an existential quest would require grasping the book as a whole. Presumably, the least formal features will be the most generally evident, as the formal ones can be most definitely specified, and more general categories are bound to correlate with more instances.

Returning to the question of which features are most general and which more idiosyncratic, we notice the following: Erasmus, Swift and Voltaire do not mix verse with their prose; neither do they use significantly unconventional diction. I cannot judge the oral quality of the originally non-English works, but these three authors also seem more interested in attaining the 'transparent' quality of prose. Burton, Carlyle, Kierkegaard and Melville are relatively free of fantasy, in the sense of dreamlike or mythical 'other worlds.' Erasmus makes

perhaps least reference to topical matters, in the sense of satire of particular people, events, or opinions. *Alice* seems least concerned with right learning, but the experience of perversions of learning is itself educational. All are or contain parodies of forms. All are at least symbolically encyclopedic, in the sense of seeking a comprehensive view of some particular subject, or presenting a smattering of a broad range. All, in my opinion, present an existential quest, although in Burton, Sterne and Carroll, the tendency is muted, because there is little change in intensity, little sense of progress. So if we were to reduce our structure to the most common properties, it would include the concern with right learning, the parody of forms, and encyclopedism.

If we seek to analyse this complex further, we observe that some of the less common features can be regarded as 'implications' drawn from the more common. Mixture of verse and prose is an aspect of encyclopedism with respect to forms; unconventional diction can be seen as lexical encyclopedism or parody of speech patterns. The oral qualities that Frye describes can be largely subsumed under encyclopedism - an attempt to say everything at once, and to say everything that is thought. Fantasy can be seen as both parody of reality, and as encyclopedism with respect to possible experience. Topicality can be an attempt to make the encyclopedism include the present, and to enliven right learning. Furthermore, these three categories somewhat overlap. Encyclopedism combined with a parodic attitude leads to parody of various forms. Right learning is, roughly, learning all that you need to know about all of the things you need to know about. Encyclopedism gives you all you need to know, but the value orientation is lacking. In a way, parody supplies this, because of its implicit standards, but the personal relevance is uncertain. It laughs away whatever is not needed. So to reduce our characteristics to the most essential possible, and putting them in quasi-intentional terms (which relate the efficient cause, the authorial agent, to the formal cause) we are left with the following: an encyclopedic impulse, a parodic impulse, and an impulse towards personal conviction. Slightly more abstractly, we have the impulse to be all-inclusive regarding knowledge and all-exclusive with respect to belief or conviction. In order to distinguish the genre from that of the genuine encyclopedia, we must add that the anatomies are explorations of belief and are usually ironic: they tend to be inclusive about knowledge only in order to reject it, and exclusive about conviction in order to try to attain it.

Any attempt to specify a form for a particular genre runs the risk of implying that somewhere out there is the archetypal or essential instance of it, either waiting to be written, or being thumbed over by all the other archetypes and Platonic forms. If we take the analogy with the study of language, we can see that it is obvious that the existence of norms does not imply the existence (or potential existence) of a concrete ideal. To say that some sentences are grammatically correct interrogative sentences does not mean that it makes sense to speak of a most grammatical or most interrogative sentence. We must be careful not to confuse the notion of an abstract or ideal character or structure of a genre, as embodied in a set of conventions, with the idea of an ideal structure as one that does what it does better than any possible other structure. This again is a confusion of senses of function. It would be perfectly possible to write something that is the quintessential anatomy according to all of our characteristics, but that was nonetheless dull and insipid. Similarly, it is possible to write a formally perfect sonnet that is perfectly awful. To speak of a 'group of initiatives' around a structured vision suggests that these conventions go some way towards realizing the vision in an appropriate way, but further determinations are necessary to produce the particular character of the work, as a glance at the diversity of mood and matter of these books shows.

While Frye's approach to genre is oriented to the conditions established between the writer and the audience, and the 'rhythms' appropriate to presentational factors, my study has led me to think of genre as fundamentally about a model to which the writer relates himself. A model embodies certain conventions and implies a certain vision and certain kinds of effects. Frye's description of the pregeneric *mythos* of winter is a kind of model in this sense, but is regarded as a structural principle or attitude rather than as part of a developing tradition. Hence it is necessarily somewhat removed from actual works. The model any writer uses is also abstracted from the works he or she admires, but in order to understand better the nature of this abstraction, a diachronic study of a 'line of descent' is highly relevant to genre (although I do not know if this is best treated as an 'anxiety of influence').

Many critics have observed that closer attention to the "formal nature of a particular work" (Denham), the "synthesizing idea" (R. S. Crane), the "artistic problem" (Panofsky) (Denham 201), or the "*intentio operis*" (Eco) would tend to provide a more definite idea of the work's structure than 'pure' structuralism, and with a higher degree of certainty. Both approaches agree on the importance of the initiative, or the writer's relation to

the formal cause, but the former leads to a reformulation of ideas of artistic intention. I believe that combining Frye's approach to structure with a developed view of what is involved in individual initiatives promises a rich account of the interaction of visions or mythic principles with literary models.

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