TIME AND SPACE IN THE TECHNIQUES OF SATIRE

TIME AND SPACE IN THE TECHNIQUES OF SATIRE

BY

ROSS EDWARD JACKSON, 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

MASTER OF ARTS (1988) McMASTER UNIVERSITY
(English) Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Time and Space in the Techniques of Satire

AUTHOR: Ross Edward Jackson, B.A. (York University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Richard Morton

NUMBER OF PAGES: vi, 92

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to examine the level of consciousness of time and space in three technical devices commonly used by satirists: the voyage to other worlds, allusions, and digression. In discussing these techniques, I have chosen three different satires by three different writers: Swift's Gulliver's Travels, Pope's Dunciad and Byron's Don Juan. In each chapter of this study, I not only link time and space with the technical devices under consideration, but suggest how the analysis of time and/or space works in conjunction with each writer's satiric goals. Moreover, I suggest how each of these techniques expresses the particular writer's epistemological assumptions of reality. While technique is stressed, the thematic is not lost, for I do address certain themes which are present in all three works.

While, to my knowledge, no extensive work has been done on time and space in the techniques of satire, I have not been forced to wander, as Wordsworth said of Newton, "through strange seas of thought, alone." For, in preparation of this thesis, I have read and felt the benefit of Locke's and Berkeley's philosophies of time and space,

general studies on the satire genre, and wide selections of the most recent criticism of each author under consideration. It might be noted at once that the concept of the chronotope, as outlined by Bakhtin is his Dialogic Imagination, also relates time and space to literary mimesis, but Bakhtin's methodology is quite different from that attempted in this thesis. The approach I have taken for each chapter is, I hope, eclectic, relating the aesthetic, the philosophical and the historical, while always illustrating my ideas from examples from the primary texts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to think that the excellent instruction of the late Dr. Brian Hepworth, whose flawless knowledge of satire, and stress on the importance of technique to the genre, has found its way into this study.

I wish to express my thanks to Professor Richard Morton for his gracious supervision of this thesis.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents for their support throughout the years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In one of the most endearing and memorable scenes in Canadian literature, Stephen Leacock writes of that fictional little town, Mariposa, and its little boat, the Mariposa Belle:

> The Mariposa Belle always seems to me to have some of those strange properties that distinguish Mariposa itself. I mean, her size seems to vary so. If you see her there in the winter, frozen in the ice beside the wharf with a snowdrift against the windows of the pilot house, she looks a pathetic little thing the size of a butternut. But in the summer time, especially after you've been in Mariposa for a month or two, and have paddled alongside of her in a canoe, she gets larger and taller, and with a great sweep of black sides, till you see no difference between the Mariposa Belle and the Lusitania. Each one is a big steamer and that's all you can say. (39)

A few pages later, in commenting on the "tragic" sinking of the Mariposa Belle, Leacock intrudes within his narrative to say:

> But, dear me, I am afraid that this is no way to tell a story. I suppose the true art would have been to have said nothing about the accident till it happened. But when you write about Mariposa, or hear of it, if you know the place, it's so vivid and real, that a thing like the contrast between the excursion crowd in the morning and the scene at night leaps into your mind and you must think of it. (42)

I quote these passages from Leacock's famous satiric evocation of small-town Canadian life for three reasons.

First, both passages utilize the techniques, and the inherent temporal/spatial dimensions embodied within them, which are the subject of this thesis. Secondly, Leacock's use of these techniques in the twentieth century reveals a continuity of satiric method, which I imply through this thesis. Thirdly, my use of Leacock to illustrate the techniques under consideration is an example of my own illustrative method in writing this thesis.

In the first passage from Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town, the narrator's account of the changing size of the Mariposa Belle is related to space and perception. Once "you've been in Mariposa for a month or two," he tells us, the little boat "gets larger and taller ... till you see no difference between the Mariposa Belle and the Lusitania." Of course, in reality, the Mariposa Belle is a small boat. But the narrator's confusion in determining its size results from his immersion in the fictional world of Mariposa, and the Lilliputian perception ("till you see") of space that such an immersion entails. The Mariposa Belle may be the Lusitania of Mariposa, but to a rational mind, which has control over concepts of space, it is no more than a small lake steamer. Leacock's humorous presentation of the distorted perceptions of the inhabitants of Mariposa is borrowed from Swift's Gulliver's Travels. In the first two parts of his most well-known satire, Swift displaces his protagonist to the fantasy worlds of Lilliput and Brobdingnag. In these strange worlds,

Gulliver's space perception is affected by his apparently enormous and diminutive sizes. Through Gulliver's skewed perception of space, Swift satirizes the pride and pedantry of his persona, and the causes of this pride: scientific and mathematical learning and materialist philosophy.

When the narrator mentions the Lusitania in the same breath as the Mariposa Belle, he is making an allusion which is ridiculous. The incongruity of the comparison depends upon the ability of the reader to visualize the Lusitania, a very famous and large ocean-liner in its day, and the tiny Mariposa Belle side by side. In the second chapter of this thesis, I discuss Pope's allusions to Aeneid V and Paradise Lost in Dunciad II. Unlike Leacock's in this instance, Pope's allusions are literary; but, nevertheless, they work satirically by this same process. The reader's ability to visualize certain scenes in the Aeneid and Paradise Lost and compare them to Pope's mock epic contribute to the bathos. The "smallness" of the dunces' games in the Dunciad is held up to the epic funeral games in the Aeneid. Further, I contend that when Pope alludes to Virgil, Homer or Milton, he is creating a temporal/spatial image, showing his own perspective of time and space, which he contrasts with the formless, one-dimensionalist perspective of the dunces.

The second selection from Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town, with its digressive intrusion by Leacock, shows the satirist commenting upon his art in the process of his

creation of it. In the third chapter of this thesis, I discuss Byron's use of digression in the first canto of Don Juan. Like Leacock, but more pervasively, Byron interrupts Juan's adventures to comment upon his poetic practices, and also a wide variety of subjects. I maintain that when Byron digresses from his narrative, he exposes the artifice of dramatic illusion, and projects a dual image of the present by simultaneously giving a picture of himself writing, and forcing the reader to recognize his own temporal reality in the act of reading.

I have chosen Gulliver's Travels, Dunciad and Don Juan to illustrate the centrality of space and time in the three techniques under consideration because their creators use these devices to a greater extent, and, I believe, are more aware of the temporal/spatial implications of their use, than other satirists. Nevertheless, as my reference to Leacock here, and to other satirists in the following pages, suggests, I feel that these techniques embody temporal and spatial dimensions no matter which satirist uses them. One could just as easily, for instance, substitute Dryden's MacFlecknoe for the Dunciad in the chapter on allusion, or use Kurt Vonnegut's Breakfast of Champions or Sterne's Tristram Shandy to discuss digression. T.S. Eliot once said that "the most individual parts of his [the poet's] work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously" (431). The "individual parts,"

which Eliot speaks of, are the techniques. That the techniques of satire have been passed down through the literary ages is undeniable. What is attempted in these pages is a demonstration of how they work in individual texts.

CHAPTER I

Miniature and Gigantic Worlds: The Distortion of Space in Gulliver's Travels Parts I and II

Imagine a man urinating to put out a castle on fire, a man having his food stolen from his hand by wasps, a man needing a full-length sword to slay a rat, a man towing fifty battle ships while swimming: imagine, Swift asks the reader of Gulliver's Travels, these improbable events. Indeed all we can do is imagine, for these scenes, occurring far-off and in an "other world," cannot be accepted rationally by the mind of anyone who recognizes the spatial/physical incongruity of, for example, a man towing the tons of wood, steel, glass and other materials that comprise a flotilla of fifty Man-of-War ships. Knowing the size of an individual man, and his size relative to a castle, wasp, rat and a ship, the reader realizes that these events could not occur in our world. Their impossibility, their unreality, and therefore their implausibility, is rooted in our knowledge of spatial relations. Only when we are displaced in space, as happens to Gulliver and the reader of Swift's satire, do we recognize that space, as abstract a concept as it seems, is a structural principle through which we understand reality.

Narratives that displace usual physical relationships are not without precedent in the history of literature, and do not seem limited to any one genre. One need only think of Dante's mystical ascent of Mount Purgatory, Milton's heroic Satan in Hell, Spenser's Bower of Bliss, or more recently Lovecraft's and Dostoievsky's tales of the fantastic, children's fairy tales like Peter Pan, and today's interest in intergalactic space fictions, to come to the conclusion that fiction often takes as its setting an imagined world significantly different from our own. The satirist, in particular, seems to enjoy employing other, strange worlds for his setting. Beginning with the Cynic Menippus (c. 340-c. 270 B.C.), satires have been set in a fantasy world. Following the example of Menippus, Varro, Gilbert Highet records, wrote satires that "were not discursive monologues, but narratives of fantastic adventure told in the first person" (37). The fantastic voyage to Utopias (derived from the Greek ou [not] and topos [place]), suggesting an ideal society beyond 'real' space, is a commonplace of satire. Often the displaced voyager experiences a concomitant mental displacement while in these fantasy worlds. Lucian's Kataplous and True History, the satires of Francois Rabelais, Voltaire's Candide, with its hero's voyage to Eldorado, not to mention Swift's Gulliver's Travels, all serve as examples of satires which use fantasy worlds, distinct from ours in time and/or space, for their settings or, as in Rabelais and

Lucian, so distort the society and geography of France and Greece that they become in effect fantasy kingdoms.

Many critics, writing of satire, have noted that realism is central to the genre. Leonard Feinburg, in the first sentence of his book, comments, "Like other arts, the best satire is concerned with the nature of reality" (3). And Highet writes, "The central problem of satire is its relation to reality" (158). Feinburg assumes that satire is social literature, which will tell us about reality and instruct us as we read. Highet's use of the word "problem" intimates that satire, as a type of literature, must be related to reality. But why, we may ask, does satire, if it is "concerned" with reality, take other fantasy worlds for its setting? Highet goes as far as to assert that the satirist can show us "a picture of another world, with which our world is contrasted" (159). Swift's presentation of the ideal Brobdingnag, where there are no wars, gun-powder or oppressive government, is surely a contrast with Walpole's corrupt and quarrelsome England. However, Highet's anatomized argument does not fit Swift's other Utopian world, Lilliput. As many commentators have recognized, Lilliput and Blefuscu are allegorical counterparts -- extended analogies or comparisons -- with England and France. Many of the vices and political absurdities found in Lilliput mirror those of Swift's eighteenth-century England. So Swift's first two

books show both the technique of didactic contrast (Highet's thesis) and the technique of fantastic mirror image.

Contrast and comparison has long been a method in which we "know" ideas and objects. In order to contrast and compare, however, the mind must rely on sense experience. But the senses cannot always give an accurate account of reality. Especially when the sense of sight is the informing sense, the position of the viewer, the perspective, may deceive or confuse. Different perspectives may result in spatial manipulation by which our world -- its reality -- is altered. In Lilliput and Brobdingnag, Gulliver's reliance on the sense of sight contributes to his unreliable reporting, and ultimately his distorted perspective of humanity. While Gulliver recognizes that the size of objects is different in these two fantasy worlds, he does not consider how the relative space between his eye and the objects he perceives has also changed. When we see our world under the microscope or through the telescope, the distorting lens can discomfort our sense of reality. In effect, Gulliver is looking at the world of Brobdingnag through a magnifying lens, and the world of Lilliput through the wrong end of a telescope. In the first two parts of Gulliver's Travels, Swift offers a distorted vision of our world by taking his protagonist and the reader to lands where size and space are manipulated. Through Gulliver's perception, his "sight", Swift gives us a perspective of man as prideful diminutives and grotesque

giants. And Gulliver himself represents both extremes, for, at one time or another, his perception is both Lilliputian and Brobdingnagian.

In this chapter, I shall first discuss the relationship of space to judgement and perception. I will then outline Locke's and then Berkeley's philosophy of space, illustrating how Swift employs their ideas for satiric purposes. From here, I discuss how Gulliver's reliance on sense experience, and his acquired learning, affects his perception of himself and humanity. Finally, I comment on how Gulliver's perception of space has repercussions on his reporting. Each section of this chapter is related to the others, with space the underlying concept under consideration.

I

To an Augustan humanist mind such as Swift's, space is a primary building block on which moral and intellectual judgement is built. Space is, for Swift, an idea in the mind abstracted, or taken from the senses. Indeed, in Gulliver's Travels, Swift's spatial imagery is impressed with icons abstracted from the senses, particularly of sight, as in the following:

> When I found myself on my Feet, I looked about me, and must confess I never beheld a more entertaining Prospect. The Country round appeared like a continued Garden; and the

> inclosed Fields, which were generally Forty Foot square, resembled so many Beds of Flowers. These Fields were intermingled with Woods of half a Stang, and the tallest Trees, as I could judge, appeared to be seven Foot high. I viewed the Town on my left Hand, which looked like the painted Scene of a City in a Theatre. (11; pt. 1, ch. 2 emphasis added)

Ultimately, the reality of Lilliput is identified as the pretense of the theatre; Gulliver is essentially a spectator, who sees the stage of Lilliput from the same perspective that a second-balcony theatre patron would see objects on stage. Moreover, it is telling that Swift uses the words "resembled" and "judge" in conjunction with the "seeing" imagery. To perceive space correctly -- the "seeing" metaphor is important in Swift's imaging -- is to have judgement, and in order to have judgement one must compare and contrast, keeping in mind the dimensions of other emotions and thoughts, other objects and times, while immersed in one. Only through a synthesizing of sense experience, and a knowledge of what was said and done in the past, can we judge the present. If one does not keep in sight all of these dimensions, one becomes immersed in the present, particularizing and, like Gulliver, losing the capacity to interpret the whole. Space is, then, a concept which is important to the mind's understanding: it is a construct through which we know the nature of our ideas.

Gulliver's Travels was conceived in the midst of England's greatest period of epistemological theory. With

Locke, and the scientific experiments of the Royal Society, educated men began the bold undertaking of examining the mind's thought processes. Locke's An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), as its title suggests, attempted to demonstrate the ways in which the mind "knows" its ideas. In the Essay, Locke denies the existence of innate ideas and outlines the "mechanics" of knowing, suggesting that all of our ideas are formed through the linking or association of the primary qualities of an object with the senses. Once the mind has grasped the primary qualities of an object, or what Locke calls simple ideas -- for example the knowledge that a ship is larger than a man, an inch a smaller measure than a foot -- it can build on these simple ideas and form complex ones; for Locke, then, understanding is causal, and involves comparison, contrast and memory. These are exactly the qualities which Gulliver relies on in describing Lilliput.

The importance of Locke's treatise, as Meyrick Carre observes in his article "The Empirical Philosophy," can hardly be overestimated: "Throughout the eighteenth century it was the Essay of Locke that dominated philosophical opinion. It was the bible of cultural discussion in metaphysical matters ..." (185). Substantial sections of Book II of the Essay deal with the concepts of space and time, and its ideas concerning the association of ideas in the mind surface throughout the first two parts of Gulliver's Travels. Of understanding space, Locke writes that "the Mind

has this common Idea of continued lengths" which it attains from a "clear Idea of the difference of the length of an Hour and a Day, as of an Inch and a Foot" (196; bk. 2, ch. 15, sec. 2). The mind, then, knows that an inch is a different measure than a foot by its comparison of it. Gulliver, at the beginning of his adventures in Brobdingnag, is referring to Locke's concept of association when he says:

> Undoubtedly Philosophers are in the Right when they tell us, that nothing is great or little otherwise than by Comparison: It might have pleased Fortune to let the Lilliputians find some Nation, where the People were as diminutive with respect to them, as they were to me. (62; bk. 2, ch. 1)

In addition, Locke posits that the mind knows space by measures, which give the mind an universal understanding of space through memory: "The Mind ... makes use of common Measures, which, by familiar use in each Country, have imprinted themselves on the Memory (as Inches and Feet, Cubits and Parasangs) ..." (202; bk. 2, ch. 15, sec. 9). For Locke, measures could be thought of as determinate "blocks" of space: "Men for the use, and by the custom of measuring, settle in their minds the Idea of certain stated lengths, such as an Inch, Yard, Fathom, Mile, Diameter of the Earth, etc. which are so many distinct Ideas made up only of space" (167; ch. 13, sec. 4). By conceiving space in finite measures, space could be thought of as a "container" of mass, and thus subject to mathematical expression; hence, space, in Locke's epistemology, is confused with size. Swift satirizes

Locke's materialist concept of space through his persona. In Lilliput, Gulliver's ideas of "common Measures" are distinct from those of the Lilliputians. We recall that Gulliver has to translate the spatial dimensions of "the Mighty Emperor of Lilliput['s]" land, "whose Dominions extend five Thousand Blustrugs, (about twelve Miles in Circumference)" (24; pt. 1, ch. 3). And that Gulliver records that "his Majesty's Imperial Heels are lower at least by a Drurr than any of his Court; (Drurr is a measure about the fourteenth Part of an Inch)" (28; pt. 1, ch. 4). While Gulliver suggests that objects in Lilliput have the same spatial relationship to each other as they do in our world, their measures must be translated into our measurement system to be comprehended. Swift, here, is, of course, satirizing the mathematical pedantry of his persona, for Gulliver comes by his knowledge of the size of the Emperor's dominion and the height of his heels by a mathematical equation. It would have been impossible for Gulliver to recognize visually that the Emperor's heels were a fourteenth of an inch lower than those of the courtiers by looking at them from his usual height -- a distance of five and a half feet. Nor could he visually recognize "twelve miles in Circumference." As Gulliver reflects a few pages later, size may be dependent upon the distance of the object from the retina:

> As the common Size of the Natives is somewhat under six Inches, so there is an exact Proportion in all other Animals, as well as Plants and Trees: For instance, the tallest

> Horses and Oxen are between four and five Inches in Height, the sheep an Inch and a half, more or less; their Geese about the Bigness of a Sparrow; and so the several Graduations downwards, till you come to the smallest, which, to my sight, were almost invisible.... (35; pt. 1, ch. 6)

From these comparisons -- that is, by comparing a known size/quantity in Lilliput with a recollected size/quantity in Europe -- Gulliver can extrapolate a measuring system.

II

Much of the humour in the first two parts of Gulliver's Travels rests on Gulliver's associations. Displaced to strange worlds, Gulliver compares objects in Lilliput and Brobdingnag with objects in our world, which, while similar in size, have incongruent characteristics. For example, the Lilliputians restrict Gulliver's movements by attaching "fourscore and eleven Chains, like those that hang to a Lady's Watch in Europe" (10-11; pt. 1, ch. 1) to his leg. Here, Swift's simile, comparing a Lilliputian chain with a "European Lady's" watch chain, is similar in one characteristic: both are made from links. However, the incongruity of a man being held by ninety-one watch chains, something we regard as fragile and delicate, and emphasized by Gulliver's qualification that they are the size of a "Lady's," is ludicrous. While the ninety-one chains together that hold Gulliver are, we assume, as thick as a single

length of chain in our world, they would not individually be of the same strength. Indeed, one wonders why Gulliver does not just break each individual chain to set himself free.

As the chain example illustrates, Gulliver relies on memory, and contrast and comparison to determine the size of objects in Lilliput. However, other than in size, Gulliver's associations are invariably discordant in other aspects. For instance, while at the farmer's house in Brobdingnag, Gulliver recalls, with his usual mathematical pedantry, that he encountered a cat, "who seemed three Times Larger than an Ox" (65; pt. 2, ch. 1). Similarly, he remembers that the farmer's dog "was a Mastiff", who "was equal in Bulk to four Elephants" (66; pt. 2, ch 1). Gulliver's association of a Brobdingnagian cat and dog with an ox and elephant are similar in one way: they are all from the animal world. However, we could hardly say either that a cat looks like an ox or that a mastiff has the same disposition as an elephant. While Gulliver depends on his senses and memory in comparing objects in Lilliput and Brobdingnag with objects in our world, they ultimately fail him in his associations. Whenever Gulliver attempts to form what Locke would call a "complex" idea from the data of sense experience, he frequently makes unusual comparisons.

As we have seen, Swift incorporates some of Locke's ideas concerning association in his satire. Locke's pioneering work with the concept of space also laid the

foundation for George Berkeley's epistemology, from which Swift also draws extensively in the first two parts of Gulliver's Travels. While Locke argues a finite perspective of space, suggesting the tangible reality of objects before the eye, Berkeley, a Trinity College graduate and friend of Swift in later years, departs from Locke's materialist view that objects are real in time and space -- with or without the presence of the senses. He suggests, in anticipation of Kant eighty odd years in the future, that it is the senses in themselves which give the mind its ideas of the size and shape of an object. In his An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision (1709), a title which suggests the undermining of Locke's Empiricism, Berkeley takes as his subject the illusory mechanism by which men convince themselves of the relation between objects and the space separating them from the eye:

> Now, it being already shown that distance is suggested to the mind by the mediation of some other idea which is it self perceived in the act of seeing, it remains that we inquire what ideas or sensations there be that attend vision, unto which we may suppose the ideas of distance are connected, and by which they are introduced into the mind. And first, it is certain by experience that when we look at a near object with both eyes, according as it approaches or recedes from us, we alter the disposition of our eyes, by lessening or widening the interval between the pupils. This disposition or turn of the eyes is attended with a sensation, which seems to me to be that which in this case brings the idea of greater or lesser distance into the mind. (239; sec. 16)

Since knowing any idea is dependent on sense experience, space, for Berkeley, is a precondition for any knowledge whatsoever. Unlike Locke, and in opposition to Newton's mathematical conception of space,[1] Berkeley suggests the subjectivity of spatial relations between objects. The distance between the object and the perceiving eye prohibits physical experience and, therefore, valid sense experience:

> It is plain I cannot mean, that what I see is a mile off, or that it is the image or likeness of any thing which is a mile off, since that every step I take towards it, the appearance alters, and from being obscure, small, and faint, grows clear, large, and vigorous. And when I come to the mile's end, that which I saw first is quite lost, neither do I find any thing in the likeness of it. (Berkeley 251; sec. 44)

The Berkeleyan epistemology of space is exploited by Swift, and is particularly noticeable in part II, where the diminutive Gulliver, once he sees the Brobdingnagians up close, is sickened by what seem to be deformities:

> I must confess no Object ever disgusted me so much as the Sight of her monstrous Breast, which I cannot tell what to compare with, so as to give the curious Reader an Idea of its Bulk, Shape and Colour. It stood prominent six Foot, and could not be less than sixteen in Circumference. The Nipple was about half the Bigness of my Head, and the Hue both of that and the Dug so varified with Spots, Pimples and Freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous: For I had a near Sight of her, she

---

[1]Berkeley was vehemently opposed to Newton's concept of space. Newton thought since Nature was matter and matter was space, we could view space as a mathematical formula. For an indepth study of Berkeley's objection to Newton's concept of space see Schwartz's "Berkeley, Newtonian Space, and the Question of Evidence."

> sitting down the more conveniently to give Suck, and I standing on the Table. (66; pt. 2, ch. 1 emphasis added)

Gulliver does, however, have something to compare the disgusting, monstrous breast with, for after this sight, he makes a Lockean association and thinks of the complexions of the women in his native country:

> This made me reflect upon the Skins of our English Ladies, who appear so beautiful to us, only because they are of our own Size, and their Defects not to be seen but only through a magnifying Glass, where we find by Experiment that the smoothest and whitest Skins look rough and course, and ill coloured. (66-67; pt. 2, ch. 1 emphasis added)

Gulliver the technological pedant is again satirized here; how many beautiful English ladies would have stood still to be examined by Captain Gulliver with a magnifying glass! Because Gulliver only "knows" space in mathematical terms, he is shocked when he discovers that it is his senses which determine space. The sailor-navigator must come to terms with the Berkeleyan philosopher. Gulliver, clearly, does not understand that space is crucial in comparing size, for he "can only interpret phenomena," as Nigel Wood has astutely observed, "according to probabilities derived from their 'primary qualities'" (80). Since Gulliver can only interpret the "primary quality" of the Brobdingnagians -- their size -- his view of them is distorted; his comparison with English women shows his characteristic misanthropy and misogyny, but depends on his failure to, as it were, see "below the surface." Without understanding space, perception approaches

madness, as it does in Gulliver. Martin Price has justly censured Gulliver because he "embodies the incorrigible tendency of the mind to oversimplify experience, a trait that takes, with equal ease, the form of complacency or of misanthropy" (196).

Gulliver continues this passage with a recollection of his Lilliputian experience:

> I remember when I was at Lilliput, the Complexions of those diminutive People appeared to me the fairest in the World: And talking about this Subject with a Person of Learning there, who was an intimate Friend of mine; he said, that my Face appeared much fairer and smoother when he looked on me from the Ground, than it did upon a nearer View when I took him up in my Hand, and brought him close; which he confessed was at first a very shocking Sight. He said, he could discover great Holes in my Skin; that the Stumps of my Beard were ten Times stronger than the Bristles of a Boar; and my Complexion altogether disagreeable: Although I must beg Leave to say for my self, that I am as fair as most of my Sex and Country, and very little Sunburnt by all my Travels. (67; pt. 2, ch. 1 emphasis added)

To perceive objects in their proper spatial context is of the utmost importance for intellectual and moral judgement. When Gulliver gets too close to the Brobdingnagians, he is disgusted; he then transfers this disgust to humanity in general, eventually to himself, when he reifies his own self by comparing his beard to the "Bristles of a Boar". Similarly, the Lilliputians, when too close to Gulliver, lose the perspective -- the space -- that validates experience, and lose the reality which they are too close to comprehend.

By the end of his stay in Brobdingnag, Gulliver has a distorted concept of space and, therefore, he cannot denominate the size of objects. We recall that Gulliver is winged away from Brobdingnag by "giant" eagles, and is dropped by them into the sea. When rescued by a passing ship, Gulliver asks the captain whether he or his men had noticed any "prodigious Birds in the Air about the time he first discovered me" (112; pt. 2, ch. 8). Gulliver then relates that after

> discussing this Matter with the Sailors while I was asleep, one of them said he had observed three Eagles flying towards the North; but remarked nothing of their being larger than the usual Size; which I suppose must be imputed to the great Height they were at.... (112; pt. 2, ch. 8)

Swift intimates that the eagles which carried Gulliver from Brobdingnag are the same ones that the sailor witnessed. But the discrepancy between Gulliver's account of the size of the eagles and the sailor's is the result of different space perception. Gulliver is still perceiving the birds according to Brobdingnagian space; he has not taken into account that, because of his displacement to other worlds where spatial measures are different, distances in space also change. Gulliver's space perception is, in effect, Brobdingnagian. Gulliver's ducking under door frames when in England is as much the result of his distorted perception of space as it is of their "small" size.

III

As we have seen, Swift utilizes Berkeley's theories of space as they relate to sight. But Berkeley also illustrates the independence of the senses in determining measurements of space. When we recognize the distance of an object in space, we experience an alteration, as it were, in the eye; the same applies to the experiences of touch and sound, which have nothing to do with vision:

> By the variation of the noise I perceive the different distances of the coach, and know that it apprcaches before I look out. Thus by the ear I perceive distance, just after the same manner as I do by the eye. (Berkeley 256; sec. 46)

In one scene, Gulliver relies on his hearing to determine how many Lilliputians there are surrounding him in space: "But by the Noise increasing, I knew their Numbers were greater ..." (6; pt. 1, ch. 1). Gulliver shows how much sound contributes to his perception of himself as a giant. When he urinates to the amusement of the diminutive Lilliputians, he describes it as a "Torrent which fell with such Noise and Violence from me" (9; pt. 1, ch. 1). In his mind, Gulliver not only sees himself as a giant, but "hears" himself as one. Similarly, Swift shows the reader that ideas of touch are also related to our ideas of size, when in Brobdingnag Gulliver is given a "sheet" by the farmer's wife which was a "clean white Handkerchief, but larger and coarser than the Main Sail of a Man of War" (67; pt. 2, ch. 1). The reader

must first compare the size of a Brobdingnagian handkerchief to that of a European one and then to a Man of War sail in our world. Once we have made these associations, we may be amused at the thought of Gulliver draped in a sail. But the second part of the reference deals with touch. Swift asks us to compare first a handkerchief, which we ordinarily think of as made of soft material, with a ship's sail, which we usually conceive of as being made from coarse material such as canvas. Gulliver's displacement makes him compare and associate objects which are similar in size, but not in character. Each of his senses is independent, but they work together in giving him his idea of the size of an object -- which, in Brobdingnag, means its "primary quality."

Gulliver's size relative to the Lilliputians and Brobdingnagians contributes to the way in which he perceives himself. In Lilliput, Gulliver's enormous stature makes him proud. He notes, for example, when the soldiers march under him, that some of them looked at his genitals with "Laughter and Admiration" (23; pt. 1, ch. 3). Later, of course, Gulliver thinks that he could have, if he wanted, a sexual tryst with the Queen of Lilliput. It is interesting, no less than amusing, that Gulliver who professes to be in control of measurements, does not realize the physical impossibility of this occurring. Conversely, while in Brobdingnag, Gulliver perceives himself as a little animal. For instance, when he is first picked up by a Brobdingnagian field hand, he

describes what he thinks is the giant's reaction to him in the following manner:

> He considered a while with the Caution of one who endeavours to lay hold on a small dangerous Animal in such a Manner that it shall not be able to scratch or to bite him; as I my self have sometimes done with a Weasel in England. (63; pt. 2, ch. 1)

Similarly, when the farmer's wife first sees Gulliver, he records that "she screamed and ran back as women in England do at the Sight of a Toad or a Spider" (64; pt. 2, ch. 1). Gulliver reifies his own self in this simile by comparing himself with these small, but also unpleasant animals and insects. Because Gulliver is looking at himself under the microscope in Brobdingnag, he conceives himself as insignificant as an insect.

As has been suggested, Gulliver is so interested in particulars that he cannot see the context of the whole. In part, Swift is attacking the type of education Gulliver has attained and the type of thinking it produces. A surgeon who learns "Mathematick[s]" and navigation because they would prove "useful to those who intend to travel" (3; pt. 1, ch. 1), Swift's protagonist is a utilitarian man of the new science, a modern, who aligns himself with both a Cartesian[2] and a Newtonian belief in the certainty that mathematics

---

[2]Gulliver would not disagree with Decartes' comment that, "Most of all was I delighted with Mathematics because of the certainity of its demonstrations and the evidence of its reasoning ... I was astonished that seeing how firm and solid was its basis, no loftier edifice had been reared thereupon" (8).

seemed to offer and that philosophy, natural science and history did not. At the start of his voyage, Gulliver informs the reader that it is not "proper" to "trouble the Reader with the Particulars of our Adventures in those Seas" (4; pt. 1, ch. 1). Of course, Gulliver's remark is ironic because in the preceding three paragraphs he has given a detailed chronicle of his life. Immediately following this passage, he comments:

> Let it suffice to inform him, that in our passage from thence to the East-Indies, we were driven by a violent Storm to the North-west of Van Dieman's Land. By an Observation, we found ourselves in the Latitude of 30 Degrees 2 Minutes South. Twelve of our Crew were dead by immoderate Labour, and ill Food; the rest were in a very weak Condition. On the fifth of November, which was the beginning of Summer in those Parts, the Weather being very hazy, the Seamen spyed a Rock, within half a Cable's length of the Ship ... Six of the Crew, of whom I was one, having let down the Boat into the Sea, made a Shift to get clear of the Ship, and the Rock. We rowed by my Computation, about three Leagues.... (4; pt. 1, ch. 1)

Even though Gulliver recognizes that the reader is not interested in particulars, his pride in his own knowledge of navigation overrides this recognition, and he prattles away about dates and degrees of longitude with the specificity of any mathematician. Moreover, he lists the events that occurred in a detached, forensic manner, without change of tone, according equal weight to the particular location of their ship and to his twelve dead comrades. Like the degenerate narrator of A Modest Proposal, Gulliver uses euphemisms to disguise human suffering, such as the adjective

"immoderate" to describe the physical exhaustion that was ultimately fatal. Yet, amidst all of the suffering he encounters, he still finds it important to remember the date, the weather, and the distance in space ("within half a Cable's length") that the ship was from the rock. His drab statistical reckoning of death and the six remaining members of the crew again suggests his mathematical nature, and myopic interest in minute particulars. He relates that by his "Computation", he and the survivors rowed about "three Leagues", but he never suggests the feelings or emotions that he, or any of the other men, experienced in the rowboat. Gulliver parodies the new scientific man, who is only knowledgeable in externals and facts; this type of learning is, in Swift's view, useless as far as revealing anything significant about human morality or experience.

IV

Gulliver's type of education, one that focuses on the facts, contributes to his distorted view of the world. Moreover, his presentation of his narrative, purporting to give a factual account of his adventures, is often erroneous. Michael Seidel has argued that "the record of his [Gulliver's] progress becomes confused with the disintegration of his recording powers" (203). In parts one and two of Gulliver's Travels, fairly frequent

inconsistencies of size suggest that either Swift is careless in narration, or that we are expected to read Gulliver as an unreliable witness. No one could draw behind him a whole fleet of Lilliputian ships; a cavalry regiment could not exercise on a pocket handkerchief; Gulliver's supine body could not suffer a deluge of Lilliputians. Probably, Gulliver is being revealed as not just an inefficient narrator, who suffers from a "disintegration of his recording powers," but as a positively unreliable one.

Swift's parodying of William Dampier's A Voyage to New Holland (1703) and Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1709), the two notable travel-books that Swift had in mind as he wrote (Wood 77), and whose respective authors were a prominent Royal Society member and a professed Whig, is based on their factual reporting through the first-person speaker. Throughout Gulliver's travels to Lilliput and Brobdingnag, Swift makes the reader aware that what Gulliver writes has been filtered through his senses, which have been distorted by spatial incongruities; all that Gulliver writes (and he writes his adventures after the fact, between bouts of madness and misanthropy) is a distortion. And sometimes the distortion takes the form of incongruity or inconsistency, perhaps recalling the celebrated pockets in Crusoe's non-existent trousers. Everything is a clue to the cautious reader.

In the following passage, Swift uses recurrent sensual imagery to record how Gulliver sees, feels and hears:

> I likewise felt several slender ligatures across my Body, from my Armpits to my Thighs. I could only look upwards; the Sun began to grow hot, and the Light offended mine Eyes. I heard a confused Noise about me, but in the Posture I lay, could see nothing except the Sky. In a little time I felt something alive moving on my left Leg, which advancing gently forward over my Breast, came almost up to my Chin; when bending my Eyes downwards as much as I could, I perceived it to be a human Creature no six Inches high, with a Bow and Arrow in his Hands, and a Quiver at his Back. In the mean time, I felt at least Forty more of the same Kind (as I conjectured) following the first. (5; pt. 1, ch. 1 emphasis added)

Swift's use of paratactic, right-branching sentences may be mimicking Defoe's prose style. In addition, his use of verbs that are related to the senses illustrates how much his reporter depends on the senses. However, Swift undercuts his persona's ability to provide an accurate account of his experiences because he relies too uncritically on his senses. Significantly, Gulliver is blinded by the sun ("the Light offended mine Eyes"). Gulliver cannot see correctly -- indeed he carries, but notably seldom wears corrective lenses. Gulliver calculates the number of Lilliputians standing on his body by multiplying the weight of one; a Lockean, but particularly unconvincing calculation. When Gulliver later records that "he felt above an Hundred Arrows discharged on my left Hand, which pricked me like so many Needles" (6; pt. 1, ch. 1), he must be only giving an approximation, for a man from our world would never have

experienced being stuck with a hundred needles. Because of the minuteness of objects in Lilliput, Gulliver has nothing real to compare his experiences with; his knowledge of space gained from the real world has neither meaning nor is applicable in Lilliput.

To a rational mind, size is dependent on space perception. However, as the eagle example mentioned earlier illustrates, Gulliver does not take into account how space perception effects his determining the sizes of objects in Lilliput and Brobdingnag. When Gulliver sees himself beside the Queen of Brobdingnag in a mirror, he recalls that he could not "forbear smiling at my self" (80; pt. 2, ch. 3) because the Queen is so much larger than him. But what one wonders is, as Gulliver does, whether Gulliver has reduced his own size to smaller proportions:

> Neither indeed could I forbear smiling at my self, when the Queen used to place me upon her Hand towards a Looking-Glass, by which both our Persons appeared before me in full View together; and there could nothing be more ridiculous than the Comparison: So that I really began to imagine my self dwindled many Degrees below my usual Size. (80; pt. 2, ch. 3)

And hence Gulliver informs us that he "fears" he has "run too much into the other Extreme" and done the Brobdingnagians "Injury by a false and diminutive Representation" (85-86; pt. 2, ch. 4). Of course, Gulliver has not, as he thinks, represented the Brobdingnagians as small, but has exaggerated their dimensions as his comparison of the distance or their

voices from him (seventy feet or so) with thunder illustrates. We may view Gulliver's comments as suggestive of his unreliability, but Swift is suggesting that his reporter's unreliability is the result of both Gulliver's giant and miniature size and the distorted perception of space it entails.

CHAPTER II

Past Time: Allusion in the Dunciad

Almost inevitably, and with good reason, critics of Alexander Pope's satires find themselves discussing, whether directly or peripherally, the poet's use of allusion. While our other major English authors use allusions, none, apart from Pope, uses them to the extent that they become a key technical device, or to such an extent that critics feel it necessary to analyze their structural significance. Two studies that treat the subject directly are Reuben Brower's Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion (1959) and Earl Wasserman's article "The Limits of Allusion in The Rape of the Lock" (1966). Brower quite correctly views Pope's allusiveness as part of his technique of imitation (viii). However, Brower does not recognize that Pope's use of allusion is a rhetorical strategy itself, like simile or metaphor, characterizing the poet's visual imagery:

> Through allusion, often in combination with subdued metaphors and exquisite images, Pope gets his purchase on larger meanings and evokes the finer resonances by which poetry (in Johnson's terms) 'penetrates the recesses of the mind'. (viii)

Building on Brower's analysis, critics today can move past

this adjectival commentary, to show the epistemological foundation of Pope's virtually obsessive allusiveness.

Earl Wasserman's controversial article, while it focuses on only one of Pope's poems, offers some valid general observations on Pope's borrowings. Wasserman astutely remarks that since the modern reader is "disinherited from his [Pope's] referential systems [,] it is reasonable to question whether we are adequately aware of the scope of his allusions and their part in constituting the fabric of his poems" (224). However, Wasserman's bold statement that Pope's allusions

> serve to tell us that the mind that composed The Rape of the Lock was less an English one hearkening [sic] back to the classics for witty references than one applying itself to an English social situation from the viewpoint of a deeply ingrained classicism (226),

suggests that at birth Pope was, as it were, merely plunked down by ancient Graeco-Roman storks in the midst of the eighteenth century, devoid of an English lineage and contemporary cultural and intellectual phenomena. Wasserman's assumption ignores the epistemological underpinnings that Pope's view of past time encompasses. Brian Hepworth has answered Wasserman's claim for the significance of Pope's allusions and what they tell us about Pope's mind, when he writes:

> No one knows, as Fellini's Satyricon has recently demonstrated, what the state of mind at any moment was in Rome. We may not even have the terms available to help us to such

> knowledge. Pope creates the past to which he alludes even as he alludes to it...." (7-8)

The theme of these pages is that Pope's allusions to the writers of ancient Greece and Rome, no less than his allusions to his English Renaissance ancestors, are themselves a temporal spatial image through which this Augustan expresses how he "knows" his knowledge of reality, and contrasts his knowing with that of the dunces. Pope's use of allusion suggests an image sometimes[1] of a poet two thousand miles away in space and seventeen hundred years away in time; and his poetry is marked with these images of extension in time and duration in space. Pope's allusions, as will be discussed in detail in an analysis of Dunciad Book II, force the reader to "see", with the satirist, over a perspective of time and space, and compare the duncery and darkness of his age with the sunlit aesthetic precepts that Pope believed were characteristic of Classical times. In addition, Pope's allusions to specific passages in Virgil and Milton, in Book II of the Dunciad, impart particular references; but they also impart a larger general context of meaning which is linked to Pope's humanism, pictorialism, and the philosophers', primarily Locke's, imaging of time in the association of ideas. Hence, some discussion will be

---

[1]Of course, when Pope alludes to Milton or Dryden, these temporal/spatial measurements are lesser.

afforded to these subjects as they relate to Pope's allusive satire.

I

> I visit, indeed, all the Flowers and Blossoms of the Field and the Garden, but whatever I collect from thence, enriches my self, without the least Injury to their Beauty, their Smell, or their Taste ... I hope, you will henceforth take Warning and consider Duration and matter, as well as method and Art (Swift 376),

says the bee, emblem of humanist learning, in Swift's The Battle of the Books, to the spider, who spins a formless web "furnisht" from "a Native Stock within my self" (376). The bee's caution to the spider to "consider Duration", a space of time, suggests the importance of time to Neoclassicists' ideas of art and Nature. The spider/bee analogy, with all of its metaphoric meanings, is recurrent in Swift as in Pope, and characterizes the different epistemologies of "modern" and humanist learning. Like the spider, who spins his web unanchored in the air, Pope's solipsistic dunces, like Swift's moderns, create from within themselves, immersed in the present moment and without acknowledging past time. They are opposed to Pope, the satirist, who while localized in the context of time and space, compares and contrasts, keeping in view other moments in time, other men, ideas and emotions. The consequences of this "modern" thinking about time and reality is at the heart of Pope's satire on the dunces. In

the following passage from the Dunciad, Pope images the formless cobweb as a replacement for the dunces' conception of wit:

> Or, if to Wit a coxcomb make pretence,
> Guard the sure barrier between that and Sense;
> Or quite unravel all the reas'ning thread,
> And hang some curious cobweb in its stead!
> (Dunciad 1.177-80)

Because the dunces lack sense or judgement, their wit, or how they put things together, has no restraint, and can be related to their insignificant learning:

> For thee we dim the eyes, and stuff the head
> With all such reading as was never read:
> For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,
> And write about it, Goddess, and about it,
> So spins the silk-worm small its slender store,
> And labours till it clouds itself all o'er.
> (Dunciad 4.249-54)

If the web is a symbol of the formlessness characteristic of the dunces, Pope aligns himself, through his use of allusion, with the humanist bee, who "enriches" himself with the sweetness of classical learning, from which he attains the ability to "see" over a perspective of time and space. "Seeing" for Pope, as opposed to the dunces' myopia, which Pope constantly images with fog and clouds, is the result of proper learning. Unlike the humanist, the "projector," the modern scientist so scorned by the Tory satirists, looks at particulars without keeping in mind the context of the whole. Pope's criticism of the dunces in the following lines suggest this unhappy facet of modern learning:

> 'O! would the Sons of Men once think their Eyes
> And Reason giv'n them but to study Flies!
> See Nature in some partial narrow shape,
> And let the Author of the Whole escape:
> Learn but to trifle; or, who most observe,
> To wonder at their Maker, not to serve.'
> (Dunciad 4.453-58)

Pope, here, draws attention to the experiments of the Royal Society. The undermining influence of the lens, the microscope, and the telescope, makes men "See Nature in some partial narrow shape." The result of this type of thinking is pride, for the possessor of this learning will start "To wonder at their Maker" (God) and not "serve" him. The scientist, therefore, breaks the hierarchical order of the great chain of being. Aubrey Williams has perceptively remarked that "Preoccupied with minutiae, with the part, the dunces never acquire such a perspective on man, never see the 'relative' insignificance of their position" (129). The importance of time and space to this position is great. The prideful scientist, arrogant professor, power-hungry politician, the hair-splitting pedant who names himself a critic, all do not keep in view the relative insignificance of their span of life -- as a measure of duration in time and extension in space -- to the eons of time before and after their existence. If they had had this conception of time and space, those pillars of reality, they would be humbled by the smallness of their lives and accomplishments.

It is against this duncical idea of time and space that Pope is opposed. Through his use of allusion, Pope

establishes a humanist moral and aesthetic position, which he shares with an impressive lineage of English poets from Spenser and Sidney to Milton and Dryden, and from which he stigmatizes the dunces and their modern thinking about art and reality. It is worth pausing to consider some of the ideals of humanist teaching in morals and art. While humanists may come in different religious shapes and political colours -- one may think of, for example, the Puritanical Whiggism of a Marvell and the Roman Catholic Toryism of a Pope -- we can, nevertheless, assert that humanist ideals in art and education remain contiguous from the early Renaissance to the Enlightenment.

At the heart of humanist thinking is an adoration for the past. An example of this veneration is Dryden's words, in his dedication to his translation of Plutarch's Lives:

> Not only the Bodies, but the Souls of Men, have decreas'd from the vigour of the first Ages; that we are not more short of stature and strength of those gygantick Heroes, than we are of their understanding, and their wit.... How vast a difference is there betwixt the productions of those Souls, and these of ours! How much better Plato, Aristotle, and the rest of the Philosophers understood nature; Thucydides, and Herodotus adorn'd History; Sophocles, Euripedes and Menander advanc'd Poetry, than those Dwarfs of Wit and Learning who succeeded them in after times. (227)

Dryden's comments suggest an epistemological outlook, one carried over in Pope's poetry, grounded in the study of history, more precisely the study of human philosophy. Against the backdrop of "modern" scientific ideals of

learning, with its emphasis on viewing the whole of Nature anew, Pope, a survivor of Renaissance humanism, felt an anxious desire for continuity, based on the humanist belief that "past ideas and accomplishments were the best" (The Critical Path 66).

Only through a knowledge of past time, the humanist believed, does man have the perspective -- the ability to "see" over time and space -- to judge the present. As Northrop Frye, writing of humanist learning, posits:

> Encyclopaedic learning is not specialized learning: versatility is a humanist ideal, because only through versatility can one keep a sense of social perspective, seeing the whole range of a community's culture. (The Critical Path 62)

Past time, for the humanist, is not, as it is for the twentieth century, an alienating phenomenon, but something which can be held up, or, as in the case of Pope's allusions in the Dunciad, compared, to the present. Pope's comment to Jervas suggests this cognitive assumption: "It is my employment to revive the old of past ages to the present ..." (qtd. in Brownell 17).

As suggested by Pope's criticism of scientific learning noted earlier, the humanist eschews theorizing; he bases the means of knowing on fact. "The humanist," Paul Fussell records, "is pleased to experience a veneration, which often approaches the elegiac, for the past, a feeling accompanied by a deep instinct for the tested and proven in the history of human experience" (72). Pope's lines in Book

II of the Dunciad, "And Demonstration thin, and Theses thick,/ And Major, Minor and Conclusion quick" (241-2), suggest that the "modern" dunces do not have a reverence for "the tested and proven", but theorize without adequate support of examples or fact.

The humanist's suspiciousness of or, perhaps better, anxiety about theorizing is based on the tendency of theories to simplify man's nature and experience. Inquiries into the technical operation of the cosmos are irrelevant, the humanist feels, because they move men away from thinking of their moral natures, an idea which Swift imaginatively exploits in Gulliver's Travels. As Fussell comments, "The humanist is convinced that man's primary obligation is the strenuous determination of moral obligations" (72). The consequence of the humanist's obsessive concern for morality is an obsessive concern for ranking, in literary genres, and in Nature at large. Pope's evocation of the Great Chain of Being in An Essay on Man, his evaluative comments on criticism in An Essay on Criticism, no less than his moral equation in linking excrement with duncery and the type of thinking hack-writing entails, all attest to the view that there is good and bad in all strata of experience. Pope's perception of reality is hierarchial or vertical; however, as his reverence for the past indicates, it is also horizontal.

The values listed above (and they are only a few), which the humanist adhered to in education and life, were

transferred, equally importantly, to his art. The artist instructed the reader, if pleasurably, in the moral structure of the cosmos. Johnson's phrase "to teach and delight" echoes a humanist assumption stretching from antiquity to the sixteenth-century humanist, Sir Philip Sidney, who, in his A Defence of Poetry, defines poetry and its aims as

> an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the word mimesis - that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth - to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture - with this end, to teach and delight (25).

Pope, more so than Sidney or for that matter any poet of the Renaissance or Restoration, took the Aristotelian injunction to heart. For Pope, the classical theory of imitation meant the imitation of nature. Of course, the imitation of nature was not divorced from the imitation of other models, which embodied the laws of nature, as Pope wrote of Virgil's revelation in An Essay on Criticism:

> Nature and Homer, were, he found, the same:
> .....
> Learn hence for Ancient Rules a just Esteem;
> To copy Nature is to copy Them.
> (135, 139-40)

Moreover, explicit in Sidney's definition of poetry as imitation is the recognition that poetry teaches moral precept by its "speaking pictures", its examples; this is a notion that Pope no doubt had in mind when he told Arbuthnot that "examples are pictures, and strike the senses" (qtd. in Brownell 58). Further, Pope's commitment to the Renaissance ideal that poetry should instruct is indicated by his comment

that "No writing is good that does not tend to better mankind in some way or other" (qtd. in Warren 45).

II

In Renaissance, as in Neoclassical reality, the reason and the passions were supposed to have been in "battle" to control the will. To sway the will to reason was paramount in the creation of art. The poet should, in order to move the reader to reasoned, virtuous action, employ pleasing pictures through his energeia. Pope's comment to Swift that the four epistles[2] "will conclude with a Satire against the mis-application of all these [human capacities], exemplified by pictures, characters and examples" (qtd. in Williams 111) suggests that Pope thought of his verse as painting the vices and follies of his subjects. Clearly, by creating pictures of the dunces through allusion, Pope provides perspective by a dual vision of present and past time, which is contrasted with the one-dimensionalist dunces, who only regard the present. As Aubrey Williams notes, "In the world of the Dunciad one becomes increasingly aware of the two opposite realms of value, the classical and the contemporary, the epical and the duncical..." (48). For

---

[2]Apparently, Pope planned to write four satiric epistles in 1736. But ideas in these epistles found their way into the fourth book of the Dunciad (see Williams 111). I have merely used Pope's comment to illustrate the relationship between satire and pictorialism.

Pope, the best way to remedy duncery was to imitate the best of the past; and through allusion, Pope imitates his esteemed poetical ancestors, using their rhetorical practices, such as the epic simile, within the lines of his own great poetry, to oppose the uncreativity and vileness of the dunces.

Since the eighteenth century, commentators have recognized the pictorial in Pope's poetry. Indeed, Pope's interest in painting is illustrated by his own attempt to paint, and his various comments about the Sister Arts. Pope's lines in "Epistle to Jervas" (1716) --

> Smit with the love of Sister-arts we came,
> And met congenial, mingling flame with flame;
> Like friendly colours found them both unite,
> And each from each contract new strength and light
> (13-16) --

testify to his love of painting, as do his various comments to friends, such as his remark to Spense in 1730, that "painting gave him as much enjoyment as poetry" (qtd. in Brownell 9).

As we well see shortly, many of Pope's allusions are impressed with a "painterly" perspective of time and space. In Pope's allusions, the image of time may be thought of as a space of time. So a "painterly" perspective in a poem is made up of time and space together. In Pope's imagery, time is inseparable from space in providing perspective. It is, however, worth reflecting on how seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century developments in other spheres paralleled the age's poets and painters in their imaging of the

iconography of time. The lens of Galileo, the microscope and telescope, made people aware of distance and time and their effect on perspective. The influence of Galileo's lens was felt by contempory painters. David Tarbet has noted that "The invention of pictorial perspective in the Italian Renaissance depended upon the incorporation of the idea of distance within the painting" (187). This idea of embodying distance and time in painting is felt in Pope's pictorial allusions. We should be wary, as we are prone to do in our century, of concluding that the distance between the object and the eye necessarily effects a mimetic presentation of reality, for Renaissance and Neo-classical perspectivism, as Tarbet notes, "stressed fact" (188). That is, the distance between the object and the perceiving eye did not, as it did later for Berkeley and the Romantic poets, entail a division. These developments meet Pope's humanist conception of art as mimesis crucially in the imaging of time in his own pictorial allusions.

III

Pope's imaging of time is paralleled by the philosophical ideas of the age. In fact, Pope imaginatively expresses some of John Locke's philosophy concerning time, the association of ideas and relation. For Locke, the association of ideas was related to judgement or an activity

like that of allusion or simile in the hands of Pope. In Book II of An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Locke writes that "The Nature therefore of Relation consists in the referring, or comparing two things, one to the other; from which comparison, one or both comes to be denominated" (321; bk. 2, ch. 25, sec. 5). Locke notes also that space and time are intimately related, and "are justly reckoned amongst our simple ideas" (201; bk. 2, ch. 15, sec. 12). The importance of time in the association of ideas, Locke argues, is pivotal, for the mind understands its idea of time, or "duration" as he often calls it, by the succession of ideas in the mind: "Time ... is the Idea we have of perishing distance, of which no two parts exist together, but follow each other in Succession ..." (204; bk. 2, ch. 15, sec. 12). In his poetry, Pope suggests a Lockean conception of time by the regular and logical progression of his thoughts. Unlike Byron's digressive verse, which produces a static image of time, each of Pope's couplets usually express a complete thought. Successive couplets build on the previous couplets to illustrate a logical thought process. In the Lockean edifice, once the mind has "got the idea of any length of Duration," it "can double, multiply, and enlarge it" (197; bk. 2, ch. 15, sec.3). This "movement" of the mind, in building its knowledge, is indispensible in Locke. We move from simple ideas in our childhood to more complex and abstract ideas later. The association of ideas in the mind

is causal; hence, we might say that the mind rests on a structure of time; the epistemological underpinnings of Pope's allusiveness can be thus explained.

Lockean epistemology and Popian aesthetics treat the association of ideas similarly. Man's ability to associate ideas correctly, Locke and Pope argue, is related to his moral and aesthetic judgement, and depends on his acquired learning:

> This wrong Connexion in our Minds of Ideas in themselves, loose and independent one of another, has such an influence, and is of so great force to set us awry in our Actions, as well as Moral as Natural, Passions, Reasonings, and Notions themselves, that, perhaps, there is not any one thing that deserves more to be looked after. (Locke 397; bk. 2, ch. 33, sec. 9 emphasis added)

Locke's stress on how education can "set us awry in our actions" is matched in An Essay on Criticism, where Pope tells us that judgement and sense can be skewed by "false Learning":

> Yet if we look more closely, we shall find
> Most have the Seeds of judgement in their Mind;
> Nature affords at least a glimm'ring Light;
> The Lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right.
> But as the slightest Sketch, if justly trac'd,
> Is by ill Colouring but the more disgrac'd,
> So by false Learning is good Sense defac'd;
> Some are bewilder'd in the Maze of Schools,
> (19-26)

While Pope is here referring to schools of criticism, he clearly associates the dogma of "false Learning" with a lack of sense. In the Dunciad, the chaotic misassociations of the dunces have the same source:

> There motley Images her fancy strike,
> Figures ill pair'd, and Similies unlike.
> She sees a Mob of Metaphors advance,
> Pleas'd with the madness of the mazy dance:
> How Tragedy and Comedy embrace;
> How Farce and Epic get a jumbled race;
> How Time himself stands still at her command,
> Realms shift their place, and Ocean turns to land.
> (Dunciad I.65-72)

The association of ideas in the minds of the dunces is, Pope implies in these lines, wrong. Those things which should be associated one with the other are not; those things which should not be associated one with the other are. The wrong association of ideas finds its metaphors in chaos and madness. Interestingly, Locke also describes the characteristics of madmen in terms of their false associations: "For they do not appear to me to have lost the Faculty of Reasoning: but having joined some Ideas very wrongly, they mistake them for Truths; and they err as Men do, that argue right from wrong Principles" (161; bk. 2, ch. 11, sec. 13). In addition, Pope's personification of "Time" as he "stands still at her [Dulness's] command" suggests that the dunces, like Swift's spider, do not look back to the past. Their "motley Images" and "Similies unlike" intimate that their failure is the result of "Time stand[ing] still," for their minds, limited as they are by a knowledge of the present, have only their own images to work on, producing static, infertile writing that neither follows nature nor progresses naturally. Pope suggests the Lockean injunction that the succession of ideas in the mind gives us our

conception of time. But for the dunces, who have "random thoughts now meaning chance to find," they have no conception of time and hence "leave all memory of sense behind" (Dunciad 1.275-76).

Where Locke's epistemology and Pope's allusiveness come together in the association of ideas, is in memory -- Mnemosyne, goddess of memory and mother of the poetic muses. "Memory," Locke writes, "in an intellectual Creature, is necessary in the next degree to Perception" (153; bk. 2, ch. 10, sec. 8). He proceeds almost as if he has the dunces in mind: "It [the memory] is of so great moment, that where it is wanting, all the rest of our Faculties are in a great measure useless: And we in our Thoughts, Reasonings, and Knowledge, could not proceed beyond present objects, were it not for the assistance of our Memories..."(153; bk. 2, ch. 10, sec. 8). As the last part of this quotation suggests, without memory we cannot abstract or form complex ideas. In fact, Pope creates an abstraction in the Dunciad by recalling past writers and using their esteemed precepts to contrast with the uncreativity of the dunces. Moreover, as noted earlier, Locke espouses an epistemology of time as a succession of measures, or an overlapping of one measure of time on another. Once the mind has an understanding of a single measure of time, fixed, as it were, in the memory, it can project and expand on it to form larger measures. It is this epistemology that is at the heart of Pope's allusiveness

and his "Neoclassicism," for when he alludes to the past, he follows his classical models, creating a temporal image of succession in the reader's mind. In contrast, the dunces do not have any conception of "pastness" because they think in a present, memory-less void, and hence cannot abstract from other: "O Muse! relate (for you can tell alone,/ Wits have short Memories, and Dunces none)" (Dunciad 4.619-20). Because the dunces do not look back, they cannot, in Locke's words, "proceed beyond" the present. Consequently, "it [the memory] loses the idea, and so far it produces perfect Ignorance" (Locke 143; bk. 2, ch. 10, sec.8).

As a reading of Dunciad II uncovers, Pope parallels, in a bathetic manner, the heroic games of Aeneid V and certain scenes in Paradise Lost. In the opening lines of Dunciad II, echoing Milton's Paradise Lost II, Pope's elevated language and expression denotes the vile and low:

> High on a gorgeous seat, that far out-shone
> Henley's guilt tub, or Fleckno's Irish throne,
> Or that where on her Curls the Public pours,
> All-bounteous fragrant Grains and Golden show'rs,
> Great Cibber sate.... (Dunciad 2.1-5)

Milton's Satan had sat:

> High on a throne of royal state, which far
> Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
> Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
> Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.
> (PL 2.1-4)

Pope's epical depiction of Cibber, sitting before his subjects, also extends the reader's mind to Virgil, whose Aeneas presides over the funeral games: "High on a sylvan

throne the leader sat;/ A numerous train attend in solemn state" (Aen. 5.379-80 Dryden trans.). The pictorial, and the perspective of classical time, are the direct result of the allusion; while reading the lines, we are also, with Pope, recalling in memory Milton's portrait of Satan seated on his throne before the fallen angels, Virgil's Aeneas, and probably Dryden's Flecknoe. Pope has structured an "edifice of time", in a Lockean sense, by building all of these references in five lines. In conjunction with this "cementing" of time, Pope, through his allusion, is presenting several pictures in the reader's mind, and the reduction of Cibber is not complete until we recall Milton's and Virgil's lines. Pope's lines, then, can be seen as a picture of a picture. In addition, the first four lines of Dunciad II are an exact replica of the Dunciad Variorum (1728); the only difference is that Pope has substituted Cibber for Tibbald. Hence, Pope's restating of his previous work suggests that there is a progression, but no change, to the throne of duncery. In fifteen years, Tibbald has become Cibber and presumably even today there is someone ready to assume this unflattering throne.

IV

Pope's comments in praise of Homer, in the Preface to

the Iliad, suggest that when he thought of the ancient's poetry, he had temporal and spatial measures in mind:

> Let them [reader of Homer] think they are growing acquainted with Nations and People that are now no more; that they are stepping almost three thousand Years backward into the remotest Antiquity, and entertaining themselves with a clear and surprising Vision of Things no where else to be found, and the only authentick Picture of that ancient World. (449)

Of course, Pope's view that in reading Homer we will be given an "authentick Picture" of the "ancient world", or an exact mimesis, is an exaggeration. However, his comments, especially his use of the word "Vision", intimates both the importance of "seeing" over a perspective of time and space and an awareness that writing privileges a mimetic process of re-presenting, a re-presenting of ideas (invention) in a pictorial style (elocution) that is suitable for the subject matter.

Pope's pictorial allusions are to a great extent achieved through an imitation of action, or motion. In the Preface to the Iliad, Pope implies that in Homer movement is mimesis:

> What he writes is of the most animated Nature imaginable; every thing moves, every thing lives, and is put into Action.... the Reader is hurry'd out of himself by the Force of the Poet's Imagination, and turns in one place to a Hearer, in another a Spectator. The course of his verses resembles that of the Army he describes.... (440)

Pope's revelation that the reader of poetry is a "Spectator" suggests that he felt poetry should be pictorial, addressing

itself to the mind of the reader through visual means. When Pope writes that "the Reader is hurry'd out of himself", he is speaking of the displacement the reader experiences as we visualize an image. However, in order to produce the enargeia, or "descriptions intended to bring visual reality before the minds eye" (Hagstrum 29), of action, the poet must create a sense of motion in his verse.

Jean Hagstrum's theory that the pictorial is created by a "reduction of motion to stasis" (xxii) works with Pope's thematic concerns in the Dunciad. In Book II of the poem, Pope uses allusion to image the motion of the dunces as either formless or reduced to stasis. In the following lines, which allude to Satan's flight through hell in Book II of Paradise Lost, Pope curtails kinesis to stasis through his versification, while displacing the reader's sense of time by forcing us to recall Milton's lines published seventy years earlier. The dunce, Curll, is running:

> Swift as a bard the bailiff leaves behind,
> He left huge Lintot, and out-strip'd the wind.
> As when a dab-chick waddles thro' the copse
> On feet and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops;
> So lab'ring on, with shoulders, hands, and head,
> Wide as a wind-mill all his figures spread,
> With arms expanded Bernard rows his state,
> And left-legg'd Jacob seems to emulate.
> (Dunciad 2.61-68)

Satan's flight through Hell is thus described by Milton:

> As when a gryphon through the wilderness
> With winged course o'er hill or moory dale,
> Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
> Had from his wakeful custody purloined
> The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend
> O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,

> With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,
> And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.
> (PL 2.943-50)

Pope transforms Milton's image of a "gryphon," a large and mythical creature, into a "dab-chick," a tiny and common bird in England. This reduction is a metaphor for the "smallness" and commoness of the dunces in all facets of life. In addition, Pope's description of Curll's "movements" ("outstrip'd the wind") recalls Virgil's Mnestheus, whose speed in the ship race is described as: "The speedy Dolphin, that outstrips the wind" (Aen. 5.153 Dryden trans.). The allusions to both Milton and Virgil, the equating of Curll's movements with a "dab-chick", the incongruent use of the epic simile, all reduce the dunce's activity in Pope's poem.

Moreover, Pope follows the Homeric injunction of mimesis by imitating the action of the dunce, as he runs, in his own verse and hence produces a pictorial image by a "reduction of motion to stasis." In the first two lines of the passage, the words seem as if they are moving across the page swiftly in the manner of Curll running. But, in the epic simile, Pope seriates, and uses asyndeton and epanalepsis, with the words "so lab'ring on," and the motion of the verse appears as if it has, uncritically, "slowed down." In the lines, "On feet and winds, and flies, and wades, and hops;/ So lab'ring on, with shoulders, hands, and head," the words seem as if they are "hopping" on the page, in the manner of a "dab-chick." Moreover, the epic simile

serves to distance the reader from the "action," while simultaneously displacing the reader's attention from the duncical "action" and forcing him to recall Milton's lines.

Pope reduces motion to stasis at the end of Book II when the dunces fall asleep:

> Thro' the long, heavy, painful page drawl on;
> Soft creeping, words on words, the sense compose,
> At ev'ry line they stretch, they yawn, they doze.
> As to soft gales top-heavy pines bow low
> Their heads, and lift them as they cease to blow:
> Thus oft they rear, and oft the head decline,
> As breathe, or pause, by fits, the airs divine.
> And now to this side, now to that they nod,
> As verse, or prose, infuse the drowzy God.
> (Dunciad 2.388-96)

While these lines do not directly refer to any lines in Aeneid V, one is still reminded of the Trojans falling asleep when leaving Acestes and Sicily:

> The steeds of Night had traveled half the sky:
> The drowsy rowers on their benches lie;
> When the soft god of sleep, with easy flight
> Descends, and draws behind a trail of light.
> (Aen. 5.1089-92. Dryden trans.)

The reason for the dunces falling asleep, when compared to the reason for the Trojans falling asleep, deflates the former. The dunces are read to and therefore fall asleep, while Aeneas and his men are expectedly tired after a hard day's activity, culminating in their voyage from Sicily. Rhetorically, Pope seriates extensively and shifts the position of the caesura, in the first three lines of this passage, to diminish the movement of the verse as we read across the page; hence, the verse imitates the sense of drowsiness the dunces experience before falling asleep. In

addition, "Heavy", "drawl", "Soft creeping", "stretch" and "yawn", are all words that suggest the sluggish motion associated with sleep, while the movement of the dunces' heads is compared with the slow shifting of pine trees being moved by the force of the wind, the exact cause for the dunces' heads nodding from side to side. The word "pause" implies a pause, or break, in the measure of the line, which also augments the stasis-like dimension of the verse. Pope's antithesis, in the last line, intimates the drowsy nodding of the dunces' heads from side to side. In both passages discussed above, Pope has followed, like Virgil in the Aeneid, Homer's precept of showing the action of movement. But he has, through rhetorical strategies, produced bathos, by reducing motion to stasis to develop a picture of his subjects.

Direct allusions to the games of the Aeneid are often changed slightly, but significantly, to reduce Pope's satiric targets. We recall in Virgil's epic that Nisus slips and falls in the running race:

> When eager Nisus, hapless in his haste,
> Slipped first, and, slipping, fell upon the plain,
> Soaked with the blood of oxen newly slain.
> The careless victor had not marked his way;
> But, treading where the treacherous puddle lay,
> His heels flew up; and on the grassy floor
> He fell, besmeared with filth and holy gore.
> (Aen. 5.427-33 Dryden trans.)

In contrast to the pastoral and votive suggestions of these lines, Pope's dunce, Curll, slips and falls in "cates" that had been thrown in front of his Grub Street shop:

> Full in the middle way there stood a lake,
> Which Curl's Corinna chanc'd that morn to make:
> (Such was her wont, at early dawn to drop
> Her evening cates before his neighbour's shop,)
> Here fortun'd Curl to slide; loud shout the band,
> And Bernard! Bernard! rings thro' all the Strand
> Obscene with filth the miscreant lies bewray'd,
> Fal'n in the plash his wickedness had laid:
> (Dunciad 2.69-76)

The allusion "works" because of the different substances that Curll and Nisus fall in. Virgil's "holy gore", suggesting a sacrificial image, is turned into "evening cates." Everything in the games of the dunces is small and physical when compared to the grand and epical in Virgil's poem.

As suggested by the above example, the two opposed realms of value suggested within Pope's allusion are to a large extent achieved through a comparison of "size." In the Aeneid, we recall, the fighter, Dares, boasts that he is the strongest of the Trojans. Dares asks Aeneas to confer on him the prize for boxing without a fight because no one will challenge him:

> 'If none my matchless valor dares oppose,
> How long shall Dares wait his dastard foes?
> Permit me, chief, permit without delay,
> To lead this uncontended gift away.'
> (Aen. 5.507-10 Dryden trans.)

Of course, after some prompting by Acestes, the aging Entellus accepts Dares' challenge. In the Dunciad, a similar scene occurs before the running race between Lintot and Curll. Lintot says to the crowd of dunces:

> 'This prize is mine; who tempt it are my foes;
> With me began this genius, and shall end.'
> He spoke: and who with Lintot shall contend?
> (Dunciad 2.54-6)

As in the Aeneid, the boaster's challenge is accepted; the dunce, Curll, heroically answers the toll:

> Fear held them mute. Alone, untaught to fear,
> Stood dauntless Curl; 'Behold that rival here!
> 'The race by vigour, not by vaunts is won;
> 'So take the hindmost, Hell.' - He said, and run.
> (Dunciad 2.57-60)

The events of Dares' and Entellus' epic battle is yet again parodied in the urinating contest between Osborne and Curll. In a direct allusion, Pope transforms Virgil's lines describing the youthful Dares and the veteran Entellus -- "One on his youth and pliant limbs relies;/ One on his sinews, and his giant size" (Aen. 5.570-71 Dryden trans.) -- into something sexual: "One on his manly confidence relies,/ One on his vigour and superior size" (Dunciad 2.169-70). Virgil's depiction, in its style and content, is appropriate. But, in Pope's lines, the epic style is incongruent with the bodily and physical.

Indirect allusions to the events of Aeneid V produce a chain-like reaction of remembrance in the reader's mind. For instance, while the prizes that Aeneas proclaims for the winners of the funeral games are tangible, the prizes that Dulness holds out for the dunces are formless and intangible. In the following passage, Dulness places before the eyes of the dunces a prize which is constantly metamorphosing:

> A Poet's form she plac'd before their eyes,
> And bade the nimblest racer seize the prize;
> No meagre, muse-rid mope, adust and thin,
> In a dun night-gown of his own loose skin;

> But such a bulk as no twelve bards could raise,
> Twelve stav'ling bards of these degen'rate days.
> All as a partridge plump, full-fed, and fair,
> She form'd this image of well-body'd air;
> With pert flat eyes she window'd well its head;
> A brain of feathers, and a heart of lead;
> And empty words she gave, and sounding strain,
> But senseless, lifeless! idol void and vain!
> (Dunciad 2.35-46)

Once we have registered this formless mass of "nothing" into our mind, we think of the prizes Aeneas offers:

> And first the gifts in public view they place,
> Green laurel wreaths, and palm, the victors' grace.
> Within the circle, arms and tripods lie.
> Ingots of gold and silver heaped on high,
> And vests embroidered, of the Tyrian dye.
> (Aen. 5.144-48 Dryden trans.)

Once reminded of Virgil's lines, we think of other memorable scenes in the Dunciad. While recalling the "Green laurel wreaths" that the victors of the Aeneid wear, we think also of the "wreathes" of the dunces -- the "brown dishonours of his [Lintot's] face" (Dunciad 2.108) as he picks himself up out of the muck, and Arnall "bring[ing] up half the bottom on his head" (Dunciad 2.321) after diving in the mud.

As we have seen, in Dunciad II Pope parodies the funeral games of Aeneid V. In fact, Aubrey Williams views the dunces' movement through the streets of London to the 'polite' world of Westminster as a "movement similar to the one from Troy to Rome" (19). However, one could easily argue that Pope views the aesthetic and moral decline represented by the dunces as, in Reuben Brower's words, a "blotting out of all intelligence and order in a return to original

darkness and chaos" (319). Brower's comments, of course, are a paraphrase of the concluding lines of the Dunciad:

> Lo! thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restor'd
> Light dies before thy uncreating word;
> Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
> And Universal Darkness buries All.
> (Dunciad 4.653-56)

This artistic and moral "chaos", which Brower speaks of, is a world where there is no time or space; it is, as Milton images Hell in Paradise Lost, an

> Illimitable ocean, without bound,
> Without dimension; where length, breadth, and height,
> And time and place are lost; where eldest Night
> And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
> Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
> Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
> (PL 2.892-97)

It is this "Hell" of anarchy, of chaos, without time and space, which the dunces create through their memory-less, one-dimensional writing, that Pope opposes through his allusions, which establish hierarchy, form and a link in time and space with the Classical past.

Chapter III

THE PRESENT: DIGRESSION IN DON JUAN

In reading Don Juan, we are struck by the prominence of Byron's[1] digressions. One critic of Don Juan, Bernard Beatty, has in fact done a quantitative study to show that digressions account for up to sixty-eight percent of the verses in some cantos (Byron's Don Juan 84). While it is interesting to have these figures before us, they neither aid us in understanding what Byron is doing satirically through digression, nor tell us what effect they have on the reader. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to address these problems through a close reading of canto one of Byron's most well-known satire. I shall first discuss Byron's digressions in terms of their self-reflexiveness; his position as a satirist; his parodying of literary and social conventions; his self-criticism as satirist. The underlying theme of these pages, which is observed throughout, is that Byron's

---

[1]While there are different voices in the digressions, I think they all belong to Byron. That is, one cannot say that the narrator in Don Juan is a fictional creation, for the narrator's ideas are usually similar to Byron's. Even when Byron satirizes his narrator (in other words, himself), we should not consider him as someone different from the poet; Byron could always laugh at himself.

digressions displace his readers from dramatic illusion, and, in contrast to Pope's allusions, make us aware of our own present reality while reading.

Byron's use of digression is not without precedent. As far back as Homer, authors have intruded within their narratives. In early eighteenth century, Swift, whom Byron admired, has the narrator in A Tale of a Tub digress to the point where he even digresses in praise of digressions. Primarily, Swift uses digressions to satirize the madness of his "modern" narrator. Later in the eighteenth century, with the rise of the novel, Sterne, and Fielding, utilize digression in their novels. Sterne facetiously comments on his digressiveness with a jocularity that could be Byron's:

> For in this long digression which I was accidentally led into, as in all my digressions (one only excepted) there is a master-stroke of digressive skill, the merit of which has all along, I fear, been over-looked by my reader, - not for want of penetration in him, - but because 'tis an excellence seldom looked for, or expected indeed, in a digression; - and it is this: That tho' my digressions are all fair, as you observe, - and that I fly off from what I am about, as far and as often too as any writer in Great Britain; yet I constantly take care to order affairs so that my main business does not stand still in my absence. (51; bk. 1, ch. 22)

As Sterne does in this passage, Byron often takes advantage of his digressions to speak about his writing while in the process of writing. William Hazlitt noticed this characteristic in Don Juan when, in words which we often hear

bandied around in today's critical discourse, he wrote that "it is rather a poem written about itself" (75).

Like the novels of Sterne and Fielding, and more recently, Faulkner and Vonnegut, Byron's Don Juan belongs to the satire genre, but also to a type of literature which is highly self-conscious. Northrop Frye has impressively written about process literature in his article, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility." In almost every stanza of Don Juan, Byron makes abrupt transitions, seemingly haphazard associative leaps of thought, seeming to improvise as he writes. The extemporaneous quality of Byron's poetry may be usefully illustrated by comparing it with Pope's verse. In Pope, each couplet may express an earlier thought, and lead directly and logically to the next couplet/thought. In Byron, the reader is constantly in suspense as to what Byron will think of next. Essentially, Byron's digressiveness may be viewed as illustrative of the poet's mind in mental cognition, in the "process" of thought.

The resultant effects of Byron's digressions on the reader are numerous. Initially, we note, they strip away the pretence of mimetic illusion. By forcing the reader to remember that Byron is creating all that we read, he displaces the reader from the events of his narrative (Juan's adventures), and as Bernard Beatty has written, "remind[s] us of a real man and a real world outside the text" (Don Juan and Other Poems: A Critical Study 112). Simultaneously

making us aware of our role as reader, and his as writer, Byron creates a dual perspective on the present. We are presented with an image of Byron writing during the course of a current experience, and, by implication, we become aware of our own temporal/spatial reality. That is, in reading Don Juan, we are made constantly aware of the fact that we are performing an activity ourselves -- reading -- in time (1988), and in place (perhaps an easy chair in our sitting room). This somewhat disconcerting effect makes the reader cognizant that writing and reading are activities which occur in time.

I

In Don Juan, the reader/writer relationship is stressed, and Byron makes it known, as a realistic writer would attempt to conceal, that in this marriage he is in control. Authorial control is important to the satiric purposes in Don Juan, for Byron uses it to parody both literary and social conventions. At the beginning of the poem, Byron tells us that "Most epic poets plunge in 'medias res'," but he will "begin with the beginning" (DJ 1.6). In fact, Byron does "begin with the beginning" for his initial words ("I want a hero") show the process of him selecting his invention, and why he chose Don Juan and not some other heroic personage. Byron also exerts his control, as writer,

by holding up a literary convention and then breaking it. This process of creating structures and then de-creating them is yet again in evidence a stanza later, when Byron ironically asserts:

> The regularity of my design
> Forbids all wandering as the worst of sinning,
> And therefore I shall open with a line
> (Although it cost me half an hour in spinning)
> Narrating somewhat of Don Juan's father,
> And of his mother, if you'd rather. (DJ 1.7)

Byron's claim for narrative "regularity" is ludicrous, for he undercuts this statement in his one-line digression, which he tells us, "cost" him "half an hour in spinning." This little interruption suggests Byron's awareness of his own temporal reality while composing. Further, in the last two lines, Byron displaces readers from his narrative by involving us in his selection processes. But ultimately we know, as Byron does as he writes these lines, that we have no choice in what he will write about. Like Brecht in his expressionist dramas, Byron asserts his control as artist, forcing the reader to watch the process of his creating, while concomitantly alienating his audience from the narrative, and bringing us closer to his narrative voice. Ultimately, we are presented with an image of the poet as he writes in his study in the present moment. The "epic" poet of The Dunciad and the narrating Gulliver present to us what we take to be the fully digested narrative of past events. In Don Juan, even Juan's history is subject to authorial interference.

Similarly, when Byron writes of Juan's parents, he digresses and inadvertently relates the particulars of Juan's family:

> His father's name was Jose - Don, of course,
> A true Hidalgo, free from every stain
> Of Moor or Hebrew blood, he traced his source
> Through the most Gothic gentlemen of Spain;
> A better cavalier ne'er mounted horse,
> Or, being mounted, e'er got down again,
> Than Jose, who begot our hero, who
> Begot - but that's to come - Well, to renew:
> (DJ 1.9)

Here, the narrator's repetition of the same thoughts suggests his interest in particulars. The thematic, however, cannot be separated from the aesthetic, for, in the last two lines, Byron's antithesis of past and present time suggests that he has, uncritically, got ahead of himself. As a result, the narrative time seems to be static, producing the effect of an imitation of his fragmented thought-processes. The reader is left to conclude that Byron is essentially making-up the verse as he writes. Here, we note, is an illustration of the difference touched on earlier between Byron's and Pope's imaging of the iconography of time. Pope builds his argument line by line, each logically progressing to the next line and the next thought, alluding back as we have seen in a previous chapter, and structuring time in a Lockean sense by the consistent succession of ideas in the mind. Byron's verse, on the other hand, never seems to progress forward because he is constantly digressing, creating on the spot, from the events of his poem or even his previous digressions. Because

of these narrative shifts, we receive a sense, to borrow Frye's phrase characterizing process writing, of "a continuous present" ("Towards Defining and Age of Sensibility" 314). It should be noted that this sort of "process" writing differs from the "poetry of experience," to use Robert Langbaum's phrase describing the poetry of Wordsworth or Keats. In a poem such as Keats's Ode to a Nightingale, the sense the reader has of -- currente calamo -- of the poem written as the experience occurs -- is based on the sense that the poet has, during the course of composition, experienced a complete, potent, emotional moment, or, in the Wordsworthian sense, a "spot in time." In Don Juan, however, the reader senses not a deep experience on Byron's part, but rather a continuing series of "professional" decisions -- that is, Byron attempting to "write" the poem. For us, then, the question is not how vicariously to experience the deep emotion of Keats or Wordsworth, but how to "read" the poem -- exactly the same question that readers ask when confronted with the Dunciad or Gulliver's Travels.

In his digressions, Byron often reiterates facts and ideas, while simultaneously pushing ahead the events of Juan's adventures. The flux created by this looking forward and back keeps the reader's attention on not only the poem but on Byron's writing of it. For instance, in stanza 49, Byron relates that Juan was "At six a charming child, and at

eleven" he had "all the promise of as fine a face/ As e'er a man's maturer growth was given" (DJ 1.49). From here, Byron makes an abrupt transition and speaks on what Juan does during the day. Then, in the next stanza, he says that "At six, I said, he was a charming child,/ At twelve, he was a fine, but quiet boy" (DJ 1.50). Through the digression Byron has contorted the normal, chronological sequence of time. A few cantos later, after yet more digressions in which the narrator talks of Juan's schooling, his own schooling, "all the Greek" he "since had lost" (DJ 1.54), and his marital status, he tells us that "Young Juan was now sixteen years of age" (DJ 1.54). In his study Don Juan and Other Poems: A Critical Study, Bernard Beatty has suggested that, "Sometimes after a digression we are restored to exactly the same point that we had earlier left, but Byron often takes advantage of this way of suggesting the passing of time ..." (109). Beatty is correct, but Byron is again showing his control over the poem by manipulating narrative time. By only briefly touching on Juan's life in his narrative, and according it less weight than his own subjective reflections, Byron firmly establishes himself as the mediator in the poem, interposing himself between the story and his readers. At the same time, he is also breaking Aristotle's rules of time and place. In addition, Byron forces us to recognize that his choices, as artist/arbiter, determine our response to his poem. He selects what age Juan will be; he chooses the Don Juan

legend, re-creating it and then de-creating it; he changes Juan, as we see in future stages of the poem, and, in effect, denies him all autonomous existence. Consequently, we are constantly reminded that behind the narrative voice there is a man writing the words which we are reading. "This highly recognizable voice," John Jump astutely observes, "helps to project upon our minds a clear image of the man who speaks to us throughout the digressions ..." (115). Hence, his Don Juan -- a sought-for hero -- has in effect nothing to do with the legendary Dan Juan of Tirso Di Molina, Cokayne, Moliere, Mozart or even Bernard Shaw in Man and Superman.

II

Byron's fragmentary, digressive narrative is, however, more than simply narcissistic artifice for its own sake. The aesthetic effect produced by Byron's use of digression matches his liberal political and social views and his conservative ideals of poetics. Moreover, through digression, Byron makes use of the essential subjectivity of all of our experience by focusing the reader's mind on a mind which itself is structuring experience. Jerome McGann has suggestively written that, "In Don Juan, Byron makes a great virtue of not comprehending the world in a unified, integrative or closed system" (103). McGann's comments remind us of much of Byron's criticism of his literary

contemporaries, and their ideas of poetry. Partly, Byron's attack on Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge is based on their provincialism:

> You, Gentlemen! by dint of long seclusion
> From better company have kept your own
> At Keswick, and through still continued fusion
> Of one another's minds at last have grown
> To deem as a most logical conclusion
> That poetry has wreaths for you alone;
> There is narrowness in such a notion
> Which makes me wish you'd change your lakes for ocean. (DJ Dedication 5)

Byron's spatial image in the last line of this passage intimates that the Romantic poets do not have enough life experience to write successful poetry. Byron's letter to his friend, Thomas Moore, on August 3, 1814 emphasizes the value of experience:

> Half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies.... Lord, Lord, if these home-keeping minstrels had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterranean, and tested a little open boating in a white squall - or a gale in 'the Gut' - how it would enliven and introduce them to a few of the sensations! (LJ 4: 152)

Because the "Lakers" have been cloistered together in the Lake District, which results in their "continued fusion/ Of one another's minds," Byron suggests that they do not have the ability to "see" beyond a limited perspective of time and space, and therefore they have a limited view of reality. Moreover, Byron implies also that in spite of his satiric targets' claim for personal transcendence in their poetry, they, like everyone else, structure experience with their "logical conclusion" that "poetry has wreaths for" them

"alone." Their solipsism, Byron feels, is reflected in their imaginative poetry, which neither mirrors reality, nor acknowledges by allusion past literary accomplishments. Byron, no doubt with the Romantics' hostile censuring of Pope in mind,[2] says that the "Lakers" do not "recollect [that] a poet nothing loses/ In giving to his brethren their full meed/ Of merit ..." (DJ Dedication 8).

Byron's criticism of the Romantics, however, is not entirely based on their provincialism, and imaginative flights; indeed, he does "allow" that they are "poets still" (DJ Dedication 6). Rather, his derisive comments about Wordsworth and Coleridge are based on their systematizing,[3] which Byron correctly views as a contradiction of their belief in transcendence, and which he parodies in his own irregular, digressive verse:

> And Wordsworth, in a rather long 'Excursion',
> (I think the quarto holds five hundred pages)

---

[2]The Romantic's hostility toward Augustan poetry is well-known. Perhaps the most penetrating criticism of Pope is that he neither addressed poetic ideas nor used natural diction. In the Biographia Literaria, Coleridge claimed that Pope's poetry was "a conjunction disjunctive, of epigrams." He also wrote that Pope's "matter and diction seemed to [be] characterized not so much by poetic thought as by thought translated into the language of poetry" (28; ch.1). Byron, of course,was a champion of Pope throughout his life.

[3]Byron's dislike of systematizing is evident by his various comments to Thomas Moore on Leigh Hunt's poetic systems: "When I saw "Rimini" in MSS., I told him that I deemed it good poetry at bottom, disfigured only by a strange style. His answer was, that his style was a system, or upon system, or some such cant; and, when a man talks of his system, his case is hopeless ..." (LJ 6:46).

> Has given a sample from the vasty version
> Of his new system to perplex the sages:
> 'Tis poetry - at least by his assertion,
> (DJ Dedication 4)

As the last line of this passage suggests, Wordsworth is essentially structuring -- systematizing -- experience, even though he sets out to transcend experience through his poetry. Byron expresses this idea more forcefully in a digressive stanza in which young Don Juan soberly contemplates his affair with Donna Julia:

> Young Juan wander'd by the glassy brooks
> Thinking unutterable things; he threw
> Himself at length within the leafy nooks
> Where the wild branch of the cork forest grew;
> There poets find materials for their books.
> And every now and then we read them through,
> So that their plan and prosody are eligible
> Unless, like Wordsworth, they prove unintelligible.
> (DJ 1.90)

Of course, Byron is parodying Wordsworth. His intrusive comment in the last line suggests that Wordsworth's unintelligibility is the result of the Lake poet's systematizing and imaginative flights on "winged steed" (DJ Dedication 8), which, in Byron's pragmatic view, are nothing more than an escape from reality. In the next stanza, Byron makes it manifest, through digressive comparisons, that when he is writing about Juan's pensiveness he is really thinking about Wordsworth and Coleridge:

> He, Juan, (and not Wordsworth) so pursued
> His self-communion with his own high soul,
> Until his mighty heart, in its great mood,
> Had mitigated part, though not the whole
> Of its disease; he did the best he could
> With things not very subject to his control,
> And turn'd, without perceiving his condition,

> Like Coleridge, into a metaphysician.
> (DJ 1.91)

After giving an account of Juan's "unutterable" thoughts in stanza 92, Byron then gives his more pragmatic thoughts on why Juan meditates on metaphysical abstractions, undercutting all that he has said before:

> 'Twas strange that one so young should thus concern
> His brain about the action of the sky;
> If you think 'twas philosophy that this did,
> I can't help thinking puberty assisted.
> (DJ 1.93)

Here, Byron plants a seed in the reader's mind to suggest that Juan's, like Coleridge's, dreamy, pubescent thoughts are the result of his being sheltered in early life, and hence incapable of recognizing reality. When, in the following stanza, Juan forgets the time and his space -- the two constructs by which we "know" reality -- Byron is impinging on Wordsworth's and Coleridge's fanciful visions of transcendental experience:

> He though of wood nymphs and immortal bowers,
> And how the goddesses came down to men:
> He miss'd the pathway, he forget the hours,
> And when he look'd upon his watch again,
> He found how much old Time had been a winner -
> He also found that he had lost his dinner.
> (DJ 1.94)

III

Often in his digressions, Byron looks self-critically at his own poetic practices. For instance, when Donna Julia, Juan's seductress, is introduced, Byron describes her in

elevated terms only to deflate his own description in a one-line digression:

> Amongst her numerous acquaintance, all
> Selected for discretion and devotion,
> There was the Donna Julia, whom to call
> Pretty were but to give a feeble notion
> Of many charms in her as natural
> As sweetness to the flower, or salt to ocean,
> Her zone to Venus, or bow to Cupid,
> (But this last simile is trite and stupid).
> (DJ 1.55)

One may note that if Byron really thought his simile "stupid," he would not have included it. To view his self-reflexive digression in this way, however, is to ignore the satire. Like Shakespeare, who stigmatizes the folly of love poets,[4] Byron is satirizing the hyperbolic rhetoric of love poetry. Byron creates his own idyllic rhetoric, and then precedes to de-create it. Similarly, in the famous bedroom scene, when Juan flees from Donna Julia's husband Alfonso, after he had been discovered, Byron compares him to the biblical Joseph:

> Juan contrived to give an awkward blow,
> And then his only garment quite gave way;
> He fled, like Joseph, leaving it; but there,
> I doubt, all likeness ends between the pair.
> (DJ 1.186)

By drawing our attention to the impropriety of his own allusion, Byron makes the reader conscious of the artifice implied in all art works, while forcing us to remember the processes of literary creation. In another example, Byron's

---

[4]I am referring, in particular, to sonnet 130 ("My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun"), Shakespeare's anti-Petrarchan sonnet.

self-reflexiveness is displayed when Donna Julia contemplates how she might live with Juan if only her husband were dead:

> And if in the mean time her husband died,
> But heaven forbid that such a thought should cross
> Her brain, though in a dream! (and then she sigh'd)
> Never could she survive that common loss;
> But just suppose that moment should betide,
> I only say suppose it - inter nos -
> (This should be entre nous, for Julia thought
> in French, but then the rhyme would go for nought).
> (DJ 1.84)

Byron's Swiftian view of human evil is deflated by the technical considerations in the final couplet. In this case, Byron's presence in the poem is felt through his seemingly random, impromptu versification.

The feeling of improvision is one of the many effects of digression. That Byron was interested in the art of the improvisor is illustrated by his comments to Thomas Medwin:

> The inspiration of the improvisor is quite a separate talent: - a consciousness of his own elocution - the wondering and applauding audience, - all conspire to give him confidence; but the deity forsakes him when he coldly sits down to think. (Medwin 138)

Interestingly, Byron's use of the phrase "a consciousness of his own elocution" suggests his recognition of the fact that the improvisor, or digressive poet, is aware of the effect of his art. Moreover, Byron notes also the importance of the relationship between the improvisor and his audience. In Don Juan the extemporary manner of Byron's narrative contributes to immediacy, for, through his digressions, Byron breaks down the usual distance between writer and reader, affording himself the opportunity to voice his subjectivity. Often

within conversational, one-line intrusions, Byron validates the implied subjectivity inherent in all art forms by voicing his subjectivity. For instance, writing of Donna Julia, he tells us, "Her eye (I'm fond of handsome eyes)" (DJ 1.60) and "Her stature tall - I hate dumpy women" (DJ 1.61). Similarly, through digression, Byron provides himself with the opportunity to comment upon other writer's poetry, such as Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming":

> 'Oh Love! in such a wilderness as this,
> Where transport and security entwine,
> Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss
> And here thou art a god indeed divine.'
> The bard I quote from does not sing amiss,
> With the exception of the second line,
> For that same twinning, 'transport and security'
> Are twisted to a phrase of some obscurity.
> (DJ 1.88)

Byron, like Pope when he illustrates the awkwardness of the dunces by comparing it with his own lucidity, satirizes contemporary obscurity. He does this again in the concluding stanza of the canto, which incidently concludes its longest digression,[5] when he quotes Southey:

> 'Go little book, from this my solitude!
> I cast thee on the waters, go thy ways!
> And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
> The world will find thee after many days.'
> When Southey's read, and Wordsworth understood,
> I can't help putting in my claim to praise -
> The first four rhymes are Southey's every line:
> For God's sake, reader! take them not for mine.
> (DJ 1.222)

---

[5]In stanza 188, Byron actually says, "Here ends this canto," but he continues to digress for another 34 stanzas!

Of course, Byron has deliberately selected some of Southey's most feeble, hackneyed poetry and contrasted it with his own witty verse to emphasize his superiority:

> But for the present, gentle reader! and
> Still gentler purchaser! the bard - that's I
> Must, with permission, shake you by the hand,
> And so your humble servant, and good bye!
> We meet again, if we should understand
> Each other; and if not, I shall not try
> Your patience further than by this short sample -
> 'Twere well if others follow'd my example.
> (DJ 1.221)

If we agree with Byron (and how can we not after reading Southey's insipid lines juxtaposed with Byron's), we align ourselves with him in his attack on false wit, an effect we often feel while reading Pope's satire.

While Byron establishes, as in the above instance, an almost congenial, conversational relationship with the reader through digression, he concomitantly displaces us from the events of Don Juan's adventures. M.K. Joseph has noted this effect when he writes that Byron "tease[s] the reader by involving [us] in the fiction, and then withdrawing from it with the reminder that it is only fiction after all" (29). A discussion of one of the longer digressions illustrates this effect. While describing the climactic scene in which Juan and Donna Julia are about to consummate their desire for each other, Byron, "apparently" traumatized by the event, says: "And then - God knows what next - I can't go on;/ I'm almost sorry that I e'er begun" (DJ 1.115). Indeed, we feel that Byron wishes he had not "e'er begun," for he proceeds to

digress for eighteen stanzas, discussing Plato (1.116), his pleasures in life (1.118, 119), and, in the manner of Sterne, a digression justifying his digressions:

> Here my chaste Muse a liberty must take -
> Start not! still chaster reader - she'll be nice hence -
> Forward, and there is no great cause to quake;
> This liberty is poetic licence,
> (DJ 1.120)

From here, Byron continues to digress, postulating that he has a "high sense of Aristotle and the rules," from whom he "begs pardon when I err a bit" (DJ 1.120). Byron then shows his "high sense" of the rules by breaking them, as he has done throughout the canto, in telling us that the date of Juan's and Julia's tryst was "June the sixth," and then moving his narrative ahead in time, in the same stanza, to November:

> But keeping Julia and Don Juan still
> In sight, that several months have passed; we'll say
> 'Twas in November, but I'm not so sure
> About the day - the era's more obscure.
> (DJ 1.121)

However, Byron does not keep "Julia and Don Juan still in sight," for he continues to digress, taunting the reader by listing things that are "sweet" and desirable -- the singing of a gondolier (1.122), the sight of a rainbow (1.122), a harvest (1.124), and, in a more satiric tone, the "sweetness" of a woman's revenge (1.124). Completing this long list of things "sweet" and desirable, Byron then says that the sweetest thing in life "Is first and passionate love" (DJ 1.127). But just when we think that we observe a logical

association and that Byron is leading us back into his narrative of Juan and Donna, he digresses on medical developments (1.129), small-pox (1.130), syphilis (1.131), the British coal-mining controversy (1.132), and the perplexing world (1.132). Finally, Byron appears to have run out of things to speak about, and we think he will return to the story:

> What then? - I do not know, no more do you -
> And so good night. - Return we to our story:
> 'Twas in November, when fine days are few,
> (DJ 1.134)

But Byron, yet again, prolongs our suspense by digressing for another stanza on the month of November, snow in the mountains, the noise of waves as they crash on the rocks, sunsets (1.134), and his Epicurean delights: "I'm fond of fire, and crickets, and all that,/ A lobster-salad, and champaigne, and chat" (DJ 1.135). We feel that in all of these digressions, which foster and sustain each other, we are witnesses of Byron's subconscious associations. We may conclude, as M.K. Joseph does, that "Byron achieves the feat of simultaneously playing a role and being aware of it" (31). He is, by dramatizing his own satiric voice in the narrative,

and detaching himself and the reader from the events of his narrative, essentially playing a role -- that of poet.[6]

IV

One of the major problems which critics of Don Juan have regularly discussed is the moral position of Byron as satirist. Bernard Beatty, in fact, has labelled Don Juan as a "comic poem" because there does not seem to be a definite moral base from which Byron lashes out at shame and folly (Don Juan and Other Poems 133). Byron himself wrote of his masterpiece that "it is the most moral of poems; but if people won't discover the moral, that is their fault, not mine" (LJ 4:279). We should, I think, take Byron's claim seriously. That there is a relationship between moral satire and the practice of digression is suggested in canto twelve, where Byron insists that his digressions have a moral purpose:

> Oh pardon my digression - or at least
> Peruse! 'tis always with a moral end
> That I dissert, like Grace before a feast:
> For like an aged aunt, or tiresome friend,
> A rigid guardian, or a zealous priest,

---

[6]While I have consciously avoided a biographical reading of Don Juan, it is nevertheless revealing in terms of self-reflexive art that people who knew the poet, and Byron himself, often spoke of his role playing. The Countess Albrizzi noted of Byron: "He necessarily found himself in the situation of an actor obliged to sustain a character, and to render an account of his every action and word" (Marchand 2: 727). Of how his future biographers would portray him, Byron wrote: "One will represent me as a sort of sublime misanthrope, with moments of kind feeling. This, per exemple, is my favourite role" (Marchand 1: vii).

> My Muse by exhortation means to mend
> All people, at all times and in most places;
> Which puts my Pegasus to these grave paces.
> (DJ 12.39)

At times, Byron achieves a very sophisticated type of moral satire, through digression, by satirizing himself or his persona. For instance, in describing the type of eduction Juan's mother forces upon her son Byron digresses and speaks of Juan's parents and their marital troubles:

> He and his wife were an ill-sorted pair -
> But scandal's my aversion - I protest
> Against all evil speaking, even in jest.
> (DJ 1.51)

Previously, of course, the narrator has gossiped about Don Jose and Donna Inez, spreading, not averting, "scandal": "Don Jose and the Donna Inez led/ For some time an unhappy sort of life,/ Wishing each other, not divorced, but dead" (DJ 1.26). Byron's satire is subtle in this instance, for he mocks both a society which promotes such hypocrisy and the individual -- represented by Byron the narrator -- who subverts his own moral and ethical ideals to gain social acceptance.

Byron, like Swift, often satirizes his persona in order to illustrate the abuses and follies of mankind. In the following passage, when Juan and Donna Julia are about to meet alone, Byron records the date and time with an exactness that reminds one of Gulliver: "'Twas on a summer's day - the sixth of June:-/ I like to be particular in dates" (DJ 1.103). And then a stanza later, he repeats this statement:

"'Twas on the sixth of June, about the hour/ Of half-past six - perhaps still nearer seven" (DJ 1.104). By particularizing, Byron satirizes pedantry by his own pedantry. A few stanzas later, he is still having fun at his own expense. Like Swift, with his "modern" narrators, and Rabelais in his satires, Byron shows a minute, pedantic interest in numbers. When the narrator relates that Alfonso is fifty years of age, he then digresses on the number fifty:

> When people say, 'I've told you fifty times,'
> They mean to scold, and very often do;
> When poets say, 'I've written fifty rhymes,'
> They make you dread that they'll recite them too;
> In gangs of fifty, thieves commit their crimes;
> At fifty love is rare, 'tis true,
> But then, no doubt, it equally as true is,
> A good deal may be bought for fifty Louis.
> (DJ 1.108)

By digressing on the number fifty, Byron, as he does through all of his digressions, removes the pretense of dramatic illusion, creating an image of the present, and asserting his control as poet. But by digressing on something as seemingly unimportant as the number fifty, and, in the process, displacing us from the narrative, Byron illustrates, mimetically, the uselessness of particularizing.

CONCLUSION

I have asserted in the preceding pages that Swift, Pope and Byron image, through their techniques, a consciousness of time and space, the two constructs by which we understand our knowledge of reality. The nature of reality is a subject which inevitably engages the mind of the satirist. Insofar as these three satirists criticize the vices and follies of human beings and their institutions, they are concerned with the reality of their society. But ultimately, Swift, Pope and Byron are ridiculing more than just their society; they are criticizing particular conceptions of reality, which underlie the vices and follies. Of course, in order to stigmatize a faulty perspective of reality, one must either illustrate why it is faulty or provide a better perspective. The satirists' censure of distorted perception is usually covert. But how they criticize, or through what methods, tells us about their own views of reality, or, in eighteenth-century terms, of Nature. To articulate their own epistemologies, Swift, Pope, and, less obviously but still evidently, Byron, present two distinct realms of value, two perspectives, and two epistemologies: their own, and that which they condemn.

Each of these satirists asks their readers to compare these opposites, and judge them.

In Gulliver's Travels, Swift's narrator stands for values exactly opposite to those of his creator. As we have seen, Gulliver's epistemology of space results in a distorted perception of reality and eventually a destructive vision of humanity. Gulliver's pedantry, misanthropy and other foibles are attributable to his acquired learning. Swift shows how Gulliver's type of education, one which is centrally mathematical and scientific, contributes to his incorrect understanding of reality. Similarly, Pope's criticism of the dunces is levelled at their conception of reality. Their uncreativity and dullness results from their solipsism. Because the dunces do not acknowledge other times and places, thoughts and ideas, they have a limited perspective of reality. Pope counters their solipsism through allusion, which exhibits, as we have seen, his own awareness of time. In Don Juan, Byron elucidates an epistemology contingent solely on the breadth of one's experience. His attack on the "Lake poets", whose seclusion from reality produces imaginative flights, contrasts them to his own epistemology. Through his self-reflexive digressions, Byron is at pains to emphasize the difference between imagination and experience, reality and fiction; it is these dichotomies which Byron's Romantic contemporaries blur. Byron himself demonstrates that he can discern the difference between these dichotomies

by showing that even fiction, the by-product of imagination, is an experience whose foundation is constructed in reality.

In this study, I have often commented upon how the techniques used by Swift, Pope and Byron affect the reader's reality. To describe this effect, I have used the word "displacement." When Swift displaces Gulliver to the fantasy worlds of Lilliput and Brobdingnag, the reader is also displaced - in time and space. We are, with Gulliver, always comparing the reality of these Utopias with the reality of our own world, the reality of Gulliver and our own reality. By displacing his narrator and readers, Swift forces us to "see" reality from various perspectives. We may distance ourselves from Gulliver's distorted vision of reality precisely because of Swift's demonstration of its absurdity and madness. Pope's allusions also displace the reader. When the reader recalls a classical original, the reader inevitably recognizes his own erudition and ability, like Swift's classical bee, to gather "sweets" through time and space. The limited perspective of the dunces is thus shown up by analogy. They do not recognize that they are a part of a great classical tradition. Byron's digressions in Don Juan expose the fallacy of dramatic illusion. When we read Don Juan, we are constantly reminded of our own act of reading. We avoid, then, the false enthusiasm, the mindless devotion to the "story," that Byron sees as characteristic of the typical Lake Poet. For Swift, Pope and Byron, their

differing techniques are used to show their control over the concepts of time and space, which is to say, their control over reality.

Bibliography of Works Cited

Priamry Material

Byron, George Gordon, Lord. Byron. Ed. Jerome J. McGann. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Pope, Alexander. Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pope. Ed. Aubrey Williams. Boston: Houghton, 1969.

Swift, Jonathan. Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings. Ed. Richardo Quintana. New York: Random House, Inc., 1958.

Secondary Sources

Beatty, Bernard. Byron's Don Juan. London: Croom Helm, 1985.

---. Don Juan and Other Poems: A Critical Study. Hamondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1987.

Berkeley, George. The Works of George Berkeley. Ed. G.N. Wright. 2 vols. London, 1843. Vol. 1.

Brower, Reuben A. Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion. London: Oxford University Press, 1959.

Brownell, Morris R. Alexander Pope & the Arts of Georgian England. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Byron, George Gordon, Lord. Byron's Letters and Journals. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand. 12 vols. London: John Murray, 1973-81.

Carre, Meyrick. "The Empirical Philosophy." Backgrounds to Eighteenth-Century Literature. Ed. Kathleen Williams. Scranton, Ohio: Chandler Publishing Company, 1971. 95-120.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. Biographia Literaria. New York, 1882.

Descartes, Rene. Discourse on the Method for Rightly Conducting One's Reason and for Seeking Truth in the Sciences. Trans. Donald A. Cross. Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980.

Dryden, John. The Works of John Dryden. Ed. Samuel Holt Monk. 19 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974. Vol. 17.

Eliot, T.S. "Tradition and Individual Talent." Criticism: The Major Statements. Ed. Charles Kaplan. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986. 429-437.

Feinberg, Leonard. Introduction to Satire. Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1967.

Frye, Northrop. The Critical Path. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971.

---. "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility." Backgrounds to Eighteenth-Century Literature. Ed. Kathleen Williams. Scranton, Ohio: Chandler Publishing Company, 1971. 312-321.

Fussell, Paul. "What is Humanism?" Backgrounds to Eighteenth Century Literature. Ed. Kathleen Williams. Scranton, Ohio: Chandler Publishing Company, 1971. 68-94.

Hagstrum, Jean H. The Sister Arts. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958.

Hazlett, William. The Complete Works of William Hazlitt. Ed. P.P. Howe. 21 vols. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1932. Vol. 11.

Hepworth, Brian. The Rise of Romanticism: Essential Texts. Manchester: Carcanet New Press Limited, 1978.

Highet, Gilbert. The Anatomy of Satire. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962.

Joseph. M.K. "The Artist and the Mirror: The Narrator in Don Juan." Twentieth Century Interpretations of Don Juan. Ed. Edward E. Bostetter. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 29-37.

Jump, John D. Byron. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972.

Leacock, Stephen Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1962.

Locke, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Ed. Peter H. Nidditch. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Marchand, Leslie A. Byron: A Biography. 3 vols. New York: Alfred A. Knopt, 1957.

McGann, Jerome J. Don Juan in Context. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Medwin, Thomas. Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron. Ed. Ernest J. Lowell, Jr. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966.

Milton, John. John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose. Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes. Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1957.

Price, Martin. To the Palace of Wisdom: Studies in Order and Energy from Dryden to Blake. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1964.

Schwartz, Richard. "Berkeley, Newtonian Space, and the Question of Evidence." Probability, Time, and Space, in Eighteenth-Century Literature. Ed. Paula R. Backscheider. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1979. 259-274.

Seidel, Michael. Satiric Inheritance: Rabelais to Sterne. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979.

Sidney, Sir Philip. A Defence of Poetry. Ed. Jan Van Dorsten. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Sterne, Laurence. Tristram Shandy. Ed. Howard Anderson. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980.

Tarbet, David W. "Reason Dazzled: Perspective and Language in Dryden's Aureng-Zebe." Probability, Time, and Space, in Eighteenth-Century Literature. Ed. Paula R. Backscheider. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1979. 187-208.

Virgil. The Aeneid of Virgil. Trans. John Dryden. Ed. Robert Fitzgerald. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964.

Warren, Austin. Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist. Reprint. Gloucester, Massachusetts: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Wasserman, Earl R. "The Limits of Allusion in The Rape of the Lock." Pope: Recent Essays. Ed. Maynard Mack and James A. Winn. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1980. 224-226.

Williams, Aubrey L. Pope's Dunciad: A Study of its Meaning. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1955.

Wood, Nigel. Swift. Brighton: The Harvester Press Limited, 1986.