

REPRESENTATION, TRUTH AND BELIEF IN LITERATURE

**REPRESENTATION, TRUTH AND BELIEF
IN LITERATURE**

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ABSTRACT

This work examines interconnected problems concerning representation, truth and belief in literature in the context of a moderate, rather than an absolute, conception of literary autonomy, and a broad, rather than a restrictive, conception of 'the aesthetic'.

In Chapter One the different types of representation are categorized and five 'characteristic' features of representation are presented. This analysis is applied to (a) linguistic representation in literature, (b) iconic representation in literature, and (c) symbolic and allegorical representation in literature. Chapter Two explores iconic representation in literature focussing on (i) sound associations, (ii) onomatopoeia, (iii) rhythm, and (iv) visual aspects of the text. The way these interact with linguistic representation is examined and their aesthetic significance is described.

Chapter Three is concerned with the ways in which literature may represent or be about the real world, and the ways in which literature may be true to or of reality. Among the topics examined are literary sentences and themes. In analyzing the former we distinguish between

literature and purely fictional literature and treat each separately. Sentences in purely fictional literature are not used to make explicit assertions about real phenomena and they are neither true nor false of reality. They represent in an 'internal' (or 'depictive' or 'presentational') sense. Literature, however, includes fictional and non-fictional sentences and may, therefore, contain assertive, referential sentences which represent in an internal and in an external sense, and which may be true (or false) of real phenomena. Arguments against this view are presented and criticized. A different way in which literature (including purely fictional literature) may be about, and be true to, reality, is by having a theme. Thematic works are about more than the particular events depicted. In contemplating the work's theme or themes we relate the work to life. Sometimes the work's theme is presented through symbolic or allegorical representation.

Chapter Four delineates the essential role which the reader's beliefs (about what is true or false, good or bad) play in 'actualizing' the literary aesthetic object (including its 'world' and its aesthetic form).

Chapters Five, Six and Seven explore connections between truth, belief and aesthetic value. In Chapter Five it is argued that, though truth is not a necessary or a sufficient condition of literary value, it often

contributes to literary value by giving depth, power, resonance or wit to a work. Cognitive value sometimes enriches aesthetic value; cognitive judgements are sometimes reasons supporting aesthetic judgements.

In Chapter Six we acknowledge the fact that literary works informed by beliefs we do not share often win our 'imaginative consent'. But, we argue, reading literature as literature does not require of us a universal and indiscriminating imaginative acceptance of all beliefs in literature, including the idiotic, the insane, and the horrendously immoral. Some works arouse in us a cognitive or moral dissent that disrupts and impairs the quality of our aesthetic experience. Poor cognitive and moral value can adversely affect aesthetic value; cognitive and moral judgements can be reasons for aesthetic judgements.

In Chapter Seven we examine Aristotle's Poetics with interpretative and philosophical aims. We criticize some modern attempts to read Aristotle as an absolute autonomist. We exhibit the connections he posits between truth to reality, 'form', and 'beauty', and also between moral belief and aesthetic emotion. Aristotle's remarks about 'character realism' provide the starting point for a discussion of its aesthetic relevance. We argue that out-of-character actions in literature are often, but not

always, an aesthetic flaw, and we attempt to explain why this is so. Frye's theory of fictional modes is used as a framework for this analysis.

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A little learning is a dang'rous Thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring:
There shallow Draughts intoxicate the Brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fir'd at first Sight with what the Muse imparts,
in fearless Youth we tempt the Heights of Arts,
While from the bounded Level of our Mind,
Short Views we take, nor see the Lengths behind,
But more advanc'd, behold with strange Surprize
New, distant Scenes of endless Science rise!
So pleas'd at first, the towering Alps we try,
Mount o'er the Vales, and seem to tread the Sky;
Th' Eternal Snows appear already past,
And the first Clouds and Mountains seem the last:
But those attain'd, we tremble to survey
The growing Labours of the lengthen'd Way,
Th' increasing Prospect tires our wandring Eyes,
Hills peep o'er Hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

(Alexander Pope, Essay on Criticism, II. 215-32)

These lines vividly illuminate certain aspects of the experience of thought and learning. On the 'climb' which the present work represents, I have been helped by others in many ways.

I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Constantine Georgiadis, not only for his valuable suggestions and criticisms, but also for his encouragement. I would also like to thank Professor Evan Simpson, Professor Jakob Amstutz, and Professor Graham Roebuck for their many helpful comments and criticisms. Doug Matheson was kind enough to read four chapters of this dissertation

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
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PART I

CHAPTER I REPRESENTATION

Introduction	6
1. Types of Representation	9
2. Common Features?	25
3. Literature and Representation	52

CHAPTER II ICONIC REPRESENTATION IN LITERATURE 56

CHAPTER III LITERATURE, REALITY AND TRUTH

Introduction	79
1. Two Questions About Truth	82
2. Some Senses of 'Truth' Used in Aesthetics	89
3. Literary Sentences	98
4. Theme, Symbol, Allegory	134
5. Truth to Reality	139

CHAPTER IV THE READER'S BELIEFS AND THE WORLD OF THE WORK

Introduction	143
1. The Real and the Imaginary in the Constitution of the World of the Work	146
2. Beliefs	164

PART II

TRUTH, BELIEF AND AESTHETIC VALUE

CHAPTER V TRUTH, BELIEF AND POSITIVE EVALUATIONS OF LITERATURE

Introduction	175
--------------	-----

1. Examples	184
2. Objections and Replies	202
CHAPTER VI BELIEF AND NEGATIVE AESTHETIC RESPONSES	
1. Examples	222
2. Tolerance and Dissent	238
CHAPTER VII TRUTH, BELIEF AND POETRY IN ARISTOTLE'S <u>POETICS</u>	
Introduction	254
1. 'Universal Truth', Beauty and Structure	257
2. Critical Judgement	289
3. Character Requirements and Truth to Reality	298
4. Aesthetic Emotions and Moral Belief	303
CONCLUSION	323
APPENDIX: PICTORIAL POETRY	329
ENDNOTES	335
BIBLIOGRAPHY	355

INTRODUCTION

Philosophical problems often come with labels attached (e.g. the 'mind-body problem', the 'free will problem'). One traditional problem area in aesthetics has been given a number of labels: 'art and reality', 'art and representation', 'art and truth'. In connection with literary works of art we have the labels 'literature and reality', 'literature and life', 'literature and representation', 'literature and truth', and, in this century, 'literature and belief'. These labels do not have exactly the same scope but there is much overlap between the particular problems each designates. This is not surprising, for there are obvious logical connections between the concepts of representation and reality, representation and truth, truth and reality, and truth and belief.

As the title of this work suggests, our aim is to examine interconnected questions concerning representation, truth and belief in literature. We shall attempt to exhibit their interconnectedness, and to give a logically coherent, interconnected answer to them. The questions are numerous. Does literature represent reality? In what way or ways might it do so? Does literature contain truth? If

a literary work does contain truth, is the work's aesthetic value enhanced? What role do our beliefs about what is true or false, right or wrong, play in understanding and evaluating literature? Are we ever justified in criticizing a work aesthetically because it is untrue or unrealistic or because we do not believe its view of life or accept its attitude towards what it depicts? In the context of the aesthetic appreciation of literature, what relation (if any) exists between aesthetic value and cognitive value, and between aesthetic value and moral value?

There are many types of representation. These are classified and analyzed in Chapter One. Those types of representation especially relevant to our task are discussed in more detail in later chapters. 'Iconic' representation in literature is examined in Chapter Two. The question of whether literature ever contains sentences which accurately represent or are true of real states of affairs is discussed in Chapter Three. There will also be some discussion of other ways in which literature may represent or be about reality. Examples of symbolism, allegory and theme will be analyzed in this connection.

As the previous paragraph suggests, the concept of truth employed here encompasses (i) explicitly asserted true statements about reality, and (ii) truth to reality

which may not be asserted but is nonetheless present in the work. We may say here that (i) is stated, while (ii) is shown but need not be stated.

In this century the term 'belief' has become a significant and widely used concept in discussions of some of our questions. The European literary tradition has breathed the air of Classical and Christian Humanism and in this atmosphere the questions were discussed in terms of the concepts of knowledge and truth. Many have said that this century has seen a breakdown in the consensus which made the use of the terms 'knowledge' and 'truth' seem unproblematical. Out of this more relativistic atmosphere the phrase 'the problem of belief' became a popular label among Anglo-American writers and literary theorists (e.g. in T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards, Cleanth Brooks, M. H. Abrams and others). This label is also used by some analytical philosophers (e.g. A. Isenberg) though the majority of them still prefer the label 'literature and truth'.

The question of the relevance of the reader's beliefs (about what is true or false, right or wrong) for understanding literature is explored in Chapter Four. The relevance of truth and belief for the aesthetic evaluation of literature is examined at length in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Seven is concerned with Aristotle's treatment

in the Poetics of the links between truth, belief and literary value.

The fourth key term in our title is the word 'literature'. I shall use this term in the sense in which it has been most commonly used for some time, namely to mean literary works of art. Some philosophers have drawn a sharp distinction between purely classificatory and purely evaluative uses of terms such as 'art' and 'literature'. However, the most common sense of the term is, I believe, both classificatory and evaluative. It is classificatory inasmuch as it classifies Oedipus Rex, Hamlet, King Lear, War and Peace, and Keats's "Ode to Autumn" under the heading 'literature' (technical articles in mathematics and physics are classified under different headings). It is evaluative inasmuch as it presupposes a certain level of aesthetic value in the work. Harlequin romances and the novels of Mickey Spillane are fiction but they are not literary works of art. Fictional novels must be aesthetically good to be classified as literature in the sense used here.

Literature includes tragic and comic drama, epic, romance, novels, short stories, lyric poetry, poetic essays, prose essays (e.g. of Montaigne, Hazlitt, Lamb), and so on. Sometimes there is disagreement about whether this or that particular work is a literary work of art. As

far as possible I shall use as examples works which are now generally regarded as being literary works of art. I shall not base my argument on examples from the prose essay genre, though I believe it would be justifiable to do so. Nor shall I appeal to Plato's Symposium, Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Gibbon's Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire or other works which are sometimes classified both as literature and as something else (e.g. philosophy or history).

CHAPTER ONE
REPRESENTATION

Introduction:

The concept of representation may be applied to a broad and highly diverse range of phenomena. Lawyers represent their clients, politicians represent their constituents, characters may be represented by actors in drama or dancers in ballet or mime artists in mime. Any one of a wide range of mental acts may involve mental representation. Representation occurs in speech and writing, in pictures and maps. When an object or event is used as a symbol it represents something. When a sequence of events has an allegorical significance the events represent something. And there is a type of representing involved in the practice of studying a sample (in polls and scientific studies) so as to reach general conclusions about the entire class of phenomena of which the sample is representative.

For at least two reasons, the concept of representation is difficult to analyze philosophically. In the first place, the phenomena designated by the concept seem remarkably heterogeneous. The activity of a lawyer in

court, the representational character of a picture, the relation between a word and what it represents - whatever (if anything) these have in common is not easy to discern. By contrast, it is not too difficult to come up with a list of properties which might plausibly be regarded as common characteristics of, say, triangles or squares or doors or chairs. (It may turn out, of course, that each property is not present in every door or chair).

A second reason why the objects and events we call representational are difficult to analyze is that there is a tremendous amount of overlap and interconnection between them. Pictures (e.g. photographs, representational paintings) are not mental representations, yet many argue that pictures and mental images work in a similar manner by 'looking like' or resembling what they represent. Should pictures and mental images be placed in the same category or in different categories? Drama and opera involve linguistic representation (what is said or sung by the characters) and the dramatic representation of action. Should we keep the linguistic and dramatic aspects separate from each other and thus divide drama and opera into two types of representation? We find symbolic objects and events in literature, painting, sculpture and film, and also in our thoughts and dreams. Should we treat all symbols as one type of representation or should we place

different types of symbols into different categories?

These and other questions and dilemmas arise when one begins to ask how one might classify or categorize the phenomena to which we apply the terms 'represents', 'representation' or 'representational'. In facing a classificatory decision one is sometimes pulled in different directions by two fairly natural criteria of classification. One criterion is where the representations occur and the other is how they work. It seems natural, for instance, to group thoughts, images and dreams together because of where they occur (in a mind), and to label them 'mental representations'. But it also seems natural to employ the criterion of how they work and to form, say, the category of representations which work 'iconically' (by sensory resemblance), and to label these 'iconic representations'. This category would include representational painting and sculpture, film, photographs, mental images and dreams. Thus, by one criterion mental imagery and dreams are placed in the category of mental representation; by the second criterion they are classified as iconic representations.

In fact, both of these classifications, and both of the underlying criteria, are useful. In order to do justice to the complexity, diversity and interconnectedness of representational phenomena it will be necessary to

employ both criteria.

Having noted these preliminary questions and difficulties we shall now proceed in the following manner. In Section I we shall attempt to categorize the field of representational phenomena. In Section II we shall search for the features common to most if not all instances of representation. Sections I and II may be read as a self-contained analysis of representation. In Section III we shall explicitly discuss some connections between literature and representation (the reader may notice them in Section I and II) and indicate how some of these links will be pursued later in this work.

Section I Types of Representation

Our first category is mental representation. The principle underlying the formation of this category is the criterion of where the representations occur. Mental representations are representations which occur in a mind and not in the physical world. In saying this I presuppose our intuitive understanding of what it is for something to occur in a mind, and I also presuppose that minds are not themselves physical objects or physical processes.

Whenever we think about, remember or imagine some object or state of affairs, real or imaginary, through concepts alone or through conceptualized images, while

awake or while dreaming, that object or state of affairs is thereby represented. Some philosophers have applied the term 'representation' not only to thinking, remembering and imagining, but also to perceiving. Locke is thought to have regarded our 'ideas' (perceptions) of primary qualities (e.g. shape and size) as being representations of the external object's primary qualities. This use of the term requires a commitment to the representational theory of perception which epistemological realists and phenomenologists, for well known reasons, withhold. The realist claims that when I see a tree I see the tree itself, not a representation of it. The phenomenologist argues that the tree I see is a certain collection of perceptions, not some object 'behind', and represented by, those perceptions.

Prima facie, the notion that sensation¹ is a type of mental representation seems incomprehensible, since it is very unclear what a sensation could represent. However, within a certain kind of theory of mind it could be maintained that a sensation represents a state of the organism (e.g. a person's sensation of hunger represents his state of being in need of food at that time). This problematical position, though, would be a minority view.

Mental representations, then, include thoughts, memories and acts of imagination. Perceptions would be

included in the category by Representational theorists of perception, but not by realists or phenomenologists. Most philosophers would exclude sensations.

It should be noted that images, perceptions and sensations must involve conceptualization if they are to be understood by the person experiencing them. An open-eyed catatonic may be receiving sensory stimuli but he is not having an experience because no conceptualizing of the stimuli occurs. To use Kant's words, intuitions without concepts are blind. An image, considered in itself, might be called a representation, but an image in my mind is a representation for me only if I have some minimal understanding of its content (i.e. only if I conceptualize it in some way).

Dramatic representation is the second type of representation. In drama, opera, ballet and mime, actions may be represented by the performers. In drama and opera linguistic actions may be represented also. In paradigm cases of drama, actors play the role of characters by performing the actions and utterances set out in the script. Normally this is done on a stage but in principle it may be done anywhere, though it is desirable that the intended audience be provided with sufficient indication that the actions of the actors are meant to be representational. Such indications include not only

advertisements and announcements but also sets, costumes, exaggerated or stylized gesture and mode of utterance, archaic or poetic language, verse patterns, and so on. These and other cues take the represented actions out of the immediate environment of practical concerns and invite us to experience the action as representational.

Dramatic representation also occurs when actors improvise without a script, when impressionists imitate public figures, when children play games such as 'doctor and patient', and when professors and students participate, sometimes even voluntarily, in lengthy role games devised by instructional development centres.

The concept of dramatic representation has been extended so that it applies to 'real' human behaviour and not simply to make-believe action. Such dramaturgical theories of human action are found in works like Erving Goffman's The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.² Many would not accept this use of the concept of representation.

The third category of representation embraces certain ways of acting on behalf of others which, by virtue of law, regulation or custom, count as representing them. Thus, lawyers represent their clients, politicians represent their nation, region or municipality, athletes represent their country or town or school, and so on. In a more informal way a person attending a funeral may be

understood to be representing his or her own family if other members of it are not present. Custom, rather than law or regulation, makes this possible.

Fourthly, in certain contexts, when one or more things serve as specimens, samples or examples of a class of things to which they belong, then those specimens represent their class.

The main area of life in which this kind of representation occurs is intellectual enquiry. Whenever one or more things are studied in an attempt to get knowledge of all those things, then the former represents the latter. This occurs in scientific experiments, market research, public opinion polls, and so on. If knowledge of all is to be gained from the study of some, the enquirer must ensure that the sample resembles other class members in all relevant respects. Samples must be 'representative'; experiments have to be 'controlled' and variables must be taken into account.

Our fifth category is representation by what Saussure³ has called 'arbitrary' or 'unmotivated' signs. This mode of representation is found primarily in natural languages and in the artificial languages of mathematics and formal logic. It is also found in non-pictorial diagrams, traffic signs and signals, in morse and similar codes, and in non-pictorial signs in maps. The link

between a signifier and what it signifies is 'arbitrary' or 'unmotivated' in the sense that there need be no natural connection between the two to motivate the correlation of one with the other. In principle, a sign can be 'arbitrarily' linked with any object in virtue of a social or conventional rule. The word 'dog' is correlated with dogs in virtue of such a rule, but, in principle, any word could be correlated with dogs, and in other languages other words are in fact so correlated. In practice, of course, one is born into a linguistic community where words already have a meaning that one is not free to abolish, and in which new words obey the phonological, morphological and other laws of the language in question. But this fact does not invalidate the principle that the connection between words and objects is arbitrary. Rather, the principle of arbitrariness, together with the fact that the vocabulary of a language is enormous, explains why linguistic change occurs slowly. Speakers in a linguistic community could not learn and continue to know a language (and hence communicate with each other) if the conventional correlations of words and things were changing every day.

A sixth category might be called representation by motivated signs. Here one thing stands for another in virtue of some non-arbitrary or 'natural' connection which provides the motivation for linking the two. There are

three kinds of motivating link:

- (a) resemblance, either (i) iconic
or (ii) non-iconic and trans-categorical
- (b) the relation of a universal abstract quality to particular embodiments of it
- (c) proximity or contiguity.

Let us begin with (a) (i). In iconic⁴ representation something is represented by a sensory likeness or image of that thing. Visual sensory likenesses may be presented in a medium one can see (e.g. paintings, sculpture, photographs, maps, diagrams); aural sensory likenesses are presented in a medium one can hear (e.g. onomatopoeic words, the imitation of bird song or cannon-fire in music); and a piece of sculpture might be so created that it feels like the object it represents. Whether or not it makes sense to speak of olfactory and gustatory iconic representation in an external medium is a question that cannot be pursued here.

One thing can resemble another without looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it (i.e. without being a sensory image of it). Such similarities may be called non-iconic resemblances. Non-iconic resemblance provides the motivating link between presenter and represented in many cases of symbolism and allegory (in the other cases the motivation is of type (b),

as we shall see in a moment).

The rose may be used by a poet as a symbol of the transient beauty of his lover, sunlight as a symbol of insight or clear mental perception, the rising sun as a symbol of re-birth or a new beginning for a person or a group of people, the setting sun as a symbol of the ending of something. Non-iconic resemblance underlies these correlations of symbol and meaning: the rose is a beautiful flower with a short life-span; in sunlight we can have clear visual perception; each dawn is literally a new beginning to a new day, and the sunset is literally its ending.

To use a rose as a symbol of a dandelion would be absurd. Dandelions do not seem sufficiently different from roses, belonging as they do to the same category (flowers). Nor do we want to use the rose as a symbol of any other flower, or any plant or tree. For the same reason we do not want to say (except as a joke) that the Cadillac is the Rolls Royce of cars. What is missing from these examples is a sense of categorial difference. In the type of symbols we are considering under (a) (ii) there should be a similarity or analogy between things which belong to different categories or realms. We may call this non-iconic trans-categorial resemblance, or, more conveniently, analogy (a term which neatly conveys the idea of similarity

and the idea of categorial difference). The presence of a categorial difference is more obvious and is more widely understood in the case of metaphor than it is in the case of symbols and allegory of the (a) (ii) type.

There is no valid universal dictionary of such symbols in which each object and event has one and only one symbolic meaning. It is not even true that each object has a definite plural number of symbolic meanings, understood by all men, to which no other meanings can be added in future. An object can be similar to many different phenomena and this makes possible a variety of symbolic meanings based on non-iconic resemblance. Because the sun is a source of light it has been used as a symbol of insight and illumination. But it can also burn the skin and oppress the desert traveller, thereby making it a possible symbol for the infliction of pain or for constantly oppressive objects or experiences. Thus, in "The Second Coming" Yeats⁵ writes of

A shape with lion body and the head of a man

A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun.

And if people in a culture believed (or were familiar with the belief) that the sun once exploded, throwing off fragments which eventually became planets, this would make the sun a natural analogue for countless situations (social, political, familial) in which there is explosion,

fragmentation, chaos and then some reorganization into a new and relatively stable situation. If scientists today believed that a great explosion of the sun was imminent, the sun could become a potent apocalyptic symbol of disintegration and final destruction. The possibility that objects may impinge on us differently in the future, thereby suggesting new analogies, keeps perpetually open the range of symbolic meanings which that object may have for us.

In allegory we are presented with a sequence of actions and events which are meant to make some sense in themselves but which also stand for another set of actions, events or concepts. In Spenser's The Faerie Queene, for example, we follow the plot while at the same time being aware that the events (represented by arbitrary linguistic signs) themselves non-arbitrarily represent moral and religious concepts and doctrines as well as historical and political events. Unless the author is striving for ironic or paradoxical effects (as in some Baroque and modernist poetry) he will try to ensure that there is a similarity or affinity between the depicted events and their allegorical meaning.

Let us now turn to 6 (b), a type of motivated sign based on a relation between a universal and particular embodiments of it. We suggested earlier that some types of

symbolism and allegory are not based on analogy. In King Lear Cordelia is a symbol of pure goodness, and in Spenser's The Faerie Queene Britomart represents Chastity, Una represents Truth, Sir Calidore represents Courtesy, and so on. Such characters represent abstract qualities in virtue of embodying or exemplifying them, rather than in virtue of being analogous to them. Such symbolic or allegorical figures, then, belong to category (b).

In these examples an individual entity represents an abstract quality, but the opposite also occurs. Writers sometimes use abstractions to represent one or more individual entities or actions. Samuel Johnson uses this device throughout his poem The Vanity of Human Wishes. In the opening lines,⁶ for instance, abstractions like 'observation', 'hope', 'fear', 'desire', and 'hate' are described as performing actions which abstractions cannot perform:

Let observation with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life,
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
.....

Here the abstractions represent concrete human actions (the poet and us observing) and the emotions of individual people (the hopes, fears, desires and hates of each one of us).

There is also a third type of motivated sign (type (c)) based on proximity. Signs motivated by proximity are of two types: metonymic and synecdochic. In metonymy, one thing represents another thing with which it is associated. Thus, the Oval Office represents the American President, the Kremlin represents the government of the U.S.S.R., the heart may represent the emotions. In synecdoche a part stands for the whole, as when 'the Crown' represents or signifies the monarch, 'wheels' means a car, 'pen' signifies writing (as in "The pen is mightier than the sword"), 'hands' signifies working men (as in "All hands on deck"). Metonymy, synecdoche and metaphor are often grouped together as types of figurative language. This superficial similarity, however, masks a fundamental difference in the principles underlying metonymy and synecdoche, on the one hand, and metaphor on the other. The former is based on the proximity or contiguity of items in the same realm while the latter is based on analogy between different realms.

To summarize: our sixth category is representation by motivated signs, and it is divisible into three types, each based on a different motivating link:

- (a) resemblance, either (i) iconic or (ii) non-iconic and trans-categorical (i.e. analogy)
- (b) a relation between an abstract quality and a particular

embodiment of it

(c) proximity or contiguity.

These categories may be represented diagrammatically.

RESEMBLANCE	EMBODIMENT	PROXIMITY
ICONS	ANALOGY	
Representational painting, sculpture. Imitative effects in language and music. Pictorial aspects of maps, diagrams.	Some symbols and allegories, metaphor.	Some symbols and some allegorical figures. Metonymy, synecdoche.

We now have six types of representation:

1. Mental
2. Dramatic
3. Legal and political
4. Samples
5. Linguistic (unmotivated signs)
6. Motivated signs.

There are many interconnections between these categories. Mental representation includes images and concepts and thus is connected to motivated iconic signs and to unmotivated signs. Concepts involve language and hence representation by unmotivated signs. Mental images are generally (but not universally) thought to be inner sensory likenesses. We think first of pictorial likenesses in mental images and dreams, but there is also the

phenomenon of experiencing, in memory or imagination, the sound, feel, taste or even the smell of something. Dreams and mental images are mental representations because of where they occur and motivated iconic representations because of how they work.

Drama works on the basis of some or all of the following: unmotivated signs in speeches; motivated signs in actions, sets and costumes which resemble what they represent; symbolic characters, objects or events; synecdochic depictions of wholes by parts (e.g. breakfast in a kitchen can be represented by a table, a cornflake box and a bottle of milk), and so on.

Representation by samples involves both resemblance (the samples must be representative of their class in all relevant respects) and the part-whole relation of synecdoche. It differs from synecdoche, however, inasmuch as sample parts must resemble other parts (members) of the class, whereas in synecdoche the part may represent a whole composed of heterogeneous parts.

Before we conclude this section, two important distinctions need to be made. Firstly, representation can be an activity or a property of something. Actors, politicians, and lawyers engage in the activity of representing someone. And when a person makes a statement about something, or formulates a thought about something,

or creates a representational painting, then that person is involved in the activity of representing something. But when we say of the thought such a person has, the statement he makes, the painting he has created, etc., that this thought, statement or painting represents something, it would be wrong to say that this representing is an activity. Making the statement, formulating the thought and creating the painting are activities, but the statements, thoughts and paintings are not themselves actions. In the statement "Goya represented the Duke of Wellington", the word 'represented' designates an action. But in the statement "Goya's painting represents the Duke of Wellington", the word 'represents' designates a property of the painting, not an action.

Secondly, some aestheticians have noted a crucial ambiguity in the concept of representation (this ambiguity is also present in the notions of 'imitation' and 'mimesis'). In his book Aesthetics, Monroe Beardsley⁷ distinguishes between representation as 'depiction' and representation as 'portrayal'. In the depictive sense a painting is representational if we can 'see' persons or objects or events in it. In the portrayal sense a painting represents something if it refers to something outside the painting, either real (as in Graham Sutherland's portrait of Winston Churchill) or imaginary (as in Botticelli's The

Birth of Venus, if we assume that the goddess Venus does not really exist).

In The Transfiguration of the Commonplace, Arthur Danto⁸ makes a similar distinction between an 'internal' sense of 'represent', which concerns the 'content' of a painting, and an 'external' sense which involves the denotation of a real item outside the painting. Danto claims that his distinction is analogous to Frege's distinction between the sense and reference of a sentence. Interestingly, Frege⁹ suggests that non-referential discourses, such as literary fiction, should be called 'representations'. On this usage, the theory of 'representation' would be the theory of the internal sense of 'represent', and the theory of reference would be the theory of the external sense. On Nelson Goodman's usage in Languages of Art¹⁰, however, the theory of what he calls 'representation' is the theory of the external sense. For him the phrase "representation of a horse" means, in effect, "denotation of a horse". The equivalent of the internal sense of the phrase "representation of a horse" in his system would be the notion of "a horse-picture".¹¹ As Danto points out, much of the confusion in debates between Goodman and resemblance theorists of pictorial representation is due to the fact that Goodman's theory of 'representation' is really a theory of the external or

referential sense of 'representation' whereas resemblance theorists (such as Beardsley and Danto himself) are presenting a theory of the internal or depictive sense. Resemblance, says Danto, may be a necessary (though not sufficient) condition of 'internal' representation without being a necessary condition of the external sense.

The distinction between the internal and external sense also applies to literary works. To say of a novel that, in the internal or depictive sense, it represents human beings, is to say that human beings are presented within the novel. But if we use the external sense of 'represent' we mean that the novel refers to human beings outside the novel. A broad conception of the external or portrayal sense (such as Beardsley's) allows for reference to real and imaginary entities (Lenin and Zeus or Venus). But a narrow conception of it allows for reference to real entities only (Lenin but not Zeus or Venus). Since our interest is in the relation between literature and reality, we shall employ the narrow conception of the external sense.

Section II Common Features?

Since the time of Plato there has been no shortage of theories about particular species of representation.

There have also been many theories connecting two or more of these categories (e.g. Cratylus's resemblance theory of language, Hume's iconic theory of mental representation, Nelson Goodman's linguistic theory of pictorial representation, recent 'cognitive' theories in psychology and philosophy of mind which connect linguistic and mental representation, and so on). But there are almost no works on representation with a significantly wider sweep. No one, for instance, has ever attempted a comprehensive linguistic analysis and definition of the concept.

There are only two works in English which offer a fairly comprehensive treatment of representation. In his unjustly neglected book, The Nature of Representation¹² (1961), Richard Bernheimer is interested primarily in representation in painting and sculpture, but he gives a detailed and illuminating analysis of a number of types of representation. However, he leaves out linguistic and mental representation and considers only some of the modes of representation which were considered in Section I under the heading of 'motivated signs'. His book, then is not sufficiently comprehensive. Further, as I shall argue below, he is mistaken in thinking that intention is a necessary condition of every instance of representation. Finally, he does not attempt to give an explicit definition of the concept.

Hanna Pitkin's The Concept of Representation¹³ (1967) is a study of different theories of political representation which includes a consideration of other uses of the concept so as to bring into relief the distinctive nature of discourse about political representation. She does not attempt to expound and defend a definition of representation applicable to all instances of representation. It is to this task that we now turn.

Prima facie, it seems unlikely that anyone will discover a set of conditions, each of which is necessary, and the conjunction of which is sufficient, for the application of the concept of representation. But this does not mean that no order or structure can be found in the phenomena which the concept can be used to designate. Using Wittgenstein's 'family resemblance' model of concepts, Morris Weitz employs the term 'relevance - condition'¹⁴ for features which are present in many but not all instances of phenomena designated by a concept. Such features are relevant to the application of the concept but are not necessarily present in all actual and possible uses of that concept. They might be said to be characteristic of the designated phenomenon though they are not in the strict sense essential to it. We shall begin, then, by searching for characteristic features of representation. Later we shall ask whether any of these are in fact

essential features.

I believe that the characteristic features of representation are the following:

- (a) Representation is a relation.
- (b) It is non-symmetrical.
- (c) When A represents B, A makes B present even though B need not be literally present. This generates two levels of discourse (literal and non-literal).
- (d) A and B are connected either by social rules or by some 'natural' link between the two.
- (e) The intention of the representer is often relevant to
 - (i) the question of whether something is a representation or not, and
 - (ii) to the question of what is represented, in the internal and in the external sense.

We say that one thing represents another and this seems to mean that two things or elements are related to each other in representation - that which represents and that which is represented. Thus there is a representational mental state and its object, an unmotivated representational sign and its referent, a motivated sign and its referent or meaning, an actor and the character he or she represents, a politician or lawyer and the person or persons he or she represents, a sample and the class it represents.

In fact, matters are more complex than this, for three and sometimes four factors may be involved in representation. If someone says "London is the capital of England" to someone, we have not only the sentence and the state of affairs it represents, but also a speaker and a listener or interpreter of the utterance. In many cases of representation, as we noted in Section I, there is both a person who represents (e.g. a speaker, writer or painter) and a medium which represents (e.g. the utterance, the book, the painting). For the moment, however, it will suffice to consider the two elements, representer (A) and represented (B).

To the claim that representation is a relation between two things or elements, it might be objected that in some cases there is only one thing or element involved. Thus, I may talk or think about myself and thereby represent myself. Self-representation also occurs in autobiographies, the Bildungsroman, Rembrandt's self-portraits, and Marshall McLuhan's appearance as himself in Woody Allen's film Annie Hall. A politician represents all eligible voters in his constituency, including himself if he is on the electoral register there. In courts of law it is not unknown for a defendant to represent himself instead of getting a lawyer to do so.

The existence of self-representation, however, does not prove that representation is not a relation between two elements. In saying that a person represents himself or herself we presuppose a distinction between the person qua representer and the person qua represented entity. Qua representer, the person is given under a different description or in a different guise from the person qua represented entity. Representer and represented do not have an identical set of properties. A politician has a position with certain rights and obligations which, qua voter in his own constituency, he lacks. A person who defends himself in court can do things which, qua accused, he is barred from doing. Similarly, there is a distinction between Rembrandt qua creator of his self-portraits and Rembrandt qua referent of those paintings (here we are considering the external sense of representation), between Graham Greene qua writer of A Sort of Life and Graham Greene qua referent of that work. Representation requires some gap, some logical space between representer and represented.¹⁵ Without this gap we would have a person simply existing or acting, not a person representing himself as existing or acting.

In the second place, representation is a non-symmetric relation. A can represent B without it being the case that B represents A. This non-symmetric relation

contrasts with such symmetric relations as 'being similar to', 'being next to', and 'being equal to'. If X is similar to Y, then Y must be similar to X; if X is next to Y, then Y must be next to X; if X is equal to Y, then Y must be equal to X. Of course, it may happen by chance that when A represents B, B may at the same time be representing A. A husband and wife may simultaneously utter statements of the form "You always..." or "You never...". Andy Warhol and David Hockney may yet paint portraits of each other on live television. An American President represents all of his countrymen, but may at the same time be represented by (e.g.) the Governor and the Senator of the state in which he votes.

A third relevance condition of representation is that, when A is a representation of B, A, which is literally present (or literally present in its own domain), makes B non-literally present. (B may, coincidentally, be literally present, but it need not be). Because of this, representation involves two levels of discourse. One concerns what is literally present and the other what is made non-literally present.

Thus, in mental representation we have representational mental states (thoughts, memories, images, etc.) which are literally present in their own domain (in the mind or in the brain, depending on your theory of

mind). But what is represented by thoughts, memories, images and dreams need not be literally present in my mind or brain and need not be literally present nearby. If I think of a desert it is not necessary that a desert be literally present in my mind or brain, or nearby. Nonetheless, the desert of which I am thinking is in some sense non-literally present before the mind. Two levels of discourse are involved in description of mental representations: discourse about mental states or mental acts and discourse about the objects represented by those acts or states. The latter type of discourse can itself be divided into talk about the representational content of the mental state (the internal sense of representation) and talk about the entities denoted by the mental state (the external sense).

In representation by unmotivated signs, signs are literally present (e.g. on the pages of a novel) and these make objects and states of affairs (the characters and events of the novel) non-literally present before the reader's mind. In representation by motivated iconic signs, configurations of paint (to take the most obvious medium) are literally present on a canvas and the people, objects or landscapes presented therein are made non-literally present to the person looking at the painting. In drama the actor is literally present on the stage and

the character (e.g. Hamlet) is made non-literally present before the audience. There is discourse about the representational medium and discourse about what is (internally, and, where applicable, externally) represented therein.

When one person acts on behalf of others and thereby represents them, the representatives who are literally present make it possible for us to make statements like "America and the Soviet Union were at the conference" or "100 countries at the U.N. voted against the resolution". These statements are not literally true, for 100 nations could not literally be present inside the U.N. Building in New York. Yet such statements are regarded as being true in a non-literal sense.

Finally, specimens may be described on two levels: (a) statements about the specimens, e.g. "40 rats were injected with chemical C and contracted cancer as a result", and (b) statements about the class which the specimens are thought to represent, e.g. "Chemical C causes cancer in rats" or "Chemical C causes cancer in humans". The class which the experimenter takes to be represented by the specimens may be non-literally present as one of the concepts in terms of which the experiment is set up, experienced and described.

Thus far I have been suggesting that representation is (a) a relation between at least two elements which is (b) non-symmetrical and which (c) involves the making present of something which need not be literally present. These three conditions, taken together, tell us a fair amount about our topic, but they do not tell us how representer and represented come to be related in this way. A European might think of snow whenever he thinks of Canada but not always or often think of Canada when he thinks of snow. In his mind, it might be argued, there is a non-symmetrical relation between Canada and snow which makes snow non-literally present as an object of thought. But this link between Canada and snow is association, not representation. Something more is required for the relation to be one of representation. But what is this 'something more'?

As we saw in Section I, the required connection between representer and represented is based on one or both of the following: social rules or some 'natural' connection between the two. In mental representation, as we have seen, concepts involve language and hence rules, while images have a natural 'iconic' relation to what they represent in the internal sense of 'represent'. Pictures and other sensory images in an external medium represent (in the internal sense) in virtue of resemblance, but

social rules or conventions are also involved (e.g. what is 'in' the picture is inside the picture's frame; different styles, such as the Egyptian or the Impressionist, are called 'conventional' modes of representing, though the configurations of paint must look like an object to represent it in the internal sense). A creature from outer space might see a dramatic performance but wrongly think it was real rather than make-believe action. The creature would lack knowledge of these social rules or conventions: the action is make-believe; actors play characters; the dramatic action is usually distinct from the actions (e.g. coughing) of members of the audience; not everything we see in the theatre is part of the dramatic action, and so on. The audience of a play should have at least an implicit understanding of these rules and the semantic and syntactic rules of the language in which the play is performed.

In political representation the connection between representer and represented can fall anywhere in the spectrum between totally arbitrary and highly motivated. The connection is arbitrary when a government the people do not want is placed in power by foreign invaders or a domestic coup d'etat. People in the rest of the world may think this government does not, in a moral sense, "really and truly" represent its people, but sooner or later we begin to use the language of representation in a de facto

sense in connection with this government. This is mainly because the exigencies of international relations (e.g. membership in the U.N., diplomatic and trade negotiations, etc.) lead us to deal with that government and thus accept it as representing its people.

A less arbitrary and more motivated relation between representer and represented exists when a government comes to power in accordance with its society's rule-governed procedures for choosing leaders. But even here it may be said that such a government does not in a moral sense "really and truly" represent its people, even though it is said to represent them in a de facto sense. The rule-governed procedure may be criticized on the grounds that it does not tend to produce governments which "really and truly" represent the people. Or a particular government which came to power in the standard rule-governed manner might be criticized on the grounds that its ethnic, class, religious or linguistic composition does not resemble and therefore accurately represent the ethnic, class, religious or linguistic composition of the people. But the government might also be criticized, not on these 'numerical' grounds, but rather because it does not (whatever its composition) really represent the wishes, interests, aspirations or ideals of the people. Underlying this particular moral use of 'represent' there is a picture

of what a highly motivated relation between representer and represented would be like - a picture, in fact, of what an ideal society and government ought to be. Liberals, conservatives, Marxists and others have different conceptions of what the interests or aspirations of a nation or of people in general really are. Accordingly, moral uses of the language of representation which invoke the interests and aspirations of a people (or of people in general) give expression to different models of an ideal, highly motivated relation between political representatives and the people they represent.

A fifth relevance condition is intention. An entire book could be devoted to the concept of intention considered in itself (e.g. G. E. M. Anscombe's Intention¹⁶). A whole volume could also be written on the role of intention in just one species of representation (cf. the vast literature which has arisen out of Grice's intention-based theory of meaning; the many works written on the relevance of an artist's intention for our interpretation of representational works of art, and so on). Clearly, we cannot pursue all of these issues here. Instead we shall try to show, in the first place, that intention is a 'characteristic' feature of representation, and, in the second place, that some representations need not involve intention.

First, then, let us make a prima facie case for the relevance of intention. We distinguished earlier between representation as an activity and representation as a property (e.g. Graham Greene's action of representing himself in A Sort of Life and the fact that this book has the property of being a representation). If we are considering the activity of representation, it seems clear that intentional action is involved. Engaging in the activity of legal or political representation, acting in a play, creating a representational painting, talking or thinking about something - these are intentional actions distinct both from involuntary actions such as tics, twitches and spasms, and from events such as the falling of rain which are not actions at all.

When we ascribe the property of being a representation to something (e.g. a painting, a novel) it is usually true (a) that this 'object' is the product of an intentional action, (b) that this intentional action was done with a certain purpose or intention in mind, namely to produce a representation. The distinction between an intentional action and having a purpose or intention in mind is Anscombe's, and it is drawn because "an action can be intentional without having any intention in it"¹⁷ (some intentional actions may be done without any particular intention or aim in mind, e.g. looking around, crossing

one's legs, etc.). The paradigm case of a representational object is an object created by intentional actions done with the intention or aim of creating a representation. More succinctly, the paradigm case of a representational object is an object which is the product of the intentional action of creating a representation.

Intention, then, seems to be relevant to the question of whether something is or is not to be classified as an instance of representation. And it is the absence of intention which makes us unwilling to call certain types of phenomena 'representations'. For instance, when I seem to see a face in the moon or in the clouds or in a piece of driftwood, I am not inclined to call it a representation, even though I may call this kind of seeing 'representational seeing'.¹⁸ What I seem to see in the moon or clouds or driftwood is (a) not the product of any intentional action, (b) not the product of the intentional action of creating a representation, and (c) not the product of the intentional action of creating a representation of the very same face that I seem to see. What I seem to see is the result of chance, not human intention. Furthermore, this kind of representational seeing is notoriously idiosyncratic and subjective. Other people may not see anything in the clouds, or they may see something other than a face, or they may be able to see

different things at different moments even though the clouds have not really changed in shape or appearance.

Intention, then, is clearly a relevance condition of representation. But is it a necessary condition? Nicholas Wolterstorff seems to suggest that it is when he says in the Preface to his book Works and Worlds of Art (1980) that "at its root representation is an action performed by human beings".¹⁹ It should be noted, however, that Wolterstorff (as the title of his book suggests) is concerned with representation in works of art, not with representation in general. He does not discuss mental representation or political representation, nor is he interested in the kind of representation we find in mathematical or logical 'symbolism' (i.e. unmotivated signs), since these do not 'project a world' of people, objects and events. His aim is to consider 'world-projection' in works of art in the context of a theory of action rather than (as Goodman does) in the context of a theory of signs. However, if intention is not a necessary condition of representation then Wolterstorff's theory cannot be generalized to cover all types of representation. It could not, in any case, be generalized to cover the actions of legal and political representatives, since these cannot plausibly be thought of as actions of world projection, as mimesis.²⁰ (Nor can they be understood in

terms of Goodman's model of denoting signs).

In The Nature of Representation Richard Bernheimer claims that intention is a necessary condition of all types of representation:

The presence of an appropriate intent is thus the minimum requirement without which no object or event can represent, not even illegitimately, so that the non-purposive fields of nature and of chance are excluded from the application of the term.²¹

The most obvious possible counter-examples to this claim would be (a) any mental representations, such as dreams, mental images or hallucinations which are not the product of intentional actions, and (b) reflections in mirrors, lakes, windows or any other reflecting surface. Let us examine (a) first. The fundamental question here is whether all mental representations must be regarded as the product of intentional actions.

Some mental imagery is a voluntary product of conscious mental activity, but some imagery comes to us involuntarily. It does not seem to appear as the result of an intentional action and we do not seem to carry out any conscious intention or purpose in experiencing it. If this is so, such involuntary mental imagery constitutes a counter-example to the claim that all representations are the result of intention. Similarly with dreams, which come to us unbidden.

However, it might be argued that all dreams and mental imagery arise from conscious or unconscious intent. Symbolic entities and condensed dream figures are the product of activities of the unconscious, and involuntary mental images might be regarded as unconscious thoughts erupting into consciousness. However, it is to be doubted that all dreams and involuntary mental images are 'purposive' or meaningful in this way; some may be simply due to chemicals, stimulation of the brain by a brain surgeon, or exhaustion, and may not be expressions of unconscious thoughts or emotions. I would argue, then, that it is not the case that every mental representation must be the product of conscious or unconscious intention. Yet such 'unintentional' mental representations are not totally accidental as faces in the clouds are. They are emanations from a mind and we are usually in no doubt about what such images are (in the internal sense) images of (e.g. a tree). We are willing to call them representations for these reasons.

Hallucinations one has with one's eyes closed can be classified as involuntary mental imagery. Hallucinations in which one seems to see objects outside oneself are problematic. Though they seem to have a representational character, one is not sure what is meant by calling them representations. If one is willing to call

them representations, one would have to agree that they are not consciously intended representations. It might be argued that hallucinations are expressions of unconscious fears or anxieties. But must all hallucinations be like this? Surely it is possible that hallucinations lacking in deep psychological meaning may occur as the result of chemicals, surgical brain stimulation or lack of sleep. These, if we are willing to call them representations, would be counter-examples (along with some dreams and mental images) to the claim that intention is a necessary condition of representation.

Bernheimer would not accept these arguments on the grounds that mental experiences (the existence of which he accepts) are not in a public medium as paintings are and therefore should not be called 'representations' at all.²² That is, Bernheimer would argue that the category of mental representation should not have been included as a species of representation in the first place. This attempt to narrow the scope of the concept is a puzzling feature of a book which attempts to be comprehensive in its treatment of representation. It may be due to the fact that Bernheimer's primary interest is in visual artistic representation in the media of painting and sculpture.

There are very strong reasons for rejecting Bernheimer's attempt to narrow the concept. It would not

be considered a misuse of the word in English if one said that in thinking about something one was representing it. Dictionaries allow for application of the concept to mental phenomena. And many philosophers, linguists and psychologists use the term in this way. Given all this, Bernheimer's requirement that representations be in a public medium seems quite arbitrary. The fact that mental representations cannot be literally seen and touched by people, as a painting can be, does not prevent them from being representations. Further, we have shown that mental representations usually possess all five of the relevance conditions outlined above, and in nearly all cases possess the first four. Mental representation, as we have argued, involves a non-symmetric relation between two elements, A and B, in which A makes B non-literally present in virtue of linguistic rules (in the case of non-imagistic conceptual thought) or iconic resemblance (in the case of mental imagery) or both together. Very often the representation is the product of an intentional mental action which can be ascribed either to the conscious or to the unconscious.

Mental representations, then, are representations, and some of them may be 'unintentional', thus constituting one class of counter-examples to the claim that intention is a necessary condition of representation. Let us now

look at a different type of counter-example: reflections in mirrors, lakes, etc.

One can see one's reflection in mirrors, shop windows, some chrome and metal surfaces, rivers and lakes. Mirrors are the products of human intentional action done with the intention of making an object that will reflect whatever is put in front of it. Most rivers and lakes are not the product of human intentional actions (whether they are created by God is another question). Man-made lakes are the product of human intentional actions but the capacity of fairly still water to reflect objects is a property of the water itself and not the consequence of human intentional actions. Shop windows, kettles, cars and other man-made objects in which reflections can be seen are, of course, the product of human intentional actions. But the intention (or at least the primary intention) with which these actions are done is not usually that of making a reflecting object, as is the case with the production of mirrors. Windows, for example, are usually made with the intention that they allow light in, keep the wind and much of the cold out, and remain sufficiently solid to last for some time. It is usually true of most reflecting artifacts that their capacity to reflect is due simply to the nature of the materials used and not also due to a maker's intention or aim to produce a reflecting artifact. The

exceptions to this are mirrors and some showcase downtown skyscrapers (e.g. bank buildings) which are purposely designed to reflect the setting sun or the hurly burly on the streets below.

We have, then, a spectrum of reflecting things, with mirrors at one end and natural lakes and rivers at the other. In a small, unscientific poll I conducted, most people were willing to call natural and man-made reflections 'representations', while almost no one was prepared to ascribe the term to faces in the clouds. Some strong reasons can be given in support of these intuitions - reasons which give a philosophical account of our willingness to call reflection 'representations' and our unwillingness to apply the same term to faces in clouds.

Firstly, faces in the clouds are totally accidental in a way that reflections are not. If I see a reflection of myself in a mirror or in a lake, its presence there is no accident, for it is a reflection of an object (in this case, myself) suitably located in relation to the reflecting surface. The proximity of the object and the causal connection between it and its reflection provide a natural connection which justifies our saying that the reflection is a representation of that object.

Secondly, the causal connection provides what Richard Wollheim has called²³ a 'standard of correctness'

which, given our knowledge that certain surfaces can reflect objects, enables us to agree that a certain shape on the reflecting surface is a reflection of an object X which is suitably located in relation to that surface. I may, of course, idiosyncratically see a face on the surface of a lake in just the same way that I see a face in the clouds, but if I can find no one nearby, standing in the appropriate place, and looking like the face I seem to see, I will say that what I seem to see is not in fact a reflection or a representation at all.

Reflections, then, are representations. Reflections in natural lakes or rivers are (along with some mental imagery and dreams) counter-examples to the claim that representations are necessarily the product of human intentional actions. Further, reflections can occur in artifacts (other than mirrors) without it necessarily being the case that the artifact (e.g. a glass window) was made with the aim or intention that it be a reflecting artifact.

We may now summarize the argument of this section. The characteristic features of representation are that it is a non-symmetric relation between A and B in which A makes B non-literally present in virtue either of a rule or of some natural connection between the two, and A either is, or is a product of, an intentional action done with the intention or aim of creating just this kind of non-

symmetric relation between A and B.

But are any of these essential features of representation, necessary conditions for correct applications of the concept of representation? We have already argued it is an essential feature of representation that it be a relation between (at least) two elements, even in cases of self-representation where it might be thought that only one element is involved. Further, I believe that it is a necessary condition for any correct application of the concept of representation in any of its existing senses, that the relation between A and B be non-symmetrical. However, it might be argued that a new sense of the term might emerge which could be correctly applied to a symmetric relation. For instance, the term might in the future acquire a sense parallel to the sense of 'represent' which means 'is equivalent to'. (In the sentences "His rent represents one third of his salary" and "A 1% increase in unemployment represents 200,000 more people out of work" the two items in each sentence are symmetrically related). This sense of 'represent' is the odd man out among all the senses of 'represent', and it is worth noting that, in the 150 or so years in which it has existed in English, no parallel sense of 'representation' has developed. Nor does it seem likely that such a sense will develop. Further, we can argue that there are good

reasons for not welcoming such a black sheep into an already diverse family. However, to establish that a possible future event is both undesirable and highly unlikely to occur, is not to establish with absolute certainty that it will not occur. The emergence of a 'symmetric' sense of representation does not seem to be a logical impossibility. We shall have to content ourselves, then, with the following conclusion about the non-symmetrical character of representation: for all correct uses of 'representation' in any of its existing senses, representation is necessarily non-symmetrical, and, for all uses in any actual or possible senses, being non-symmetrical is at the least a very important relevance condition.

We argued earlier that when a person A represents B, or when an 'object' A is a representation of B, then A makes B non-literally present even though B need not be literally present. One possible counter-example to this claim arises if one allows the term 'representation' to be applied to perceptions of objects (representational theorists of perception use the term in this way). It might then be argued that when I have perceptions of an object that object must be literally present, as the cause of those perceptions. To this it might be replied that if what I see is a representation of the object and not the

object itself, then the object itself can never be literally present to me; the representational perception is literally present to me and it makes the object in itself non-literally present to me. The representational theorist of perception might respond to this by saying that, though I cannot see the object in itself and in that sense directly know of its existence, it must nonetheless be literally present (though not literally present to me) as a cause of my perceptions of it. As is well known, Berkeley and Kant criticized this position on the grounds that we cannot know the existence of an entity we cannot ever experience. (Berkeley went on to contradict himself by arguing for the existence of God and other minds). The representational theorist of perception, then, seems to be left in the position of being unable to say that he knows that the object in itself is literally present 'behind' his perceptions. We conclude, then, that the representational theorist's use of the term 'representational' is not a counter-example to our third relevance condition. We conclude also that this use of the term is problematical (and, as we argued in footnote 1, that Kant's application of the term to sense perception is even more problematical, given that he, unlike the representational theorist, does not claim to know the existence of 'things in themselves').

I would argue then, that for all uses of 'representation' in its existing senses, it may well be an essential feature of a person A representing B or an object A being a representation of B, that A makes B non-literally present even though B need not be literally present, and that this generates two levels of discourse, literal and non-literal. And for all possible uses of 'representation' in the future we can establish that this feature is at the very least an important characteristic property of representation and an important relevance condition of the concept.

It is difficult to think of any examples of representation in which A and B (representer and represented) are not connected by a rule or by some motivating natural connection between the two. Even when I use objects on a dinner table (e.g. knives, forks, salt-containers, etc.) to create a kind of map of the area in which I live, and thereby explain to a friend how to reach my home, I am (explicitly or implicitly) giving a rule stipulating that the knife will represent, say, street X, and the salt container my home. If my friend does not understand the correlation rules I am using he will not understand the representation I create. As far as I can see, the fourth condition is a necessary condition of any actual or possible uses of the concept of representation.

Section III Literature and Representation

A literary work of art might be said to be 'representative' of its author's writings, or a representative work of its era, or a representative example of its genre. The work might be considered as the expression of some of its author's mental representations (e.g. his or her thoughts or beliefs). If the work is staged it might be examined in terms of dramatic representation. In creating a work with a strong religious or political viewpoint, an author might consider himself (or be considered by others) to be representing (acting on behalf of) a certain group of people. The words and sentences in a literary work represent (in the internal sense) certain states of affairs in the 'world' of the work. It is a matter of debate whether literary sentences also represent in the external sense (i.e. represent real states of affairs in the world). It is also possible that literature may contain iconic modes of representation through the imitation of the sound or rhythm of phenomena in the world. Literature may also present objects, events or states of affairs which have a thematic, symbolic or allegorical import and thereby represent other objects, events or meanings.

When the term 'representation' or one of its cognates ('represent', 'represents', 'representative') is

applied to literature in any of these ways, then most of the five relevance conditions presented in Section II will be present. For example, if Dickens writes in Pickwick Papers that Mr. Pickwick did X then these words represent (in the internal sense) a certain (fictional) state of affairs (i.e. that Mr. Pickwick did X) by conventional linguistic signification or representation by unmotivated signs. There is a relation between the words and the fictional state of affairs, and it is a non-symmetrical relation (the words represent the state of affairs but the state of affairs does not represent the words). The words, which are literally present on the page, make present to our minds a state of affairs which is not literally present. The link between the words and the state of affairs is based on conventional rules, including especially rules correlating words with entities, actions or qualities. The sentence is the product of intentional action and, if it were unclear what the words represented, the question of what Dickens intended them to represent would be highly relevant to our efforts to decide what the words did represent.

Let us consider another example. In The Faerie Queene the character Sir Calidore represents courtesy; he is a symbolic or allegorical figure. There is a relation between Sir Calidore and courtesy, and it is a non-

symmetrical relation (Sir Calidore represents courtesy, but the abstract quality of courtesy does not represent Sir Calidore). Sir Calidore, and what he does, makes present to the reader's consciousness a level of allegorical meaning concerning the virtue of courtesy, its nature and moral significance. The link between Sir Calidore and courtesy is based on the fact that Sir Calidore embodies or exemplifies that virtue. The Faerie Queene is the product of intentional action and in answering interpretative questions about what Sir Calidore represents it would be relevant to ask "What did Spenser intend him to represent"?

Let us consider a third example. In the poetic phrase "the murmuring of innumerable bees" it is thought that the 'm', 'n' and 'r' sounds imitate the murmuring sound of bees in the distance. This would be an example of iconic representation occurring in co-ordination with linguistic representation. Here there is a relation between word sounds and a kind of sound we hear from bees some distance away. It is a non-symmetrical relation (the word sounds represent the sound of bees, but not vice-versa) and the word sounds seem to make the represented sounds present to us in a vivid and immediate way. The link is based on a similarity in sound, and the words are the product of intentional action. The onomatopoeic effect is obviously intended, given the careful and poetic choice

of words and sounds.

In these three examples there is a relation between some aspect of the literary work and a 'world', real or imaginary. The first involved linguistic representation (words represent states of affairs in a 'world', real or imaginary). The second is an example from a category in which objects or events in the world of the work represent other objects, events or qualities (usually in the real world). The notions of theme, symbol and allegory are linked to this category of non-iconic motivated signs. Our third example illustrated the phenomenon of iconic representation in literature (sensory aspects of some literary works represent sounds, movement, objects, etc. in a 'world', real or imaginary).

These three categories of representation in literature, each relevant to questions about the relation between literature and reality, will now be examined in more detail. Chapter Two is concerned with iconic effects in literature, Chapter Three with linguistic representation. Theme, symbol and allegory will be examined in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER TWO

ICONIC REPRESENTATION IN LITERATURE

Iconic representation in literature is neglected in aesthetics and literary theory. For this reason we shall examine its role in literature and enquire more generally into its aesthetic significance. Four areas are worthy of note in connection with iconic effects in literature: (i) sound-associations (or sound-symbolism as it is called in linguistics), (ii) onomatopoeic words, phrases and passages, (iii) rhythm, and (iv) the visual appearance of written or printed literary works. We shall examine each in turn, thereby providing a comprehensive general account of iconic effects in literature.

First, though, we shall make some general observations about sound, since it is involved in (i), (ii) and (iii). [(i) is concerned with the smallest units of sound, (ii) with larger units such as words and phrases, and (iii) with phrases, sentences, paragraphs and whole discourses.] Saussure, in A General Course on Linguistics (op. cit., p. 66) defined a linguistic sign as a two sided entity which combines a concept with a psychological "sound-image". Natural languages were spoken and heard

before they were written or read. The sound of a word is clearly important in speech. But Saussure regards word-sounds as being no less important in written languages. For him a written word, as much as a spoken word, combines a concept with a sound-image.

The importance of sound in literature has been widely recognized. The Polish aesthetician Roman Ingarden has argued that four "strata" are necessarily present in every literary work of art. The first of these is the "sound stratum" - the sounds of individual words and the "higher order" phonetic formation of an entire work, which are "built on" individual word sounds.¹ These higher order formations include euphony, dissonance, rhythm and tempo.

Literary works are written in natural languages. Each natural language has its own distinctive phonetic character. Consider, for instance, the difference in sound between Chinese and English, French and Irish Gaelic, Russian and Italian. Each has its own sound, its own characteristic beauties, its own range of potentialities considered as sensory material which the artist can mould into a flow of sound and meaning. This makes translation difficult since the translator cannot duplicate the sequence and organization of sounds of the original. How does one translate the gentle, mellifluous sounds of Spenser's Epithalamion and his Amoretti into an African

language which has a lot of clicking sounds? And it has been said that descriptive poetry which seems rugged, dense and substantial in English, often becomes somewhat thinner, smoother and slighter in French translations.

From these general remarks about sound let us now turn to (i), the associations which letters and phonemes have. Since Plato's Cratylus this has been a topic of perennial interest. In this century many earlier intuitively plausible observations have been corroborated, and new findings discovered, by psychological and acoustic research. In The Sound Shape of Language² (1979), Roman Jakobson and Linda Waugh give a critical history and analysis of work in this area. In discussing research on the associations and expressive values of vowel sounds in many different languages, Jakobson and Waugh conclude that

...it becomes ever clearer that when the diversity of the systems [of different languages] brought together is taken into account, a general pattern of sound-symbolic values stands out...(p. 187; my italics).

People associate the experiences of bright, sharp, cold, hard, quick, light (in weight), narrow and high-pitched phenomena in one series. By contrast, in a quite distinct series, we associate experiences of dark, yielding, soft, warm, blunt, low, heavy, slow, low-pitched and wide phenomena. The vowels i and e are associated with the bright-cold-sharp series and the vowels a, u and o are

associated with the dark-warm-soft series (ibid., p. 192).

The consonants t-p-k are experienced by native speakers of many different languages as ascending in an order in a way that corresponds to the vowels i-u-a. In each series the first sound is experienced as being smallest and brightest, the third is largest and darkest, and the second is in between on the small/large and bright/dark scales (ibid., p. 185).

These shared ways of experiencing and describing sounds are part of a larger picture. A sound may be literally 'loud' but it is thought to be 'bright' or 'warm' or 'heavy' in a figurative sense. Similarly, a colour may be literally 'bright' but figuratively 'warm' or 'loud' or 'heavy'. We experience and describe sensations from any one of the five senses in ways which derive from many or all of the senses. We seem to do this because we experience some affinity or similarity between sensations from different sense organs - affinities which we may find difficult to describe in language. Synaesthetics are people who experience more of these affinities than the rest of us do.

The most plausible explanation of the existence of these common patterns of inter-sensory experience and description seems to be that human beings share a common, similarly structured set of sensory systems. A number of

philosophers and psychologists have pointed out that sensations from each of the five sensory systems are capable of degrees. In the 'Anticipations' section of the Critique of Pure Reason Kant argued that

In all appearances, the real that is the object of sensation has intensive magnitude, that is, a degree.³

Sensations are capable of degrees in a spectrum between opposing poles (e.g. bright - dark, loud - soft, sweet - bitter, rough - smooth, hard - soft, etc.). Going beyond what Kant said, we can add that experiences in any one sensory modality (e.g. the aural) are amenable to description with reference to a number of these poles of opposition. If we compare any two senses we find some overlap in the list of oppositions applicable to each sense. Sounds and colours can both be described in terms of the bright - dark and warm - cold oppositions. The fair measure of agreement among people about how particular sounds and colours are to be described has led a number of scholars to construct a whole system of correspondences between aural, visual and even tactile and olfactory sensations.⁴

Since language is the medium of literary representation, it is a significant fact that most human beings find certain sounds expressive of a certain range of qualities. We may not be consciously aware of these

patterns of association, but the sound-stratum of a literary work, and especially of a poem, works powerfully on the imagination whether or not we are conscious of the way it does this. The poet is intuitively aware of the associative and expressive potentialities of letter sounds, and he may use these potentialities to create a literary representation which has iconic aspects even though it is based primarily on conventional signification. Consider for example the way Pope creates an iconic dimension in his representation of the sylphs in The Rape of the Lock.⁵ The sylphs who guard Belinda are warned that if any one of them neglects his duties, someone will

Shrink his thin Essence like a rivell'd flower.

Or as Ixion fix'd, the Wretch shall feel

The giddy Motion of the whirling Mill

(Canto II, l.132-4)

The repetition of the letter 'i' visually (through the thinness of its shape) and aurally (through its 'thin' sound and its short duration in most of these instances) enacts the semantic meaning, for the sylphs are thin and light, and the punishment involves the shrinking of these already thin creatures. Indeed the previous twenty lines contain many significant instances of the letter 'i' (e.g. three sylphs are mentioned - Brillante, Momentilla and Crispissa; other punishments include being put in 'Vials',

'Pins' and 'Bodkins' (needles), all of which are long, thin objects). The context (i.e. the meaning) makes the similarity between 'i' and thin objects relevant. The impression of thinness is conveyed aurally and visually as well as semantically. It is possible also that the image of a thin being fixed to a revolving wheel is subliminally enriched by the 'i's, 'o's and 'x's (the 'i's conveying the thinness of the sylphs, the 'o's the roundness of the wheel, and the 'x's the transfixed Ixion-like posture, with arms and legs spread). In these examples Pope uses some of the aural and visual iconic and expressive possibilities of the letter i, in co-operation with representation by conventional signs, and thereby succeeds in presenting situations with immediacy, concreteness and vivacity. The iconic aspects of the representation contribute to the realization of these aesthetic qualities.

We are not here saying that the letter i, in isolation, is an iconic aural or visual representation of thin, bright, sharp, quick, light or cold objects. We have said that its sound has certain associations for us, but this associative link is not sufficiently strong or public to be called a representational link. The words 'a cat' represent a cat, and a drawing of a cat represents a cat. If the words 'a cat' are combined with other words in a poem they continue to represent a cat. If the drawing of a

cat is part of a canvas containing depictions of many creatures it is still a representation of a cat. By contrast, however, when letters are combined with many other letters to form a whole discourse, the associations which each letter has in isolation may not be carried over into the discourse. Sounds heard singly may have associations which they do not have - or do not have as strongly - when they are experienced as parts of words and sentences. In everyday speech and in much writing we are not very interested in, and are hardly at all affected by, the sounds of letters. What is important here is the meaning. In practical contexts we would find it very distracting if letter sounds affected us as much as they do when heard singly in acoustic experiments. But even in poetry, where writers and readers are more interested in sensory effects, letters may lose the associations they have in isolation. The associations of *i* would be incongruous in a poem containing the word 'big', and we simply do not experience the 'i' in 'big' as having these associations in the poem. By contrast, in the Pope example we see the poet using the potential associations of the letter in a semantic context which focuses our attention on thin, light, quick objects. In this context, Pope's repetition of the letter make the sound (and shape) relevant to the meaning, thus activating the potential

expressiveness of the letter. We experience the word meanings and what one might call the sensory meaning together, in one 'gestalt'. The poet uses sound (and shape) to echo and enrich the sense.

We have been examining sound associations, the first of four areas relevant to the study of iconic effects in literature. We shall now examine a second area: onomatopoeic sounds, words and phrases. 'Cuckoo', 'woof woof', 'miaou', 'moo' and other words are said to be like the sounds made by cuckoos, dogs, cats, and cows respectively. Words like 'hiss', 'buzz', 'slap', 'fizz', 'splash', 'clap', 'ring', 'ding', and 'effervescence' are said to be aurally similar to the phenomena they represent. Of course, these words denote what they do because of a conventional rule. But at the same time they seem to imitate the sounds they designate. This 'iconic' aspect of the words gives them an expressive, vital quality in everyday speech and especially in poetry (as we shall see).

Though it seems self-evident that onomatopoeic words sound like their referents, some have disputed this claim. Three arguments might be offered by such critics. In the first place it might be said that these words seem onomatopoeic only if we pronounce them at the speed, volume and pitch of the represented sound. Thus 'moo' will be said slowly in a very low register, 'cuckoo' briskly in a

high register with the first syllable said or sung at a slightly higher note than the second. Or the 'zzz' sound in 'buzz' may be prolonged to give the impression of a continuous buzzing.

This argument shows that we can bring about additional iconic effects by an exaggerated mimicing of what is represented. But it does not show that there is no relevant similarity between onomatopoeic words spoken normally and the things they designate. A phonetic similarity can exist without additional similarities in pitch, volume and speed. A 'zzz' sound is a plausible phonetic representation of the buzzing noise made by some insects, and it is reproduced in 'buzz'. And 'sss' resembles a hissing sound and is reproduced in 'hiss'. 'Ooo' does not sound similar to the sound of a clap or a splash whereas 'p' does. That there is an independent phonetic similarity can also be seen if we try to substitute 'birdbag' for 'cuckoo', 'talk talk' instead of 'woof woof' or 'ruff ruff', 'piper' instead of 'miaou' or 'zen' instead of 'moo'. Even if these replacement words (which have the same number of syllables and the same rhythm as the words they replace) are uttered in an exaggerated manner at the pitch, speed and volume appropriate to the animal in question, they do not sound phonetically correct, whereas our existing words do.

A second objection to the imitative view of onomatopoeic words is this: we think such words sound like the phenomena they represent but in other languages there are words different from ours which native speakers believe to be aurally similar to those same phenomena. From this it is inferred that no such aural resemblances can exist. This argument falsely assumes that there is only one word which can be relevantly similar to, or phonetically right as a representation of, the sound of a certain phenomenon in nature. But 'X' and 'Y' can aurally resemble D without it being the case that 'X' and 'Y' are identical. This could be because 'X' and 'Y' are different words which both contain a certain letter or syllable which resembles the sound of the phenomenon D, or it might be that 'X' and 'Y' are different words each of which, taken as a whole, is somewhat similar to the sound of D. For example, 'ruff ruff' and 'wow wow' might both be said to sound like the vocal noise (or noises: perhaps some dogs 'ruff ruff' while others 'wow wow') made by dogs. And the similarity of the 'p' in 'slap' to the sound of a slap does not preclude the possibility of other plosives (e.g. 't') being similar to this sound.

A third objection to the imitative view of onomatopoeia is that the same phoneme which seems imitative in one word may not seem imitative in other words in the

same language or in words in another language. The 'p' in 'slap' or 'clap' seems onomatopoeic but the 'p' in 'nap' or 'mishap' does not. But this argument wrongly assumes that if a sound is to be imitative in some words it must be so in all words in which it appears. There may be important differences between words in which 'p' seems imitative and those in which it does not. 'Slap' and 'clap' can both be used to denote either the action or the sound made by the action of slapping or clapping. A plosive like 'p' is a fairly accurate representation of the sound characteristically made by the actions of slapping or clapping. By contrast, 'nap' and 'mishap' do not have a characteristic sound associated with the actions they designate. A mishap can occur with little or no sound or with any one of a heterogeneous multitude of possible sounds. Some people nap quietly, others breathe volubly, while others emit a deafening snore. But the word 'nap' does not sound like any of these noises. Because of this, 'nap' is not an onomatopoeic word. Thus it would seem that two interconnected factors are present in onomatopoeic words containing a certain phoneme, but absent in non-onomatopoeic words containing the same phoneme. In the first place, onomatopoeic words designate phenomena which have a characteristic sound (or family of sounds) associated with them. In the second place, the

onomatopoeic word sounds like the noise (or one of the family of noises) made by the represented phenomenon.

A third iconic aspect of literary representation involves the imitative use of rhythm, especially in poetry. Rhythm, of course, is not unique to poetry or to the arts. There are the rhythms of nature (night and day, the seasons), the rhythms of work (daily, weekly and annual patterns). There are the rhythms of one's heartbeat, one's breathing and one's characteristic way of walking. The term 'rhythm' has been applied to all of the arts, though there seems to be a fundamental difference between rhythm in the temporal arts and rhythm in the spatial arts. In the temporal arts such as music and literature, the rhythm and our apprehension of it are imposed by the temporal structure of the work. In the visual arts of painting and sculpture this is not the case.

I use the term 'rhythm' to include both regular and free rhythm.⁶ In the purest form of regular rhythm, a pattern of movement is repeated exactly, with no deviations, from day to day, year to year, stanza to stanza, or verse to verse. Where a pattern is repeated with some variations we may call it regular, though not purely or strictly regular. In free rhythm the sequence of movement is not governed by a regular pattern. Free rhythm is found in everyday speech, prose and 'free verse'.

The rhythm of a literary work, then, may be free or more or less regular. It belongs to what Ingarden has called the "higher-order" formations of the literary work's sound stratum, and it has considerable aesthetic significance. A literary work minus its rhythm would be aesthetically impoverished. If it were possible for a person to experience a literary work without experiencing its rhythm, we should say that this person was failing to experience the aesthetic qualities peculiar to rhythm itself and also the aesthetic qualities which arise from the interaction of rhythm, meaning and the represented world of the work. As we shall see in a moment, rhythmical language may embody emotional qualities that intensify and deepen our aesthetic experience. Rhythm also contributes to formal unity. Firstly, a regular pattern of movement is one of the organizing principles which help unify a poem. Secondly, a poem, like a piece of music, has a temporal development which operates on a number of levels. The levels peculiar to poetry involve the sound stratum, the word meanings and the represented world of the work (including the development of the persona's thoughts and feelings). In many poems the ending gives us the experience of simultaneous and harmonious completion on all of these levels, and rhythm participates in this development and completion (as in Yeats's "An Irish Airman

Foresees His Death").

The rhythm of a literary work of art is not to be identified with the skeletal pattern of stresses and non-stresses (or beats and off-beats) which metrical analysis abstracts from our experience of the work's movement. For one thing, the abstracted pattern can only be an approximate representation of the work's movement considered in isolation (if that is possible) from its semantic and representational dimensions: all stressed syllables do not have exactly the same weight and duration, and this is also true of non-stressed syllables. For another thing, we experience the work of art as a felt unity, a gestalt, and we experience its rhythm as "the very movement which animates the work", as being "incorporated into and blended with the work" (these apt descriptions are Dufrenne's).⁷ Rhythm, then, is interwoven into the work and our aesthetic experience of it, and is not to be equated with an abstracted succession of stresses and non-stresses. Rather, the abstracted pattern should be regarded as a potentially useful approximate representation of the "movement which animates the work".

Bearing these general considerations about rhythm in mind, we may now examine iconic uses of rhythm and their aesthetic significance. William Carlos Williams's poem "The Dance" describes the dancers in Breughel's

picture The Kermess:

In Breughel's great picture, The Kermess, the dancers go round, they go round and around, the squeal and the blare and the tweedle of bagpipes, a bugle and fiddles tipping their bellies (round as the thick-sided glasses whose wash they impound) their hips and their bellies off balance to turn them. Kicking and rolling about the Fair Grounds, swinging their butts, those shanks must be sound to bear up under such rollicking measures, prance as they dance in Breughel's great picture, The Kermess.⁸

The sounds are described by expressive, vital words such as 'squeal', 'blare' and 'tweedle'. The crude, energetic, animalistic quality of Breughel's dancers is conveyed through words like 'bellies', 'butts', 'shanks', and 'prance', by the comparison of their bellies with beer glasses, by the image of them 'kicking and rolling', and by the image of impounding wash which depicts the human, social action of drinking beer as being a kind of primal, pre-civilized and not very pleasant process. The repetitions of 'and' and 'round' contribute to the impression of continuous activity among the dancers, and the exact repetition of the first line at the end helps unify the poem and, perhaps, has the effect of seeming to frame the pictured actions in between.

This expressive evocation of the exuberant 'rollicking' of the dancers is achieved not just by the descriptive detail and the diction, but also by the rhythm. Using the terms of metrical analysis as an approximate

guide to the poem's rhythm, we may say that Williams uses a dactylic beat (a beat followed by two off beats, usually represented as -) which starts on the first syllable of 'Breughel' after the opening off beat.

In Breughel's great picture, The Kermess, the
 dancers go round, they go round and around

The rhythmic movement is carried over from line to line to create the effect of a dance going round and around from line to line. The opening word of all the lines after the first is not capitalized so as to increase the sense of the dance continuing through from one line round into the next.

Theodore Roethke's poem "My Papa's Waltz" describes the young boy, Roethke, waltzing in the family kitchen with his very tipsy father. The father waltzes around drunkenly, crashing into things, beating time on his son's head, while his wife looks on frowning. The boy hangs on 'like death' to his father's shirt until he is waltzed off to bed.

The whiskey on your breath
 Could make a small boy dizzy;
 But I hung on like death:
 Such waltzing was not easy.

We romped until the pans
 Slid from the kitchen shelf;
 My mother's countenance
 Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
 Was battered on one knuckle;

At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.⁹

The metre is iambic trimeter (three feet, each with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable). The strong beat of these short lines imitates the rhythm of the dance. The exuberant, drunken, out of control quality of the father's dancing is imitated and expressed by a number of rhythmic features. Even though the metre is iambic, the emphasis which seems naturally to fall on 'Slid', in the sixth line, communicates a sense of continuing to swing around vigorously. In the first and third verses an extra syllable is added on to the iambic trimeters in the second and fourth lines. Compare the first verse, for instance with this modified version in which the second and fourth lines have six syllables, just as the first and third do.

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy run;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not fun.

Here the second and fourth lines end with a predictable sense of completion and controlled regularity. But this is not the case in the poem as we have it.

The whiskey on your breath
 Could make a small boy dizzy;
 But I hung on like death:
 Such waltzing was not easy.

The extra unstressed syllable in the second and fourth lines leaves us with a sense of incompleteness and irregularity, a sense of things being left up in the air, which is appropriate to and expressive of the irregularity of the dance and of the boy's feelings while dancing. The rhythm of the modified version communicates none of this.

Mimetic rhythmic effects are present throughout these poems, but in other works the effect is more local, occurring in a line or even a phrase. In D. H. Lawrence's short poem, "Brooding Grief", for instance, the rhythm literally stands still in the words 'stand still' in the third line.

A yellow leaf from the darkness
 Hops like a frog before me.
 Why should I start and stand still?
 I was watching the woman that bore me
 Stretched in the brindled darkness
 Of the sick room, rigid with will
 To die: and the quick leaf tore me
 Back to this rainy swill
 Of leaves and lamps and traffic mingled before me.¹⁰

As Derek Attridge has pointed out in his illuminating discussion of the rhythm of this poem, the first two lines establish a pattern. Each line has three stresses and each stress is "separated from its neighbour by one or two nonstresses".¹¹ We expect this pattern to be continued but the third line "ends unexpectedly with two consecutive stresses, and there is no easy way of relating these to a metrical pattern".¹² The rhythm seems to stand still "as the alternating pattern is momentarily suspended, before beginning again with even greater regularity in the following line".¹³ By imitating what is described, the rhythm makes the representation more concrete, intense and emotional, and thereby contributes to the aesthetic richness of the poem.

Finally, the following lines from Pope's Essay on Criticism are famous:

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense...
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
 The line too labours, and the words move slow;
 Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the
 main.¹⁴

Pope's imitative effects have the value of providing witty and engaging illustrations of sound echoing sense, whereas

Lawrence's imitative effects contribute to emotional depth and power in "Brooding Grief". The aesthetic contribution of iconic rhythmic effects is not always the same; different aesthetic qualities may be realized in different imitative passages.

We shall now turn to (iv), visual iconic effects in literature. We may experience a literary work by listening to a recitation of it, by reading it, by seeing a dramatic performance of it, or by reciting it to ourselves 'in our minds'. The visual appearance of the written or printed work is often not important. Publishers should reproduce the paragraphing and chapter divisions of the official text (as well, of course, as its spelling, punctuation, etc.), but, apart from this, most novels, for example, can be, and are, printed in different ways. But there are many works where there is a prescribed visual layout. Poetry is printed in lines and something of considerable importance in the organization of our aesthetic experience of poetry would be lost if all poems were printed as novels are. Our perception of rhythm and meaning is organized, in part, by the line and verse division created and prescribed by the poet. In reading a novelistic printing of such a poem we will probably not be able to actualize the aesthetic object correctly. Printed as prose, the poem's structure of sound and meaning is less determinate and may invite a greater

and more heterogeneous variety of aesthetic actualizations than the poet intends.

Among works whose visual layout is important there are some in which the layout is important because it pictorially represents phenomena linguistically represented by the words of the work. 'Picture poems' have been written by many poets, including the Ancient Greek poet Simmias, Rabelais (his "Dive Bouteille"), George Herbert (his poem "Easter Wings") and Mallarme (e.g. his "Un coup de des jamais n'abolira le hasard").

Concrete poetry¹⁵ has moved even further towards the pictorial. Ian Hamilton Finlay's visual pun, "Au Pair Girl", is in the shape of a pear. His work "Acrobats" is an imitation or representation of acrobatic movement. Our mode of reading or scanning this poem is structured by the word 'acrobats'. We are free to start with any of the 'a's at the top or the bottom and then proceed towards the centre. As our eyes play over the page and we read 'acrobats' now this way, now that, we experience visually the twists, turns and gyrations of an acrobat. The linguistic meaning is thus enacted visually. This is true of many other concrete poems. In Emmett William's "Like Attracts Like", the words on each side of the word 'attracts' are indeed alike. As we read down the page we see these two words attracting each other and coalescing,

uniting (See Appendix).

The artistic possibilities of picture-poems may be limited. What is significant here is the fact that picture-poems furnish yet another kind of iconic representation in literature.

Apollinaire's picture-poems or 'calligrammes' (as he called them) in his Calligrammes¹⁶ (1918) are well-known twentieth century examples of this genre. "It's Raining" is a five line poem in which each line is printed vertically (see Appendix) so that we read downwards rather than across from left to right. The lines thus pictorially represent the falling rain which is linguistically represented by the words in the poem, including the title. Of course, we might not see the lines as falling rain were it not for the poem's title and theme. The lines are visually similar to falling rain but we only notice this similarity (and hence see the lines as falling rain) in virtue of linguistic meaning. Two other 'calligrammes' are printed below: "Calligramme (15 May 1915)", in which a star and a piece of artillery are pictorially represented, and "Heart, Crown and Mirror" in which the three objects named in the title are pictured.

CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE, REALITY AND TRUTH

Introduction

Is literature ever about the real world? Does literature ever contain truth to or about the real world? We shall argue that the answer to both of these questions is 'yes'. But before we arrive at this conclusion many other questions must be considered. To begin with, two questions about truth arise. Firstly, what is meant by 'truth' and what bearing do the classical philosophical theories about the meaning of 'truth' have on our problems? Secondly, what as a matter of fact is true? If we do not know the whole truth about the world and if people disagree about what is true, does it make sense to discuss the question of truth in literature at all? These two questions about truth will be examined in Section 1.

Though the primary meaning of 'truth' is thought to involve the notion of correspondence with reality, it is a noteworthy fact that some aestheticians, literary theorists and writers have used the term 'truth' in a quite different sense in connection with literature and the arts. Some have used it to mean 'convincing', others have used it to

mean 'coherent', and others have used it as a synonym for 'sincerity'. We shall be using the term 'truth' in its ordinary sense and not in any of these other senses. But this requires some justification and this is provided in Section II.

Having discussed these general issues in Sections I and II we proceed, in Section III, to an examination of the question of whether literary sentences are ever about reality, and, if so, if they are ever true of reality. Even here, however, other questions have to be discussed. How is language used in literature? Are literary sentences ever used to make assertions about reality? Is it compatible with the aesthetic attitude to take a literary sentence as being true of reality?

The complexity of these related issues makes our task difficult. But what makes it even more difficult is the considerable confusion which arises if one does not keep in mind the distinction between literature and fiction. As we shall see, some theorists are considering literature, others fiction and others are unclear about what they are considering. Further, as we shall also see, some commentators categorize classic articles in this area in a confusing and erroneous manner, and this mistake is a result of the failure to be completely clear about what is meant by 'literature' and 'literary sentence'.

Because of these dangers we shall, in Section III, distinguish between 'literary fiction' and 'literature', between 'literary fictional sentences' and 'literary sentences', (the former being a sub-class of the latter). Literary fictional sentences will be examined first and two theories about them considered, the 'falsity theory' and the 'no truth value' theory. It will be argued that the no truth value theory provides a better account of literary fictional sentences, their use, their nature and the way they are read and experienced in their context in the literary work.

When we examine literary sentences, however, it will be argued that the no truth value theory is not adequate (the falsity theory, it will be shown, is obviously inadequate). A variety of arguments in favour of the no truth value theory of literary sentences will be expounded and criticized. Our conclusion will be that literature includes fictional sentences which are neither true nor false, and non-fictional indicative sentences which can be true or false of reality.

In Section IV other ways in which literature can be about reality will be considered through a discussion of theme, symbol and allegory. The concept of truth to reality will be elucidated in Section V.

Section I Two Questions About Truth

To tackle the difficult philosophical question of the nature of truth would require another work. However, something should be said about the relation between the problem of truth in general and the problems concerning truth in aesthetics. In the first place, I believe that some kind of correspondence theory would provide a better theory of the truth of synthetic propositions than either coherence theories or pragmatist theories. (Since literary authors rarely if ever assert analytic propositions, it is with synthetic propositions that I shall be concerned).

In the second place, the aesthetic doctrines advanced in this work do not seem logically incompatible with the correspondence, coherence or pragmatist theories of truth. To establish this conclusively one would have to examine the different versions of each theory in great detail. Here we can only attempt to make this claim plausible. To begin with, none of these theories of truth seems to entail any particular view about, say, the use of language in literature (e.g. whether literature is ever used to make assertions, and, in consequence, whether any of the sentences in literature can be true or false). Nor do any of these theories entail any specific answer to the question of whether truth is aesthetically relevant. The position one takes on these aesthetic issues must come from

a careful study of the nature of literature itself and our experience of it.

Further, there would not seem to be any fundamental difficulty in combining one's aesthetic theory -- reached after an examination of literature -- with any one of these theories of truth. Let us take a cluster of views which we shall be criticizing: literature does not make assertions and hence cannot contain true or false statements; the aesthetic merit of a literary work does not in any way depend on its being representationally accurate (i.e. containing true statements or being true-to-reality). The correspondence, coherence and pragmatic theorists can now say "literature does not contain truth and truth is not relevant to its aesthetic evaluation". Each theorist can then substitute a formulation of his or her theory for the word 'truth'.

If, on the other hand, one favours the views advanced in this work, each theorist of truth will have to give a more precise formulation of these views, replacing the word 'truth' with a longer formula. The language in which my aesthetic views are expressed favours the correspondence theory, but this is at least partly due to the fact that ordinary language and common sense themselves favour the correspondence theory. The pragmatist and coherence theorists should be able to translate this

language into the language of their respective theories.

But it might be objected that the coherence theory applies in a particular way to literature, and, therefore, that aesthetic problems concerning truth are not in fact compatible with any theory of truth in general. There is a view in aesthetics, which we shall examine in a moment, which says that a literary work is 'true' if its represented world is made up of 'compossible' states of affairs (i.e. states of affairs which are logically compatible with each other). A work containing no logical contradictions is said to be 'true' in this sense. It might be argued that different theories of truth give rise to different concepts of truth in literature, and, therefore, that aesthetic theories concerning truth in literature are not logically independent of theories of truth per se.

This objection is in my view mistaken. The coherence theory of synthetic propositions about the world (the physical world, human nature, society, history, and so on) envisages one comprehensive system of logically consistent synthetic propositions. Within this coherent system it cannot be the case that, for example, God exists and does not exist, that human happiness can be attained and that it cannot be attained, that man is inherently as Hobbes describes him and as Rousseau describes him, and so

on. The coherence theorist will not want to allow for a multiplicity of separate internally consistent systems of synthetic propositions (atheism and theism, Hobbes's theory of human nature and Rousseau's theory), each of which is 'true'. Two theories which contradict each other cannot both be 'true' on the coherence theory.

The aesthetic doctrine of coherent represented worlds in literature, however, leads to this conclusion which coherence theorists of truth will not accept. On the aesthetic doctrine, a multiplicity of internally consistent literary worlds will each be 'true' even though they contradict each other (e.g. the determinism of Hardy or some Naturalist novelists and Milton's or Sartre's view of man as free; Sartre's atheism and the theism of Milton). The coherence theorist of truth would reject this conclusion. For such a theorist a novel will contain true statements about the world if the novel's viewpoint coheres with the unified system of knowledge established (or partly established) outside the novel by the scholarly and scientific community. Of course the novel might contain evidence which might lead to a revision of the existing system of knowledge, but it will still have to be fitted into a system external to it.

Where the world of the work is purely fictional it will be called 'true' on the aesthetic doctrine provided it

contains no contradictions. But the coherence theorist of truth will not regard it as historically true, for it will not fit into the consistent system of historical statements established by historians. If the coherence theorist regards it as being empirically true it would be because the fiction illustrated or illuminated, say, general features of human psychology, and seemed to suggest statements about the real world which cohered with the unified existing system of knowledge. The coherence theorist, like the correspondence theorist, will have to relate the work to something external to it.

We have been examining the relevance which theories about the nature of truth may have for discussions about truth in literature. But there is another question which must also be raised: what, as a matter of fact, is true? Which statements are true of the universe and which are not? Scientists do not all agree on one all-embracing physical theory. There are many conflicting theories of human nature, society and history. Different theories of reality abound in religious, philosophical and scientific thought. Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism, Freudianism, Marxism, Darwinism, Relativity Theory, Quantum Mechanics, Materialism, Structuralism -- each of these diverse systems of thought claims to be true. But clearly all of them cannot be true and none of them seems

comprehensive enough to embody 'the whole truth'.

If we do not know 'the whole truth' about everything or even about one area of reality (e.g. human nature), how can we decide whether the viewpoint in a particular literary work is true? Different types of Christian belief are expressed in some of the works of Dante, Milton, Bunyan and Graham Greene. A pessimistic determinism informs some of the works of Hardy. Much of Sartre's fiction has an existentialist outlook and in the novels of D. H. Lawrence we find many ideas about the nature of modern civilization and about relations between the sexes. But how are we to decide which of these viewpoints is true?

There is a difficulty here, but is not peculiar to those who write on the question of truth in literature. In general, one has to admit that we do not know the whole truth; that what 'knowledge' we have is finite and subject to revision; that some questions seem unamenable to empirical resolution (e.g. metaphysical questions).

Because of this difficulty -- and we shall see this especially in Part II -- the set of problems we are examining cannot always be discussed using only the concept of truth. In the first place, truth is not the only determinant of cognitive value: originality, coherence, comprehensiveness, explanatory power, depth and other

concepts are also relevant. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five. Secondly, people's beliefs about metaphysical, moral, social and political questions vary. As we noted at the beginning of this work, many modern theorists reformulate the question of the aesthetic relevance of truth in terms of the concept of belief. Hence we shall find it necessary to use the concept of belief as well as the concept of truth.

Section II Some Sense of 'Truth' Used in Aesthetics

The words 'true' and 'truth' have been used in many ways in connection with the arts. There are, one might say, different concepts of truth which are applied to art. The concept of truth examined in this work involves the relation between the literary work and reality.

Our treatment of the topic will be divided into two parts. First, in Section III, we shall ask whether literature ever contains true statements about reality. This might be reformulated as the question of whether literature contains sentences which are, in virtue of conventional signification rules, representations of real states of affairs, and, moreover, accurate representations of what they are about.

Second, even if a literary work contains no statements about reality it may nonetheless be about, and may also be true to, the real world. Section IV looks at the way in which a work may be about the real world in virtue of its theme or themes. Section V examines the concept of truth to reality.

Before we do this, however, we shall briefly examine three other concepts of truth which have been applied to literature. (1) We have already mentioned the doctrine of literary 'worlds' containing compossible elements. We may call this the ontological coherence of

the world of the work. (2) A work may be said to be 'true' in the sense that it is convincing or seems real to us so that we become highly involved in the plot. (3) A work may be said to be 'true' because it is a sincere or truthful expression of the author's feelings, attitudes, thoughts or way of seeing the world.

(1) Coherence

Part of the motivation for the doctrine of the ontological coherence of literary worlds is to be found in the attempt to think of the poet as creating a fictional world rather as God is said to have created the real world or 'nature'. The poet does not imitate 'nature'; rather, he creates another world, a 'second nature'. In The Mirror and the Lamp¹ M. H. Abrams has shown how two 18th century Swiss writers, J. Bodmer and J. Breitinger, took the analogy between poetic and divine creation seriously, and examined poetic creation using Leibniz's account of how God created the world. Each of the possible worlds which God could have created is composed of 'compossibles' or logically compatible elements. The poet, it is argued, creates an independent and self-contained imaginary world, and is under no obligation to model this on the real world. The poet's self-contained world is governed by its own inner laws. Questions of correspondence with reality are

said to be irrelevant. The poet must, however, ensure that his poetic creation is internally consistent. Brei­tinger dubbed this coherence 'imaginative truth', and Bodmer called it 'poetic truth'. Both contrast it with 'rational' or 'scientific' truth.

Similar ideas are found in Goethe,² Baumgarten,³ S. H. Butcher,⁴ E. M. Forster,⁵ and A. C. Bradley.⁶ The ideas that the 'world' of the work is imaginary and self-contained is a commonplace in modern criticism and aesthetics. The suggestion that this world must be internally consistent has also been accepted by many. The claim that this coherence may justifiably be called 'truth' or 'poetic truth' is not as widely accepted. Thus Ingarden⁷ uses the notion of an imaginary world which ought to be internally consistent but rejects the concept of 'poetic truth' as an unwarranted use of the term 'truth'.

The ontological coherence of literary 'worlds' clearly has some aesthetic relevance. Homer created a 'world' in which gods are involved in the public and private lives of the human characters. Richard Adams in Watership Down created a 'world' in which rabbits talk, act and think like humans while also living, in other respects, as actual rabbits do. Science fiction writers create 'worlds' very different from the real world. A realist novelist, the coherence view will say, may create imaginary

characters and place them in a world governed by the laws of nature we have in the real world. As a rough and ready maxim for writers, the injunction to imagine a coherent world is probably good advice. Think out the general features of your 'imaginary' world and stick to them, because violating them may destroy the illusion of realness and disrupt our involvement in the events of the story, thereby making it unconvincing. Giving contradictory descriptions of a character on one and the same page by mistake can impair our imaginative involvement in the plot.

Ontological coherence has aesthetic relevance, then, but we should also note the ways in which it is less important than some might think. In the first place, it is not a sufficient condition of aesthetic merit. An untalented novelist may present a consistent world but the novel's style may be undistinguished, the characters may not 'come to life' or engage our interest, the plot may be badly structured and the work's viewpoint silly or trite. Thoroughly bad literary works may depict consistent worlds.

Ontological coherence, in fact, is not even a strictly necessary condition of aesthetic value (though it has relevance for aesthetic value). There are sometimes good aesthetic reasons for inconsistency. Alice in Wonderland makes a virtue of contradictions and some of

Escher's drawings depict states of affairs which are impossible in space as we know it. A meta-fictional work may deliberately flout coherence to reveal something about our expectations of fiction. And even in works closer to realism, some inconsistencies may not adversely affect our aesthetic enjoyment. There are indications in Macbeth that Lady Macbeth has children and also that she does not have children. This minor inconsistency, though, does not mar our appreciation of the play. In Othello, as A. C. Bradley⁸ and others have noted, there are inconsistencies in references to the length of time which the main characters have spent on Cyprus. The references to a day or two are linked to the action we see depicted. The implicit references to a much longer time span are connected with Cassio's alleged affair with Desdemona. These discrepancies do not inhibit our appreciation of the play and in fact perform valuable dramatic functions. The short time span intensifies the development of the plot, while the references to a longer time span are necessary for the plausibility of the scenes in which Iago tells Othello that Cassio has committed adultery with Desdemona on a number of occasions. If Othello and Desdemona had been on the island for only one day (the short time span version) there would not have been time for Cassio and Desdemona to become acquainted and have an affair, since

Desdemona is with Othello throughout the evening. Without the longer time span it would be absurd to show Othello believing Iago's story, and this seems to be the aesthetic rationale for the inconsistencies, whether Shakespeare was aware of them or not.

(2) Convincing

S. H. Butcher says of the 'poet' (i.e. literary author) that he

feigns certain imaginary persons, strange situations, incredible adventures. By vividness of narrative and minuteness of detail, and, above all, by the natural sequence of incident and motive, things are made to happen exactly as they would have happened had the fundamental fiction been fact. The effects are so plausible, so life-like, that we yield ourselves instinctively to the illusion...⁹

Ingarden says of the world of the literary work that it should have

the mark of a particular, independent, authentic reality, even though nothing of the sort ever existed outside the work.¹⁰

These quotations flesh out our intuitive sense of what is meant by saying that the depicted actions and events in a literary work are 'convincing'. The events in the world of the work are presented in such a way that they 'seem real', so that we "yield ourselves instinctively to the illusion...".

Used in this way, the term 'convincing' is clearly an evaluative aesthetic notion. It would surely be contradictory to say that novel was highly convincing (in this sense) and totally lacking in aesthetic value. If a work is convincing, an important aesthetic value quality has been realized in it. In many or most literary works this is desirable, but in some this aesthetic value quality may interfere with others. If an author wants part of a work to be unconvincing for metafictional, deconstructive or other reasons, he will make a mistake if he makes that section of the work convincing. He will have realized an aesthetic value quality which goes against or does not fit in with the overall conception underlying the work. Thematic incoherence may result, and this may sometimes also involve logical incoherence (e.g. if a metafictional author states or implies the view that 'convincing' fiction is no longer possible, after having already created a convincing depiction of events earlier in the work).

Some other connections between the different senses of truth may be noted here. We have already seen that ontological incoherence can often (though not always) make part or all of a work unconvincing. We shall see in Chapter Seven that a failure to be true to life (e.g. certain types of 'unrealistic' depictions) can make part or all of a work unconvincing. And in Chapter Six we shall

see how an obviously false or silly authorial viewpoint may disrupt our involvement in the depicted happenings thereby making them unconvincing.

(3) Sincerity

It has been said that sincerity is an important criterion of aesthetic value. Some use the term 'truth' (i.e. being true to one's feelings) as a synonym for sincerity in literature. The artist, it is said, should aim at truth to his own feelings (or, more broadly, at truth to his own feelings, perceptions, thoughts or attitudes to life).

Sincerity in this straightforward sense is obviously no guarantee of aesthetic quality. A person may aim at a truthful expression of his feelings, thoughts and attitudes but produce a very poor poem, play or novel. This may be due to a lack of technical ability in (e.g.) writing metrical, rhyming verse, or in constructing and developing a plot, or in creating convincing characters, and so on, or it may be due to a lack of clarity about one's emotions and about what one's view of life is, or to a lack of intelligence or empathy or sensitivity.

But given technical ability, intelligence, sensibility, and individuality of thought and feeling, sincerity can guide the artist towards better work.

Lawrence, Kafka or Beckett might not have become the artists they became had they not tried to express sincerely their sense of life. The power or uniqueness or clarity of a lyric poem derives in no small measure from the feelings and thoughts which impel the poet to create, and which provide the poet with something to say. Sincerity can direct the potential inner source of art into finished works of art.

We shall be using the term 'truth' to mean truth to or about reality. We shall not be using it to mean 'coherent' or 'convincing' or 'sincere'. These uses of the term have been criticized by (e.g.) John Hospers¹¹ and Roman Ingarden.¹² Great confusion can result if 'truth' is taken to mean 'ontologically coherent world of a work', for it will then follow that a coherent atheist work and a coherent theist work are both 'true'. Nothing is gained, and clarity is lost, by using 'truth' in this sense. Or, rather, something is gained but it is an illegitimate gain, the appropriation of the positive connotations of 'truth' as used in its primary or normal sense (i.e. correspondence with reality). It would be better to use the term 'ontologically coherent' to avoid confusion. Similarly, though one can understand how someone might exclaim "It is so true" as a way of praising a work because it is very convincing or 'seems real', the terms 'convincing' and

'seems real' are sufficient to explain clearly what is meant. Adding the term 'truth' creates confusion. Finally, the locutions "true to one's feelings" or "truth to one's feelings" are natural in ordinary English, and their meaning is clear. But to use the notion of 'truth' simpliciter in this sense serves only to muddy the distinction between sincerity and correspondence with reality.

This is not to deny the importance of coherence, being convincing, and sincerity in literature. Rather, it is to say that these topics are most clearly studied if the term 'truth' simpliciter is not used as a misleading synonym. Further, even if these topics were best discussed using the notion of truth, this would not entail that the question of whether literature contains truth (to or about reality) was not an important problem in aesthetics. This problem must be examined irrespective of whether one does or does not also use 'truth' in other senses. We now turn to the first part of the problem, namely, whether literature contains true statements about reality.

Section III Literary Sentences

Most if not all literary works involve linguistic representation in the internal or depictive sense of 'representation'. As an example consider the following

sentence from Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment: "Raskolnikov unbolted the door and opened it a little".¹³ This sentence depicts a state of affairs in which Raskolnikov unbolts a certain door and opens it a little. Though it represents in this internal sense, it does not also represent in the external sense, for Raskolnikov is an invented character, not a real person. The sentence does not refer to an entity in the real world. The question now arises: do any literary sentences represent in the external sense (i.e. refer to real entities and describe or characterize them in some way)? And secondly, if such sentences exist, do any of them accurately represent what they refer to (i.e. are they true)?

In discussing the question of whether literary sentences ever refer to reality and are true of reality, it is important to be clear about the distinction between three classes of sentences: (a) sentences in literature, (b) fictional sentences in literature, and (c) fictional sentences whether they occur in literature, in nonliterary discourses or in everyday conversation (e.g. indicative sentences about unicorns). (By 'fictional sentences' I mean sentences about nonexistent persons, objects, places or events). Enquiry concerning the third class of sentences is often called the theory of sentences about nonexistent objects, and is undertaken in such writings as

Gilbert Ryle's "Imaginary Objects".¹⁴ Our interest is in (a) and (b), which we may call for short, 'literary sentences' and 'literary fictional sentences'. The latter are a sub-class of the former.

Not all literature is fiction. Literature includes prose essays (e.g. those of Lamb and Hazlitt), poetic essays (e.g. Pope's Essay on Criticism and Essay on Man, Dr. Johnson's The Vanity of Human Wishes). Some novels may seem to combine history and fiction (e.g. Tolstoy's War and Peace, many of Solzhenitsyn's novels). Many fictional prose narratives contain passages of discursive commentary on human nature or on the society in which the story is set. Poetic narratives in the romance and epic genres contain passages of discursive moral or theological statement (e.g. Spenser's The Faerie Queene and Milton's Paradise Lost). And it would be misleading to characterize as 'fiction' such short poems as Keats's "Ode to Autumn" or "Ode to Melancholy", or Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode". Further, some short poems are elegies to real people (e.g. W. H. Auden's "In Memory of Sigmund Freud" and "In Memory of W. B. Yeats").

'Literature', then, includes many works which are nonfictional in part or as a whole. Prima facie, it would be a mistake to analyze nonfictional literary sentences as being sentences about nonexistent entities. But it does

not follow automatically from this that such sentences are to be construed as assertions referring to real entities. Arguments against this conclusion have been offered by theorists aware of the difference between straightforwardly fictional literary sentences and literary sentences which seem to be about real phenomena. These arguments will be considered when we examine the nature of literary sentences. First, however, we shall look at fictional literary sentences, about which there are two groups of theories, falsity theories and 'no truth value' theories.

Falsity Theories of Literary Fictional Sentences

There are two types of falsity theory. The first says that writers of fiction are liars who utter falsehoods. The second says that literary fictional sentences are false but does not say their authors lie.

Proponents of the 'liar' version of the falsity theory will point out that the writer of fiction, like the liar, often tells stories about people who never existed and events which never really happened. To both the author of fiction and the liar the following might be said:

"There is no such person".

"You made that up".

"That never really happened".

In his Anatomy of Criticism Northrop Frye says:

The apparently unique privilege of ignoring facts has given the poet his traditional reputation as a licensed liar, and explains why so many words denoting literary structure, "fable", "fiction", "myth" and the like, have a secondary sense of untruth, like the Norwegian word digter which is said to mean liar as well as poet.¹⁵

The picture of the writer of fiction as a liar has, from a certain restricted viewpoint, some plausibility. The fictional narrator recounts events which never happened and in this sense is not telling the truth. There is also a sense in which the reader of fiction, like the credulous person hearing lies, accepts what is said and takes it seriously, getting fully involved in what is happening to the characters. As many have noted, the events of Crime and Punishment or Tess of the D'Urbervilles can seem more 'real' and important, at the time of reading, than the realities of our own lives. The 'suspension of disbelief' involved in experiencing fiction leaves us in a state which might be characterized as being akin, in some respects, to belief.

The initial plausibility lent to the liar theory by these affinities between storytelling and lying is quickly destroyed by reflection on their distinguishing features. Liars usually intend to deceive their listeners into thinking that their statements are true of reality. But Dostoevsky and Hardy do not intend to deceive their readers into thinking the events they narrate really happened. One

could discover that someone is lying but one could not discover that Dostoevsky was lying in the fictional sentences of Crime and Punishment (an ignorant reader might discover the work is a novel not a history, but this is a different matter). A person to whom lies have been told may justifiably feel angry or morally reprimand the liar, but it would hardly be justifiable for readers of fiction to be angry at Shakespeare, Dostoevsky or Hardy because these authors created fictional characters and plots. Finally, though the reader of fiction enters a make-believe world and may be gripped by the story as if it were true, he does not believe it to be literally or historically true.

The second version of the falsity theory does not regard the author of fiction as a liar. The literary fictional sentences he writes, however, are regarded as being false. This theory is likely to be held by philosophers influenced by Bertrand Russell's theory of descriptions and particularly by his analysis of statements in which something is said of someone or something which does not exist (some of these statements occur in literary fiction, some do not).¹⁶ The statement "The present King of France is bald" is, says Russell, to be analyzed as containing two assertions:

(a) there exists an entity, X, and

(b) certain things are true of X (i.e. it/he is the present king of France and it/he is bald). The statement will be true if both of these are true. However, since there is no existing entity of which the descriptions given in (b) are true, the statement is false. More generally, all statements (including literary 'statements') which seem to be 'about' non-existent entities will be false on this analysis.

The second version of the falsity theory is also inadequate. It considers literary fictional sentences as if they came from contexts in which indicative sentences are characteristically used to make an assertion about reality, and in which readers or listeners are usually concerned primarily with the truth value of that assertion. Examining literary fiction in terms of this model leads one to conclude that Dickens, in Pickwick Papers, is making a genuine assertion to the effect that a certain entity really exists, and he is called Mr. Pickwick, and he did such-and-such. But Dickens is not asserting that such a person really existed, nor would any intelligent reader of his novel take him to be making such an assertion. A different model of how language is being used by authors of fiction, and understood by its readers, is required. Such a model is provided by the no truth value theory of literary fictional sentences, which claims that such

sentences are not used to make a genuine assertion about reality, do not refer to a real entity, and are neither true nor false.

No Truth Value Theories of Literary Fictional Sentences

Though philosophers often talk of the no truth value theory, there are in fact at least two types of no truth value theories. The broadest form of the theory applies to all literary sentences, fictional or nonfictional. It is intended to apply to 'made up' stories such as Pickwick Papers, to narratives such as War and Peace which seem to combine fiction and history, to poems like Keats's "Ode to Autumn" which seems to be about autumn in this world and not some fictional 'autumn', and even to poems like Samuel Johnson's The Vanity of Human Wishes where many assertions about real life seem to be made. We shall discuss this broad form of the theory later in this section.

The narrow form of the theory applies to literary fictional sentences (i.e. literary sentences about non-existent objects). But a third form of the theory, intermediate between the narrow and the broad forms, is also possible. If the broad form applies to the whole class, C, and the narrow form applies to the subclass, X, one can divide the remainder (C minus X) into two parts, Y

and Z. One can then say that the no truth value theory applies to X and Y, but not Z. This gives us an intermediate form of the theory. Or rather, it gives us a number of possible intermediate forms, depending on how large one chooses to make subclass Z. This subclass could include one, a few or many of the following: literary prose essays; poetic essays; passages of theological, philosophical, or sociological commentary in narratives; historical sections of novels; poems about real phenomena (e.g. Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode"), etc. Here we shall simply examine the no truth value theory in its narrow form, that is, as a theory of literary fictional sentences.

Some post-war aestheticians who expound a no truth value theory of literary fictional sentences have been influenced by linguistic philosophy. In the first place, the view that human language is used for many purposes prompts the question "How is language used in literary fiction?" In the second place, P. F. Strawson¹⁷ has argued against Russell's theory of descriptions in a way which has important implications for theories about literary fictional sentences. Strawson suggested that, instead of regarding the kind of sentence discussed by Russell as asserting the existence of the X, we should, rather, take it to be presupposing the existence of the entity in question. If the presupposition does not in fact hold,

then the statement the sentence is used to make must be regarded as being neither true nor false. Thus, since there is no present King of France, it is neither true nor false to say that he is bald. Such statements involve what Strawson calls a 'spurious' use of language and he contrasts this with a 'genuine' use, where the X does exist, and hence makes it possible for the statement to be either true or false.

Morris Weitz, in his 1955 article "Truth in Literature", suggested that the term 'spurious' be dropped. In discussing fictional literature we should instead use the notion of the 'fictional' use of language. Where the use of language is fictional, says Weitz,

we do not fail to refer or even think we refer when we do not. We simply pretend to refer or to talk about something. We know that the things that are being talked about do not exist or that their existence or non-existence is not relevant in this context of pretending; and, consequently, we shift our orientation from belief and disbelief to make-believe, wherein the whole question of truth and falsity does not arise.¹⁸

When a novelist is using language 'fictionally', he or she is not attempting to refer to a real entity and hence cannot be said to fail to refer. Literary fictional sentences are neither true nor false.

Margaret Macdonald,¹⁹ in "The Language of Fiction", is dealing with literary fictional sentences, not the broader class of literary sentences (she says²⁰ that "no

one could correctly call, e.g. Shakespeare's Sonnets, Keats' Odes or Eliot's Four Quartets, works of fiction"). Towards the end of her article²¹ she makes some remarks about historical parts of an otherwise fictional narrative. These remarks make it unclear whether her no truth value theory is a narrow form of the theory (applicable only to literary fictional sentences) or an intermediate form of the theory (applicable also to historical parts of a predominantly fictional novel). Here we shall examine what she has to say about purely fictional sentences in literature.

Macdonald distinguishes between the use of language to assert or inform and the use of language in fiction.

...in fiction language is used to create. For it is this which chiefly differentiates it from factual statements. A storyteller performs; he does not - or not primarily - inform or misinform. To tell a story is to originate, not to report. ... When a storyteller 'pretends' he simulates factual description. He puts on an innocent air of informing. This is part of the pretense.²²

To summarize: literary fictional sentences are used to create and present imaginary states of affairs. They are not used to make assertions about reality and they are neither true nor false of reality.

We now turn to literary sentences. These include literary fictional sentences but they also include non-fictional sentences. We shall look first at the falsity theory of literary sentences, then at the no truth value

theory, and then we shall present our own view.

Falsity Theories of Literary Sentences

From what we have already said it is clear that a falsity theory of literary sentences would be inadequate. Firstly, we have already argued that literary fictional sentences are best regarded as being neither true nor false, not as being false. Since the falsity theory is not a valid theory of this large sub-class of literary sentences, it cannot be a valid theory of the whole class of literary sentences. Secondly, if we examine non-fictional literary sentences and restrict the falsity theory to this other sub-class of literary sentences, it can be shown that the theory is utterly implausible in this restricted form. Non-fictional literary sentences are about real phenomena. If they are false it is not because they fail to refer to real entities. Rather, it must be because they are not true descriptions of the real entities they refer to. Some non-fictional literary sentences may be false in this way but many of them are not.

No Truth Value Theories of Literary Sentences

In discussing no truth value theories of literary sentences it is important to keep in mind the distinction between literature and literary fiction. Failure to

observe this distinction can lead to confusion. As an example of this one might consider Marcia Eaton's article "The Truth Value of Literary Statements". She begins by saying that the problem arises in connection with sentences about non-existent objects:

In general people do not worry about sentences of type A or B. Their truth value seems straightforward. Sentences like those of type C, however, are found perplexing, for the obvious reason that the subject of these sentences does not really exist.²³ (My italics)

Later, however, she says that literature is about non-existent objects and real objects. This confusion - and apparent contradiction - is the result of a failure to distinguish between literary fictional sentences and literary sentences (which include both fictional and non-fictional sentences). This confusion is also present in her account of what other scholars have said on the topic. At one point she refers to a

group of philosophers, numbering among its ranks such persons as Strawson, Hart, Ryle, Richards and Ingarden, [who] believe... that sentences in literary works lack truth value.²⁴

This is misleading and confusing. Richards, for example, is theorizing about literature (including fictional and non-fictional sentences). Ryle and Strawson are theorizing about fictional sentences, not about all literature. Ryle and Strawson could, if they wished, say that fictional sentences are neither true nor false, while at the same

time allowing that some referential literary sentences (e.g. some historical statements in War and Peace) are true.

Having noted the dangers of confusing fiction and literature, let us now turn to an examination of theorists who have argued that the sentences in 'literature' are neither true nor false. Sometimes theorists say this of 'poetry' and it is not always clear whether this term is being used broadly as a synonym for 'literature' or more narrowly to refer to literature in verse form. But whichever sense is being used, these theorists have in mind both fictional and non-fictional poems (or else literary works in general).

Lovers of literature unfamiliar with aesthetics and literary theory are often surprised that anyone would propound a no truth value theory and even more surprised that this view should be so widespread, for it usually seems to them counter-intuitive. In discussions with such educated readers I have often been asked to explain why the no truth value is believed and maintained. Accordingly, I shall attempt to show briefly the prevalence of the view in twentieth century literary theory, and then expound arguments which can be given in support of the view.

T. S. Eliot tells us that the poet does not state his beliefs but, rather, enacts "what it feels like to hold

certain beliefs".²⁵ (However, as we shall see in Chapter Six, Eliot seems to contradict this view when he criticizes the ideas in Shelley's poetry). Positivists have drawn a sharp distinction between factual and 'emotive' language, and placed literature in the latter category as one type of non-referential, non-assertive language, incapable of being true or false. (In Language, Truth and Logic A. J. Ayer²⁶ argued that metaphysics, religion, normative ethics and aesthetic criticism could not contain true or false statements). Within a broadly positivist framework I. A. Richards²⁷ argued that indicative sentences in literature do not function "as statements claiming truth". Their real function is the manipulation and expression of feelings and attitudes. In The Well Wrought Urn²⁸, Cleanth Brooks expressed a central New Critical tenet when he said that a poem does not "eventuate in a proposition". And Northrop Frye²⁹, in The Well-Tempered Critic, says that literature "makes, as literature, no statements or assertions". Jonathan Culler³⁰, in Structuralist Poetics, argued that the conventions of 'literary competence' (the rules which govern the activity of reading something as literature) forbid us from taking literary sentences as true or false of the real world. Literature is "something other than a statement about the world".³¹

The no truth value theory of literary sentences has also been expounded by many philosophers. In "On Sense and Reference" Frege³² says that 'the poet' does not make genuine assertions, does not refer to reality and does not make true or false statements. (In a moment I shall show that Frege's argument commits him to a no truth value theory of 'literature'). In The Literary Work of Art Roman Ingarden³³ argued that literary sentences are not 'judgements' capable of truth or falsity. In "Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature" Richard Ohmann³⁴ argues that literary sentences are not used to perform the act of asserting and accordingly cannot be true or false. Barbara Herrnstein Smith in "Poetry as Fiction" says that

The statements in a poem may, of course, resemble quite closely statements that the poet might have truly and truthfully uttered as an historical creature in the historical world. Nevertheless, insofar as they are offered and recognized as statements in a poem, they are fictive. To the objection, 'But I know Wordsworth meant what he says in that poem' we must reply 'You mean he would have meant them if he had said them, but he is not saying them.'³⁵

Different types of argument can be given in support of the view that literary sentences are neither true nor false, e.g.:

1. Arguments to the effect that literary authors are not intending to make assertions capable of being true or false.
2. Arguments which distinguish between the real historical

author and the 'implied author' or 'persona' of the literary work.

3. Arguments which distinguish between the assertive use of language in discursive writing and a non-assertive use in literature.

4. Arguments distinguishing between real 'statements' and some weaker literary form of apparent statement.

5. Arguments which claim that taking literary sentences as true or false statements is incompatible with adopting an aesthetic attitude or reading literature as literature. (Some of these five categories of argument may be, and have been, combined).

Let us begin with (1), the intentions of the real historical author. It might be said that literary authors intend to use literary language for aesthetic purposes, not to make statements, and, therefore, that literature cannot contain true or false statements. This argument is highly implausible. From biographical as well as textual evidence it is clear that Dante, Milton, Pope, Tolstoy, Solzhenitsyn and countless others intended to, and understood themselves to be, using language to do many things, including making assertions about reality.

(2) Some theorists attempt to exclude the real historical author and his intentions from consideration by distinguishing between the real author and the work's

'persona' or 'implied author'. Apparent assertions about reality are then ascribed to the 'persona' or 'implied author' and treated as dramatic utterances or as being 'fictive', as Barbara Herrnstein Smith puts it in the quotation cited earlier. The distinction between real author and 'implied author' is a useful one, it has been argued, because the same real author may write a hopeful work, a pessimistic work, a tragic and serious work, and an ironic comedy. These differing attitudes may seem contradictory unless we ascribe them to the respective 'implied authors' of each work.

I would agree that the notion of an 'implied author' is useful in many contexts. However, I would not agree that we may never ascribe assertions to the real author. To begin with, the same person may in different pieces of discursive writing adopt now a serious morally concerned attitude, now a light hearted attitude, and now an embittered attitude. We would not on this account refuse to ascribe these attitudes to the same person. We may adopt a different attitude and tone depending on the topic we are writing on, the occasion on or place in which it is to be presented, and also depending on our mood and outlook at the time of writing. This is as true of literature as it is of discursive writing.

Further, our knowledge of what real authors believe is relevant to literary interpretation. If someone claimed that the 'implied author' of Paradise Lost presented an atheist perspective we should respond by pointing to parts of the text which were theistic and by appealing to the fact that we know Milton was a Christian. If it were to be suggested that the theistic passages were ironical we would again respond by close examination of the text and by referring to Milton's personal beliefs. Similarly, our biographical knowledge about Solzhenitsyn and the British Jewish writer George Steiner would be highly relevant if someone suggested that The First Circle expresses a Stalinist viewpoint or The Portage to San Cristobal of A. H. expressed a Nazi viewpoint advocating and justifying genocide. We know that these two authors did not hold these beliefs and would not write works seriously advocating such beliefs. These works did not write themselves. They are the product of intentional action written with much effort, often over a considerable period of time. Authors are intelligent people and would be most unlikely to write books seriously expressing beliefs and attitudes they do not hold at all (though insincerity is not unknown).

From the tone of Tolstoy's detailed account In War and Peace³⁶ of the Battle of Borodino we can tell that this

is Tolstoy the real person arguing and making assertions about what he thinks really happened there. We know that he did original research using contemporary documents and other sources and we also know that Russian historians regarded his account as original and important. Reading Milton's theological views in Paradise Lost it is clear that Milton the real person is presenting views about free will and sin. Reading Kenneth Rexroth's³⁷ elegy to his dead wife Andree Rexroth it is clear that the poem contains statements by the real author about himself and his wife and these are presumably true. To sever the work completely from the real author in such cases is unjustified and unnecessary. Our experience of the work, together with our biographical knowledge, make it natural and justifiable to take these and other cases as examples of the real historical author making true (or false) assertions about reality, unless some other important arguments can be found.

(3) Various arguments about the use of language in literature have been presented in favour of the no-truth-value theory. I shall briefly examine the view that literature contains representations or imitations of speech acts (e.g. asserting) rather than genuine speech acts.

We have already seen theorists of fiction claim that fiction contains 'make-believe' assertion,

'pretending' to recount what happened as if it were real. This idea has in recent years been applied to literature by theorists using the framework of J. L. Austin's speech act theory. In How To Do Things With Words Austin³⁸ argued that to say or write a word or group of words is to perform a linguistic action. A linguistic action is defined by Marcia Eaton as

a conscious action in which a person uses a linguistic object (i.e. a word or group of words) in any of various ways.³⁹

Austin argued that linguistic actions are of three types: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts. When I utter or write "a certain sentence with a certain sense and a certain reference"⁴⁰ I am performing a 'locutionary act' (i.e. the utterance of a 'locution', a sentence with a certain meaning). Secondly, in performing this locutionary act I may also be performing certain 'illocutionary acts' (i.e. asserting, commanding, questioning, replying). Thus, if I utter the locution "He did it" in a certain context I may be performing a number of illocutionary acts at the same time (e.g. asserting, blaming, betraying, replying). Austin also uses the notion of an 'illocutionary force'. In this case we could say that the utterance "He did it" has the illocutionary forces of asserting, blaming, betraying and replying. Thirdly, my utterance may produce certain consequences (e.g.

convincing, annoying, persuading, or deceiving my audience). The act of convincing or deceiving by uttering a locution is called a 'perlocutionary act'.

Richard Ohmann, in his paper "Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature", has argued that

A literary work is a discourse whose sentences lack the illocutionary forces that would normally attach to them. Its illocutionary force is mimetic. By "mimetic", I mean purportedly imitative. Specifically a literary work purportedly imitates (or reports) a series of speech acts, which in fact have no other existence.⁴¹

This theory is intended to apply, not just to literary fiction, but to literature as a whole. Since literature lacks the illocutionary force of asserting, it is argued, its indicative sentences cannot be true or false of reality.

On this view, as on the view which ascribes apparent assertions to the 'persona' or 'implied author', the apparent statements by Tolstoy, Milton and Pope are not to be interpreted as illocutionary acts of asserting made by these real historical authors. Rather, they are to be seen in dramatic terms as represented utterances of a persona or implied author who is seen as a kind of character or fictive persona standing above what is narrated or expounded. Tolstoy is not making assertions about the Battle of Borodino, nor is Milton making assertions about God, free will and sin. Both are using

language to represent a persona who is depicted as making 'assertions'.

This view is counter-intuitive and false, for the same reasons that were given in our critique of the argument which distinguishes between real and implied authors. It distorts our natural experience of these works. There is a qualitative difference between Tolstoy's representations of the thoughts of Pierre or Andrei and the passages describing the Battle of Borodino or the pages at the end outlining Tolstoy's philosophy of history. And there is a connection between the author's beliefs and the assertions about reality he seems to make in literary works. There is a connection, for example, between Solzhenitsyn's publicly known moral and political beliefs and the beliefs and attitudes expressed or embodied in his novels, between his beliefs about twentieth century Russian history and the passages of historical narration or background in his novels. In reading and interpreting his novels we know this connection exists.

(4) It might be argued that apparent statements in literature are not statements but some weaker version of statements. Different forms of this argument are possible and we shall examine two here. (a) It might be said that literature presents hypotheses rather than statements. Pope's ideas about literature and criticism in Essay on

Criticism, Dr. Johnson's ideas about human nature and happiness in The Vanity of Human Wishes, Tolstoy's ideas about history at the end of War and Peace - these it might be said, are hypotheses rather than statements of fact. This view has a number of problems. Firstly, if these ideas are called hypotheses and not statements because they are generalizations which have not been conclusively verified by their authors or have not yet been conclusively verified by anyone, then we would have to reach the same conclusions about many discursive writings which contain general theories about the physical universe, human nature, society, history or politics. We would be committed to saying that many or all of the theoretical parts of the writings of (e.g.) Hobbes, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Freud, Jung, and hundreds of others do not contain statements. But this conclusion is surely wrong. These writers are attempting to assert true statements. They may not have been able conclusively to verify their theories but this does not mean they are not making assertions. And the same is true of scientific theories which have not yet been conclusively verified.

Secondly, even if literary 'statements' are hypotheses, hypotheses are different from fictional depictions. If the discursive parts of literature are like sociological, psychological or philosophical theory, this

makes them very different from the fictional parts of literature and brings our cognitive awareness into play within an overall aesthetic interest.

Thirdly, not all 'statements' in literature are general. Factual historical narration can be found in many novels (e.g. in War and Peace there is the account of the Battle of Borodino).

Fourthly, it is possible that literary statements, whether general or particular, may have been supported by evidence sufficiently strong to verify them or at least make belief in them warranted. In Watership Down Richard Adams makes generalizations about rabbits which, he tells us, have been established by experts on rabbit life (he cites a classic text on rabbits). Historical statements already known to be true appear in many novels.

Fifth, a statement can be true though it has not yet been verified. Copernicus's belief that the earth revolves around the sun was true before he worked out the evidence and experiments which would verify his hypothesis. Hypotheses can be true though they have not yet been verified. Some literary general statements may be as yet unverified hypotheses but this does not mean they lack truth-value or that they are not statements.

(4)(b) It might be said that literature contains 'reflections' or 'suggestions' rather than statements which

the author claims are definitely true and which he is prepared to support by arguments and evidence. The degree of assertive force, it might be said, is considerably less than is the case in a scientific article or a scholarly book. Rather than say that an indicative sentence is either an assertion or not, we might recognize a spectrum within which there are degrees of assertiveness. Indicative sentences in a scholarly or scientific work are highly assertive because (a) the author is strongly committed to the belief that they are true, (b) the author has marshalled arguments and evidence for his views and is willing to discuss objections. The terms 'propositions' and 'statements', some might argue, should be reserved for such cases. Indicative referential sentences in literature are more like asides or reflections. They are not strong assertions and they are not intended to be the subject of full rational debate and analysis.

It is true that a good many authorial comments in literature are presented in this way. When Jane Austen says in the opening sentence of Pride and Prejudice that "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife", she is not using an indicative sentence in the same way as the scholar does in a scholarly work. Even with literary reflections which are not intended to be light-hearted or

humorous, the tone is often such that we find it natural to read them and feel that the author is not trying to convince us of something. We may also feel that we need not be overly concerned with the accuracy of the asides (so long as they are not both seriously meant and preposterous, blatantly false or grossly immoral). The early books of Wordsworth's The Prelude contain many ideas about the development of a child's mind, about nature, and so on, but most of these seem to be in the background, to be quietly woven into the poem's language so that they do not present themselves as full-fledged assertions for rational consideration.

This view, then, has valuable points to offer, but it is not adequate as a theory about all literary authorial indicative sentences about reality. In the first place, some literary sentences are offered as full-fledged assertions the truth of which the author wants to persuade us of. The author may also offer evidence or be willing to offer evidence. Tolstoy's account of the Battle of Borodino would be an example of assertions about history. Milton's Paradise Lost contains theological assertions with rational support. The Faerie Queene contains moral and theological assertions presented more or less strongly, as well as implied assertions conveyed allegorically. Naturalistic novels often contain historical or

sociological commentary, some of it the result of research.

Secondly, the notion of 'degrees of assertive force' is also applicable to non-literary discourse. Everyday conversation, lectures, newspaper articles and editorials, speeches, monographs and books contain indicative sentences which range from strong, rationally supported assertions, to half-serious comments, to jokes. Farewell speeches by distinguished public figures or after-dinner speeches are not 'as assertive' as a scientific publication or a scholarly research report. On this view, a great deal of non-literary discourse that we ordinarily regard as containing statements would be regarded as not being statements. The proposed criteria for 'statements' are more strict and narrow than the criteria we ordinarily use for the correct application of the term 'statement'. Indeed, on the proposed criteria it would be a contradiction to say that someone has made a statement which he does not have evidence for and which he is not willing to discuss rationally! But in ordinary language this is not a contradiction and, further, it is surely desirable that we be able to distinguish cases where a person makes a statement which he has evidence for and which he is willing to support, from cases where someone makes a statement which he does not have evidence for and is not willing to discuss and debate in a completely

rational manner. Both of these types of case occur in everyday life and it is desirable that the ordinary sense of the term 'statement' be retained to enable us to make this distinction. Our legal institutions accept this sense of 'statement' insofar as they try people for libel, slander and for publishing racist hate literature, books claiming that the Holocaust never occurred and so on. A legal defence which claimed that the persons being tried were only offering 'reflections' or 'suggestions' and not 'statements', would not be accepted as valid.

The 'reflection' view, then, is not true of all authorial 'assertions' in literature, does not demarcate literary and non-literary discourse, and is too narrow in its use of the term 'statement'. However, it does show us that many literary assertions do not have a strong assertive force, and it is correct in pointing to a general rough-and-ready difference between literature and the scientific or scholarly report. By and large, literary authorial assertions tend to have less assertive force than the scientific or scholarly report. But this does not mean that literature contains no statements or no true statements.

(5) The conclusion that literary sentences are neither true nor false has been reached via arguments about the reader's approach to literature. The most general form

of this argument begins with premises about the aesthetic attitude or aesthetic experience or aesthetic pleasure and concludes that an interest in truth is incompatible with an aesthetic interest in literature or any of the fine arts or phenomena in nature. A more specific form of the argument begins with notions specific to literature, such as 'conventions of reading literature' or 'rules of literary competence'.

In "On Sense and Reference" Frege says that

The question of truth would cause us to abandon aesthetic delight for an attitude of scientific investigation.⁴²

Though Frege is discussing literature, this point applies to our aesthetic experience of the other arts and of nature, and is therefore an example of a premise in the general form of the argument. But let us look more closely at Frege's views. In discussing reference he asks whether the sentences in literary works ever refer and he answers in the negative. His reasons for doing so are rather complex. He asserts that only sentences with a reference can be true or false. He then adds that

The fact that we can concern ourselves at all about the reference of a part of the sentence indicates that we generally recognize and expect a reference for the sentence itself. ... But now why do we want every proper name to have not only a sense, but also a reference? Why is the thought not enough for us? Because, and to the extent that, we are concerned with its truth-value.⁴³

(my italics)

But are we concerned with truth-value when reading literature? Frege thinks not:

In hearing an epic poem, for instance, apart from the euphony of the language we are interested only in the sense of the sentences and the images and feelings thereby aroused. The question of truth would cause us to abandon aesthetic delight for an attitude of scientific investigation.⁴⁴

(my italics)

From an initial interest in reference, then, Frege proceeds to reference in literature. We have an interest in or desire to find the reference of a sentence only when we have an interest in whether it is true or false. But in reading literature our interest or approach is aesthetic, not scientific, and a concern with truth-value is incompatible with the aesthetic approach. Hence, for Frege, literary sentences are not to be considered as having truth-value or reference. Presumably he would also agree that they are not really to be considered as assertions either.

If it were true that a concern with the truth value of literary sentences is always incompatible with the aesthetic attitude and aesthetic pleasure, then this would be a very strong argument for the view that sentences in literature qua literature are neither true nor false. However, I shall argue that an interest in the truth or falsity of literary sentences is not always incompatible with the aesthetic attitude.

To begin with, let us distinguish between three attitudes one might adopt towards a literary work such as Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained, Essay on Criticism, The Vanity of Human Wishes, or War and Peace. Firstly, one might adopt a pure cognitive attitude, asking only whether the represented events really happened and whether any apparent statements about reality are true, original, logically coherent, profound, well supported, and so on. In a pure cognitive attitude we should have to block out our awareness of assonance, dissonance, rhythmic qualities, rhyme, structural features of the work's sound and rhythm and plot, suspense, intensity, expressive power, style, echoes of the style and imagery and rhythmical patterns of earlier writers, and so on. I doubt that anyone could read Paradise Lost or The Vanity of Human Wishes without being aware of, and being deeply affected by, these qualities of the work. But let us leave aside the question of whether a pure cognitive attitude to these works is possible in practice. Let us simply state that, from a theoretical point of view, this is what the adoption of a pure cognitive attitude requires. If an awareness of the truth or falsity of sentences in literature is possible only in an attitude of purely cognitive awareness, then one would have to grant the validity of the no-truth-value theory.

A second attitude one might adopt might be characterized as a pure or narrowly conceived aesthetic awareness. Here one is aware of the sensory, structural and expressive properties mentioned above, but one is not aware of whether the depicted events really happened and one is not aware of whether the stated ideas are true or false, plausible or implausible, deep or shallow, original or derivative, coherent or incoherent, comprehensive or not comprehensive in relation to the subject matter they are about, capable or not capable of being supported by evidence. If the only alternative to a purely cognitive awareness is this kind of purely aesthetic awareness, then the latter is preferable as an account of how we read literature as literature.

However, there is a third attitude which might be described as an aesthetic attitude within which our cognitive and moral awareness are operative. This attitude does not require that we blank out our awareness of truth and falsity, plausibility, depth, and other cognitive features. If we approach literature with this attitude we can be aware of the truth or falsity of some literary sentences while at the same time understanding and appraising the work as literature. In the next three chapters one of the central themes will be the claim that this is the attitude we do and should take to literature.

The ways in which questions about truth, cognitive value and moral value are aesthetically relevant will be explored in detail. (The ways in which they are not relevant will also be examined).

Here we shall note the following points. In the aesthetic attitude broadly conceived (i.e. the third attitude we have just mentioned) we attend to many sensory, rhythmical, semantic, representational and thematic aspects of the work at once, relating them to each other in complex ways, unifying them into a complex and many layered aesthetic experience. At the same time we may be aware of the truth and falsity of some of the work's assertions, or, more generally, we may form some sense of the cognitive value of the work's explicitly asserted or embodied viewpoint. I would say simply that, as a matter of fact, intelligent and aesthetically sensitive human beings are capable of experiencing all of these aspects of a work in one rich experience. Being aware of truth and falsity (among many other aspects of a work) does not mean that we are not experiencing the work aesthetically. In Chapters Five and Six we shall study the question of whether and how questions about cognitive and moral value may affect our aesthetic appraisal of the literary work of art.

A second point is that we cannot have the appropriate kind of aesthetic experience of many works if

our cognitive and moral awareness is not present within an overall aesthetic attitude. The ironic character of a work may not be understood if we are not aware of the fact that the proposed ideas are so obviously false or morally outlandish that they cannot have been meant seriously. The appropriate aesthetic experience of Pope's Essay on Criticism or Dr. Johnson's The Vanity of Human Wishes is unavailable to a reader whose cognitive awareness is turned off (if that were possible). In these and many other works the ideas or viewpoint are an important dimension of the aesthetic object and often play a significant structural role in the temporal development of the work. These and other arguments will be discussed in detail in Chapters Four and Five.

Finally, it is clear that what I have been arguing here has implications for the structuralist project of characterizing the 'conventions of literary competence', the 'rules' of reading literature. If that project makes sense, it is important that it not be carried through in a narrow fashion. If conventions of literary competence are presented which parallel the narrowly conceived aesthetic attitude, then they are an inaccurate and unduly restrictive account of reading. A broader account is needed, parallel to the broader account of the aesthetic attitude as incorporating within it our cognitive and moral awareness.

Summary:

Scientific writings (eg. in chemistry) are usually composed of sentences used to refer to, and make assertions about, the real world. These sentences are usually capable of being true or false. The most commonly adopted attitude to such works is a cognitive attitude, in which we are interested in whether the assertions are true, well supported, etc.

These generalizations are clearly not true of literature. For this reason it becomes tempting to say that the negation of these generalizations will accurately describe literature: literature is non-referential, non-assertive, non-truth-functional language, towards which we adopt a narrowly conceived aesthetic attitude that prohibits us from being at all interested in or aware of the truth or falsity of any literary sentences. In this section I have examined and criticized arguments in favour of this view of literature and concluded that this view is incorrect.

Much literature is fiction. Fictional sentences do not refer to reality or express statements about reality. Consequently they are neither true nor false of reality. But not all literature is fiction. Some literary works contain referential assertions about reality, and some of these are true. Adopting an aesthetic attitude to

literature does not require us to blank out our awareness of the truth or falsity of literary sentences which are used to make assertions about real phenomena. The question of whether our awareness of truth or falsity ever affects our aesthetic evaluation of literary works will be examined in Part II.

Section IV Theme, Symbol, Allegory

Literature may represent reality by containing explicit assertions about the world. It may also represent or be about reality when the depicted events are meant to be about more than themselves. This can occur when the work's sentences are all fictional.

There are many popular novels and films of which one could say that they are about the events depicted but not about something more general. This is not the case with Antigone or Othello or Hamlet or The Misanthrope or War and Peace. These works are about the depicted events but they are also about general or universal features of life. Othello is about (eg.) jealousy, Hamlet has been said to be about many things including psychological conflict, indecision, the Oedipus complex, political corruption, etc. The Misanthrope is about (eg.) honesty and social life. War and Peace is about many things, including (according to some) human life itself in all its aspects.

These works have themes. Having a theme is an important way in which literature is about reality. By experiencing and contemplating the general property or issue which the work is about, the reader is relating the story to human life. The reader's experience of such works cannot, therefore, be described as the experience of a purely fictional world wholly unconnected to the real world.

In some but not all thematic works the theme is made present to the reader through symbolic or allegorical representation. Our involvement in the poetry and action of King Lear leads us to contemplate the existence of human suffering and possible attitudes towards it, as well as the existence of such remarkable extremes of good and evil among human beings, including human beings from one and the same family. One of the ways in which the theme of good and evil is presented is by the use of Cordelia as a character symbolizing pure unadorned goodness. Similarly, the many themes of Spenser's The Faerie Queene are presented by the continuous use of allegory.

Thematic works invite us to relate the depicted events to general features of life but they need not contain an implied thesis about those features of life. A work may open up a question without pointing us towards any definite answer or conclusion. I am here following Monroe

Beardsley who distinguishes between a theme and a thesis, a distinction also used by Seymour Chatman. A thematic work need not contain a claim, but a work with a thesis does contain a claim. Accordingly, a theme is usually (to use Beardsley's words) "something named by an abstract noun or phrase",⁴⁵ whereas a thesis will be expressed by a proposition. As Chatman puts it:

"Pride is a theme, but "Man is proud" is a thesis; "divine power" is a theme, but "Divine power exists"... is a thesis."⁴⁶

Thematic works, then, need not contain a thesis. However, some thematic works do contain a thesis. Sometimes the implied thesis is expressed with the aid of symbolic or allegorical representation, sometimes symbol and allegory are not involved.

Kafka's short story "First Sorrow"⁴⁷ is a work of fiction about a trapeze artist, his work and way of life. The words and sentences represent (in the internal sense) certain fictional people, actions and events, but they do not represent real persons or events (i.e. they do not represent in the external sense). The story begins thus:

A trapeze artist - this art, practiced high in the vaulted domes of the great variety theaters, is admittedly one of the most difficult humanity can achieve - had so arranged his life that, as long as he kept working in the same building, he never came down from his trapeze by night or day...

The theatre management sends up anything he needs and

tolerates his way of life recognizing that "only in this way could he really keep himself in constant practice and his art at the pitch of its perfection" (p. 446). When the theatre show moves from one town to another the trapeze artist finds it intolerable not being on his trapeze. However, his manager does everything possible to make the artist's travel easier by driving him at breakneck speed in racing cars in the middle of the night, though even this is "too slow... for the artist's impatience" (p. 447). One day the artist decides that in future he must always have two trapezes to work on. He bursts into tears, sobbing "Only the one bar in my hands - how can I go on living!" (p. 448). His manager reassures him that two trapezes will be provided but realizes that

Once such ideas began to torment him [the artist], would they ever quite leave him alone? Would they not rather increase in urgency? Would they not threaten his very existence? (p. 448).

In reading this vivid, dramatic, haunting, and at times humorous story, we are aware that it is about more than the depicted people and events. It is about art and other forms of work in which people become totally absorbed, to the exclusion of everyday matters, socializing, and so on. It is about the perfectionism of people completely absorbed in their work and the unhappiness to which it can give rise. These and other themes are present in the work. Indeed in reading the

story we sense that a thesis is being implicitly presented. Or, rather, we sense that a number of possible interrelated theses are implied by the work. Unlike many of Aesop's fables, for example, Kafka's allegorical fictions have a richness of suggestion and implication which lead one to connect the fiction with life in a number of related ways. Seymour Chatman has attempted to provide some "possible formulations" of the story's implied thesis:

1. Artists, in their struggle for perfection, ensure their own ultimate frustration.
2. Excessive devotion to any work will lead to a crisis of perfectionism. (A weaker form is "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.")
3. Society harms its artists by protecting them from the necessary humdrum abrasions of life, abrasions that help the rest of us mature because they teach us to cope with frustration, including necessary delays in the gratification of our desires.
4. Artists, and geniuses in general, are very much like children. They become totally involved in their work, which they do not differentiate from play; the consequence is a narcissism that ultimately poisons their lives.
5. Art, or indeed any work that aspires to greater degrees of perfection, is not only absorbing but isolating.
6. Since art is the quest for perfection, artists refuse to compromise with reality and so they find obstacles everywhere.⁴⁸

These extremely useful formulations of the implied thesis of "First Sorrow" are, perhaps, too strong. The story does not seem to imply universal propositions about all art, all artists, all people strongly devoted to their work. Each thesis could be modified so that it refers to

some or many artists rather than to all artists: some or many artists, in their struggle for perfection, ensure their own ultimate frustration; excessive devotion to any work may sometimes lead to a crisis of perfectionism; art, or indeed any work that aspires to greater degrees of perfection, can often be not only absorbing but isolating, etc.

To summarize: the presence of themes (including, sometimes, symbolic or allegorical representation) is one important way in which literature may be about reality. Thematic works may be regarded as concrete representational models with general features which we apply to life in one or more ways. Some works contain implied theses, and some of these may be true. Kafka's "First Sorrow" is a fiction, yet it is about life and contains implied truths about people excessively absorbed in their work, about perfectionism and its relation to unhappiness.

Section V Truth to Reality

A statement about reality which is true is usually said to be true of reality. A literary work containing no assertions about the real world may nonetheless be true to reality, as John Hospers⁴⁹ and others have pointed out. The ways in which the depicted world of the work is like the real world are the ways in which the work may be said

to be true to reality.

These features range from the very general to the very particular and local. Highly general features include the following: being spatial, being temporal, containing different kinds of individual items possessing qualities, continuity in the existence of these items, the presence of change, and so on. When metaphysicians (such as Aristotle or Kant) attempt to comprehend the most general features of reality it is frequently to such characteristics that they appeal.

A somewhat less general type of truth to reality is present in works which depict certain kinds of individual entities similar to the kinds found in reality (eg. humans, cats, horses, trees, rivers, clouds, houses, etc.). Aristotle's notion of poetry imitating the universal (or aiming at universal truth, as some translators phrase it) might be located near this level of generality. As we shall see in Chapter Seven, Aristotle argued that characters in tragedy are 'like' ourselves but better or greater in stature than us. The poet should depict each character in such a way that he or she acts, thinks and feels much as that type of person would in real life. Aristotle was, of course, aware that there are more fundamental or universal features of reality than this. It is because tragedy is concerned primarily with human action

that he goes no further than general tendencies in human behaviour when he speaks of the 'universal' or 'universal truth' in poetry. Elsewhere in the Poetics, as we shall see, he makes oblique reference to ontological questions not confined to the area of human action: the 'irrational', the 'impossible' and the 'contradictory' are wider in scope or more general than what is comprehended by the notion of 'universal truth' in Poetics Chapter IX.

It is into this middle level of generality, also, that most examples of iconic representation (aural, rhythmic, visual, etc.) will go. As we saw in Chapter Two, they are not usually imitations of specific individual objects or creatures but, rather, representations of how bees in general sound, how pears in general look, how a slow heavy rhythm goes, how rain in general falls. It is, of course, possible for specific objects to be represented in this way, eg. a visual representation of the leaning tower of Pisa in a concrete poem.

Lower down on the spectrum running from general to particular there is the accurate depiction of a milieu or historical era in which some invented characters and events are presented. A work's depiction of the dress, manners, atmosphere and ethos of a certain epoch or social milieu may give a 'true picture of the times'. At a lower level of generality we find the literary depiction of actual

people in an actual place and time. Works of this kind will be representationally accurate in the more general ways also, since the real people and events will normally be part of a spatio-temporal changing world of individual entities possessing properties.

Does the presence of truth to reality in a literary work enhance the aesthetic value of that work? If a literary work contains scenes which are not true to reality is the work's aesthetic quality diminished as a result? What is the relation between truth to reality and literary value? To these questions others arising from this chapter may be added. Do true statements or implied theses in literature affect literary value? Do false statements or implied theses in literature weaken the aesthetic value of a literary work? Does the cognitive value of a work's thematic import affect its literary quality? These questions will be discussed in Part II of this work.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE READER'S BELIEFS AND THE WORLD OF THE WORK

INTRODUCTION: In what ways are the reader's beliefs about what is true or false, right or wrong, aesthetically relevant? In later chapters we shall examine the relevance of the reader's beliefs for literary evaluation. In this chapter we shall examine their role in the process of 'constructing', 'constituting' or 'actualizing' the represented world of the literary work. As we shall see, this has important implications for truth to reality and how it is achieved by the writer, and also for the view that the world of the literary work is imaginary and quite distinct from the real world. Further, it will also be argued that the actualization of aesthetic structure often requires that the reader's beliefs about what is true and what is morally good be operative in reading.

The import of what we shall argue is best understood against the backdrop of the following theses:

1. The world of the work is imaginary, an autonomous, self-sufficient realm cut off from the real world. In particular, literary characters are imaginary people, not real people. Thus Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, in Theory

of Literature, state that

Even in the subjective lyric, the 'I' of the poet is a fictional, dramatic 'I'. A character in a novel differs from a historical figure or a figure in real life. He is made only of the sentences describing him or put into his mouth by the author. He has no past, no future, and sometimes no continuity of life.¹

This conception of the world of the work and its characters is intimately connected to the view, criticized in Chapter Three, that literary sentences do not refer and, in particular, that proper names in literature do not designate real people or places.

2. Secondly, critics and literary theorists often tell us that, in literary criticism, we must not 'go outside the work' or concern ourselves with what is 'external' to it. Rather, our concern must be with what is 'internal' to it. This is the rationale behind Wellek and Warren's claim that the literary character

is made only of the sentences describing him or put into his mouth by the author.²

3. Thirdly, if we are to read literature 'as literature', our approach must be an aesthetic one. The aesthetic attitude has been said by some to exclude the cognitive attitude (in which we are said to be concerned with truth and falsity) and the moral attitude (in which we are said to be concerned with what is morally right or wrong).

A similar thought has been expressed in terms of the concept of 'belief': in reading literature 'as

literature' we must bracket our beliefs about what is true or false and about what is right or wrong.

A typical statement is that of A. C. Bradley, who, in his Oxford Lectures on Poetry, argues for the strictly aesthetic or 'poetic' approach to literature and says that it is in the nature of poetry

to be not a part, nor yet a copy, of the real world...but to be a world by itself, independent, complete, autonomous; and to possess it fully you must enter that world, conform to its laws, and ignore for the time the beliefs, aims, and particular conditions which belong to you in the other world of reality.³ (my italics)

In this chapter we shall describe the process of understanding the literary work and constituting its 'world'. In the course of this analysis it will be argued that the above three points are wrong: not all characters are imaginary; we do need to 'bring in' what is 'external' to the work; and we do not bracket all of our beliefs. We may adumbrate our analysis by considering what is involved in understanding anything.

To understand something we already need to know a great deal. To understand an event, a social situation, a sentence or a literary work, one must have had some experience, one must know certain things (eg. knowledge of one's language, knowledge of the world including knowledge of human nature). To have knowledge of something is to know some truths about that matter, and it is also, most

epistemologists would argue, to believe that which one knows. Thus there is a crucial connection between understanding on the one hand and knowledge, truth and belief on the other. And a literary author presupposes our linguistic competence, our knowledge of reality and our moral beliefs. It is to the role of the reader's knowledge in the process of 'constituting' the represented 'world' of the literary work that we now turn.

Section I The Real and the Imaginary in the Constitution
 of the World of the Work

How is the literary work, including the 'world' presented therein, built up, constituted or actualized by the reader as he or she reads? And what role do the reader's knowledge and beliefs play in this process?

One theory of the constitution process might be that each sentence or phrase of the literary work gives some information (eg. that Mr. Pickwick took off his coat). The reader then puts these pieces of information together to build up or constitute the work's world. Readers thus confine themselves to what is 'internal' to the work - they do not go outside it. More specifically, readers build up a picture of a literary character solely on the basis of (to quote Wellek and Warren again)

the sentences describing him or put into his mouth
 by the author.⁴

This theory goes well with the view that representational literary works present 'imaginary' or invented worlds, for it conceives of the author as saying, in effect, "this happened in this imaginary world".

But such an approach leaves out some crucially important features of the constitution process and leads to a mistaken conception of the world of the work. To illustrate this I shall examine the opening sentences of Solzhenitsyn's novel, Lenin in Zurich:

Yes, yes, yes, yes! It's a vice, this habit of plunging recklessly, of rushing full steam ahead, intent only on your goal, blind and deaf to all around, so that you fail to see the childishly obvious danger beside you! Like when he and Yuli Martov (the moment their three years of Siberian tedium were over and they were on their way abroad at last), carrying a basket of subversive literature and a letter with the plan for Iskra in invisible ink, chose that of all times to be too clever, too conspiratorial. The rule is to change trains en route, but they had forgotten that the other train would pass through Tsarskoye Selo, and were detained by the gendarmes as suspicious persons. Luckily the police with their salutary Russian sluggishness gave them time to get rid of the basket, and took the letter at its face value because they could not be bothered to hold it over a flame - and that was how Iskra was saved!⁵

Solzhenitsyn does not, in this passage, state that the world he is writing about is spatio-temporal, physical and visible. Nor does he tell us that it contains cities and villages, earth, sky and water, human beings and animals. Yet we presuppose this in the absence of any indications to the contrary. We also assume that the

baskets, trains and letters in the story are akin, in general terms, to those of our own experience, and, moreover, that the phrase "he and Yuli Martov" refers to two human beings (generally similar to real human beings) and not, say, to two horses.

This presupposed background of veracity or truth to life is essential to the process of constitution, yet it is not explicitly given (i.e. stated) by the text.⁶ We modify this background when the author explicitly tells us that his created world is different in certain specified ways or when we infer from what is depicted that things are different. It may also be that, because we know that a work belongs to a certain genre (eg. epic, romance, fairy tale, or science fiction) we may have some expectations based on the kind of world characteristically found in such genres (for example, the presence of gods in many epics and of such creatures as witches in many fairy tales). Expectations may also arise in a reader who picks up a work by, say, Tolkien or Mervyn Peake, because he has heard accounts of their work. Such a person may anticipate some of the modifications which the reader previously ignorant of the author's works will discover and make as he reads. It may also be that, although we know neither the genre nor the author before we commence reading, the work's style alerts us to the fact that it belongs to a certain genre

(eg. "Once upon a time..."). When this happens we may expect to encounter a somewhat different world even before some counter-factual phenomenon emerges.

Having noted these points we may now return to the notion of the presupposed background of truth-to-life. This may involve features of reality of varying generality. Thus far we have been speaking of very general ones (eg. that the world is spatio-temporal, physical, visible, etc.) A somewhat less general aspect of this background would be the historical and geographical setting. The author does not have to give a complete description of the setting. All he or she needs to do is to give at least some indication that the action is occurring at a certain time or place. We, with our knowledge of history and geography, can 'fill out' what is given in the text. We do not need to be told, for example, where England is in relation to other countries, or what country London is in, or that London is a large city. (And even if an author wanted to write an interminably long work, explicitly specifying all aspects of the depicted 'world', such an enterprise is, I think, in principle impossible).

Francis Sparshott⁷ has linked up questions about the constitution of literary worlds with the distinction between memory and imagination. The world of the work has

often been called 'imaginary' or 'fictive' and the imagination both of the author and the reader has been assigned the main role in the construction and comprehension of this world. But if what was said earlier is true, then it follows that memory (as Sparshott says) has as much to do with the constitution of this world as imagination does. Since the author does not and cannot tell us everything about this world, our knowledge of life fleshes out what is directly given to us and this knowledge is, of course, remembered knowledge. Memory thus plays a central role.

In the light of all this one begins to see that the notions of a purely fictive world and a purely imaginary world are misleading, since real elements are always deeply woven into such worlds as a presupposed background of truth-to-reality. Much of this truth-to-reality in literature is not explicitly presented in the literary work, but is, rather, presupposed by the author and filled in by the reader.

I now wish to turn to a more specific aspect of the possible blending of the real and the imaginary in literature, namely, the apparent presence in literary 'worlds' of real people, places and events. We saw earlier that falsity theorists and many no-truth-value theorists believe or presuppose that literary characters must be

imaginary. This view was criticized and it was shown that some proper names in fiction do refer. A rough distinction can be made between (a) cases where the real entity is alluded to but not presented or described in any detail, and (b) cases where the real entity is depicted in some detail.

Samuel Johnson's poem The Vanity of Human Wishes contains many instances of the former kind, for many real historical individuals are briefly referred to in that work (eg. Democritus, Galileo). The poem is a meditation on the possibility (or impossibility) of attaining happiness in this life. We naturally take this work to be referring to real people and we need to know something about these people if we are to understand the poem. We are not given this information in the poem itself: we need to have acquired it from outside the work. And this is true of a great many literary works (eg. Pope's Essay on Man which refer to Plato, Newton, Columbus and many others; and his Essay on Criticism which refers to many poets and critics).

We may now consider the second kind of case, beginning with literary characters. Wellek and Warren, it will be recalled, claim that a literary character is "made only of the sentences describing him or put into his mouth by the author". But this view is surely mistaken. There are many literary works which depict real people in a

certain amount of detail which will not be fully understood by the reader unless he or she brings to the work some knowledge about that person which is not given in the work (and which is in that sense 'external' to the work).

R. K. Elliott⁸ has examined Cavafy's poem "The Battle of Magnesia" and compared how the poem might be read by

(a) a reader completely ignorant of who Philip and Antiochus were and of the significance of the battle of Magnesia, and

(b) a reader cognisant of all this.

Elliott examines how the former reader might experience the poem and concludes that for such a reader the poem will be experienced as

pretentious, obscure, lacking in tension⁹ and vitality, and - despite its shortness - prolix.

For the reader with the necessary background knowledge, however, the poem does not have these faults and yields a richer, more significant and more unified aesthetic experience. Thus it is of great aesthetic relevance both that we take this literary work to be about real people and events and that we have the background knowledge necessary to understand the poem and 'flesh out' the world represented in it.

Whereas Cavafy's poem gives us a relatively small amount of 'information' about Philip, Solzhenitsyn's novel Lenin in Zurich tells us a great deal about Lenin. Yet even here the reader's background knowledge is of considerable importance. Most readers will know that Lenin will go on to lead the Russian Revolution, become the leader of the new Communist state, and, indeed, become one of the great figures of world history. But we are not told this in the novel. Armed with this knowledge, our perspective on the story is different. In particular, our response to the end of the novel is different. At the close, Lenin, who has considered revolution likely in Europe but not in Russia and has been working with Swiss leftists in Zurich, learns that a revolution has occurred in Russia. He is stunned to learn this, and, from what we are shown in the novel, we see a certain irony here. While Lenin has been working with prodigious energy to effect change in Switzerland, political change has occurred in his own country. But our realization (acquired 'externally') that Lenin will somehow find his way to Russia and come to lead the October Revolution, alters our perception of this. While we feel amusement at Lenin's chagrin, our awareness of and admiration for his tenacity and energy is deepened by our knowledge of what is to come. And Solzhenitsyn's portrayal of him as being essentially a tactician is also

extended by our knowledge of subsequent events.

To summarize:

(a) Given our knowledge and interests, it is natural for us to read Lenin in Zurich in this way.

(b) It is clear that Solzhenitsyn intends us to read it in this way, for he includes some footnotes in the text. Some of these notes show that the author has researched Lenin's life and based the book on what Lenin was actually doing in Zurich at the time.

(c) We will not achieve a richer or superior aesthetic experience by trying to bracket our knowledge. In the first place I doubt that we could completely bracket what we know about Lenin and experience the work as being about an imaginary person, of whom it makes no sense to ask "what happened to him afterwards?" In the second place, the mental effort necessary to do this even partially would distract our attention considerably from the style, the narrative, the subtleties and ironies of Solzhenitsyn's characterization. And in the third place, the text as read by someone wholly ignorant of Lenin's life, or as read by someone who had gone through the perhaps impossible process of bracketing his or her knowledge, would not yield a superior aesthetic experience. The ending would seem inconclusive, or, at best, suggestive of the surprises and contingencies of life, the likelihood of revolutionary

activity being fruitless. For the knowledgeable reader, on the other hand, the inconclusive quality of the ending has to do with the fact that this is a slice of a real man's life. And, as I suggested, our knowledge of what Lenin will later do itself enters as a kind of ending. Further, Solzhenitsyn has a moral and cognitive aim: to show Lenin's nature, with the implications which this has for the character of the Revolution, the Russian state, and the deified Lenin whom Russians are religiously brought up to revere. This is part of our experience of the work and it would be lost in the 'imaginary', wholly 'fictive', 'bracketed' reading.

There is, then, no good reason to engage in a highly artificial exercise which may be impossible to achieve, which does not accord with our cultural tradition's mode of reading, and which does not yield a better experience.

Many other works could be cited which exemplify the role of background knowledge and the blending of the real and the fictive. We take Joyce, Lenin and Tristan Tzara in Tom Stoppard's Travesties to be representations of the actual people, Joyce, Lenin and Tzara. We take their discussions to be about art as it actually is and not about some fictive, imaginary 'art'. And, our knowledge both of the respective value of what Joyce and Tzara produced and

of what Lenin's doctrine of artistic freedom (which denies "merely bourgeois artistic freedom") has meant in practice, gives the debates a far deeper meaning than they would have for a reader ignorant of all these matters. Similarly, the interplay of the real and the imagined in E. L. Doctorow's Ragtime is a constant source of pleasure to the reader which would be unavailable to someone ignorant of who the real characters are.

The same points which I have been making about literary characters can be made about places, events and historical periods depicted in literature: to understand many literary works properly it is necessary to take its setting to be, for example, a certain actual city in a specific period of history, and the reader's background knowledge of that city or that era may be presupposed by the author. Briefly: we take Dickens to be writing about London in the 19th Century; Tolstoy to be writing about 19th Century Russia; Solzhenitsyn to be writing about 20th Century Russia; Graham Greene's The Quiet American to be set in Vietnam in the 1950s, and so on. Historical novels, novels and plays of manners, and works of satire or social criticism frequently involve the depiction of real places, events and periods, and require us to understand this. This is particularly so if the writer is asserting or implying something about a society, a class, a milieu, an

era or an individual.

If what I have been arguing is correct, we might now ask the following question: why have some literary theorists insisted that the world of the work (including the literary character) is always imaginary, separate from reality? There is a family of concepts often used in describing literature which have the cumulative effect of leading us to accept a false dogma, of causing us to be held captive by a fundamentally wrong picture. These concepts include, 'fiction', 'fictive', 'imaginary', 'imagined' and 'create'. R. K. Elliott has argued that even the notion of a 'literary character' can lead us to certain erroneous conclusions about literature:

...the question about the aesthetic relevance of reference [and, we might add, the reader's knowledge] is predecided by our use of a concept of a 'literary character' which already contains the notion of a fictional person.¹⁰

To show how wrong conclusions can be reached, one can conceive of a process of thought which starts with the notion of a 'literary character'. "Literature contains 'literary characters' (eg. 'Mr. Pickwick', 'Hamlet', 'Lenin') who are depicted as saying, thinking, and doing certain things within the world which the author has invented or creatively imagined. We can discuss what these characters do and say within the world of the work, what their motivations are, how they function and so on. We do

not yet have to raise the question of whether these characters correspond to real persons; literary criticism can proceed without asking this question. Only if the character resembles the real person to a very considerable extent can we regard him or her as being that person. But if we reflect further we can see that this question should not even be asked, since to consider whether a character is real is to leave the 'aesthetic realm', to go outside the work, thereby bringing in illegitimate questions of truth and accuracy which belong (in Frege's phrase) to 'scientific investigation' and not to the 'aesthetic attitude'."

This train of thought is seductively plausible. What is wrong with it? In the first place, the whole question is, in effect, begged from the very beginning. If we are to regard Lenin and Mr. Pickwick as merely being 'characters' then what we are effectively doing is regarding them as imaginary entities. We are saying "let us regard them for the time being as if they had no real counterparts, and let us regard sentences seemingly about Lenin in Lenin in Zurich not as being about a real person but rather as being about an imaginary person". The argument pretends that 'character', interpreted in the above way, is a neutral term in between 'imaginary person' and 'real person', but there are in fact only two

possibilities within the argument given above - treating names as referring to real people or treating them as not referring to real people; treating the person represented in the work as really existing or as not really existing. Imagine reading a history book and treating all of the represented people as literary characters: in this context it is evident that what we are doing is pretending for the time being that they do not exist, taking the sentences as not referring to actual people. It is clear, then, that at the very outset we are being asked to regard all characters in literature as if they are fictitious or non-actual. How are we to avoid having this forced on us? One way would be to interpret the notion of 'literary characters' in such a way that we need not regard all characters as non-actual initially, but, as Elliott says, the notion itself tends to lead us into this position. Another way out involves the use of a more neutral description, such as Elliott's notion of "the person of the work", either in conjunction with 'literary character' (neutrally interpreted) or instead of it. By doing this we allow our natural experience of the work and the status of its 'characters' or 'persons' to become operative immediately rather than legislating an initial phase in which all characters are treated as fictitious, which phase creates an artificial rift between the character and the real person.

Secondly, it is assumed that unless the character (already conceived of as distinct from the real person) closely resembles the real person in question, we cannot say that the work is about that real person, we cannot regard the sentence in which the name 'X' appears as referring to the real X. But this is surely wrong. The fact that I inaccurately represent someone does not mean that I am not talking about him or that I am not referring to him. Indeed the very possibility of inaccurately representing or making false statements about someone requires us to presuppose that it is that 'someone' (the person in question) who is being described and referred to. Law suits for slander would be an absurdity if this were not so. Analogously, in literature, the fact that an author modifies the person does not mean that the work is not about that person. Philip Roth's satirical novel Our Gang is indisputably about Richard Nixon but Roth represents Nixon as doing many things which we know he did not do, and as doing some things which, perhaps, no one could do (eg. the events of the closing chapter, in which Nixon arrives in Hell and mounts an election campaign to oust Satan from his position as leader). This, indeed, is common in satirical novels as it is in political cartoons which often distort the appearance of the politician or public figure being lampooned. In Roth's novel the 'person

of the work' is named Trick E. Dixon. The book opens with extracts from a speech actually given by Richard Nixon when he was President (Roth even includes the date of the speech). From the beginning it is clear that Trick E. Dixon is meant to be Richard Nixon. Roth, one might say, has stipulated that the 'person' is Nixon. As the work progresses we see Nixonian personality traits in President Trick E. Dixon and the satiric and comic intent of the novel becomes clear.

In general, then, we know that the person of the work is real by sensing what the work is doing. The bewildering variety of rhetorical techniques¹¹ available to the author, and our capacity for understanding them, make it unnecessary for the author to resort to such blunt gambits as simply stating that X in the work is meant to be the real X. If the depicted person bears a name like 'Lenin' or 'Napoleon' and there is no indication within the work that there is another individual who is the famous Lenin or Napoleon and who is distinct (within the world of the work) from the depicted person, then this would be a strong prima facie indication that the work was about the historical individual. In his play Jumpers Tom Stoppard with typical playfulness presents a character called George Moore, a Professor of Moral Philosophy who is concerned with the meaning of 'good' and the question of whether

morality is objective. As the action begins to unfold it becomes clear that this is not the famous G. E. Moore, of whom the above descriptions are also true. George Moore on a number of occasions refers to G. E. Moore thus indicating that he is an individual distinct from his more illustrious namesake.

The historical setting of the work is also relevant. When Napoleon appears in War and Peace it is in the setting of early 19th Century Russia and Europe, the era of the Napoleonic Wars. Given these similarities, the name the character or person of the work bears, the absence of another person identified as 'Napoleon the French leader... etc.', we naturally take this to be a representation of the Napoleon. (And the fact that Tolstoy gives a certain interpretation of Napoleon and his significance as a world-historical figure does not mean this interpretation is not of the Napoleon, any more than the fact that a historian is giving an interpretation of Napoleon's world-historical significance somehow makes his account a view of someone other than Napoleon).

It is not, then, a necessary condition of depicting a real person that the representation of that person be immensely accurate. As I have been suggesting, an author can avail himself of many different rhetorical strategies to indicate that the work is about a real individual.

A third difficulty with the argumentation outlined earlier is that it wrongly assumes, as Elliot puts it,

that if we experience a work as referring to real persons, we must be regarding it as aiming not at aesthetic quality but at truth.¹²

A corollary of this assumption would be that our criteria for evaluating such works are totally or mainly non-aesthetic - are, that is, totally or mainly cognitive, being concerned with the question of how accurate the representation is.

But this assumption, and its corollary, do not correctly describe our experience of such works. We take Wordsworth's autobiographical poem The Prelude, Lenin in Zurich, War and Peace, and Rolf Hochhuth's play Soldiers to be about characters or persons at least some of whom are real (eg. Wordsworth, Lenin, Napoleon, Winston Churchill). Yet we do not experience these works as being unconcerned with aesthetic quality and we do not 'turn off' or 'bracket' our aesthetic awareness or attitude. Nor is it the case that our sole or main interest in these works, and our sole or main criterion of evaluation, is cognitive. We read these works as literary works about real people yet we do not judge them solely or mainly by the standard of historical truth. There is, then, no fundamental incompatibility between reading a work 'as literature' and taking one of the persons in the work as being real.

Section II BELIEFS

In Section One we examined the process of constituting the world of the work. It was argued that the reader brings his knowledge and beliefs to the work and 'fills in' the background truth-to-reality, which is not explicitly described but is, rather, presupposed by the author. It is also argued that some literary characters are real people and that we must bring background knowledge of such people to the work if we are to understand it properly. In this section we shall explore other ways in which our beliefs (including our moral beliefs) are relevant to understanding the world of the work. This will be done under three headings:

1. Understanding character.
2. Understanding eye-witness narratives.
3. Beliefs, emotions and the structure of the work.

1. Understanding character

The role of the reader's beliefs in understanding character can be illustrated by a simple example. Let us suppose that we come upon the following sentence in a novel:

Mr. Jones remembered the death of his son and his eyes filled with tears.

We are not explicitly told that Mr. Jones is feeling sad but we infer this from what is said in the sentence. This

inference is based (a) on our knowledge of the connection, in real life, between tears and sadness and (b) on our knowledge that a real person might well feel sad remembering the death of his son. By continually making such inferences while reading we help constitute the world of the work.

More generally, authors do not have to describe literary characters in great detail. The author can show us the character and rely on us to see what kind of person the character is on the basis of our knowledge of actual human beings. Nor will an author have to explain why a character feels sadness at the death of a loved one or anger at a betrayal or fear in the face of danger. Readers are human beings and they have some understanding of human psychology.

2. Understanding 'eye-witness' narratives

Our moral beliefs and our knowledge of human beings, of physical laws, and of what is likely and unlikely in life, play a considerable role in our comprehension of plots narrated by a participant.

An eye-witness narrator's narrative cannot always be trusted either as a 'factual' account of what happened in the world of the work or as an interpretation of, and moral assessment of, these events. We need to know the

relation between the narrator's version and the version sanctioned by the work. Sometimes this involves knowing that the narrator has said something false (either false of reality or false of the world of the work). Some of Mark Twain's narrators tell stories which are absurdly far-fetched and we are meant to realize that they are lies or tall tales. Similarly, we are meant to see that Bradley Pearson's interpretation of events in Iris Murdoch's The Black Prince may be wrong.

In these works an ironic gap is opened up between the work's viewpoint and the narrator's viewpoint, by our awareness that the narrator's version is not or may not be wholly true within the world of the work. But this gap may also be opened up by our awareness (a) that the narrator is naive, egotistical or imperfect in some other way, and (b) that the author seems to intend us to view the narrator in this way. Thus Gulliver in Gulliver's Travels is a somewhat naive man and his conversion to Houyhnhnm life at the end is meant to be seen ironically, though the nature of the positive authorial viewpoint at the end is problematic. Similarly the judgement that James Joyce, in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, is ironically distancing himself and us from Stephen Dedalus depends in large part on our assessment of Stephen's character and self-image and the quality of his aesthetic theory and his

poem. The irony of Swift's A Modest Proposal is perceived at least partly through our awareness of the insanity of what is ostensibly proposed: it is so immoral and outrageous that it cannot be meant seriously. Interestingly, Defoe's ironic work, "The Shortest Way With the Dissenters", was not experienced as ironic by many of his contemporaries. The reason for this, as Wayne Booth so rightly observes, is that

Defoe's mock-Tory presents no single argument that might not have been advanced by a real fanatical Tory.¹³

And, by contrast with A Modest Proposal,

The cruelty advocated by Defoe's Tory, in the name of Mercy, is not unheard of, incredible, absolutely beyond human experience; heretics have been exterminated before, as all his readers knew, and they will be again.¹⁴

The case of Defoe illustrates both the role of the reader's knowledge and beliefs (about what is 'incredible') and the difficulty which readers may have if the author does not give sufficient indication of an ironic intent. (It also illustrates the relevance of learning the author's intention from extra-textual sources when the text's meaning is unclear in this way).

Henry James's short story "The Liar" is narrated by one of the participants, Oliver Lyon. By chance Lyon meets a beautiful woman to whom he had once proposed. She is married to a colonel who tells tall tales. Lyon befriends

them so that he can set up an elaborate way of exposing the Colonel as a liar. Throughout the story Lyon gives a moral justification of what he is doing. Since he is the narrator everything is presented from his point of view. Yet the correct interpretation of the story requires us to see that Lyon is cruel, hypocritical and unconsciously motivated by envy. We are also meant to see that, though the colonel tells lies, he does so without malice and in a way which does not really deceive anyone. Our moral beliefs, then, must play a role in our reading of this work if we are to interpret it correctly.

3. Beliefs, Emotions and the Structure of the Work

The appropriately aesthetic approach to a work of art is often said to be a disinterested one. If we take a disinterested approach we are concerned with the work as an end in itself, not as a means to some end which we have an interest in bringing about (eg. making money, achieving social status, covering a hole in a wall with painting).

While it may be true that our way of reading literature is disinterested in this sense, it is certainly not true that readers are uninterested in, uninvolved in, or emotionally distanced from, the things which happen in the literary work.

In the first place, as Wayne Booth and others have

pointed out, we have certain kinds of cognitive interests while reading. We have, for example, an interest in discovering what is true or false in the world of the work. As we read who-dun-its, detective novels, and spy novels, suspense is generated by, among other things, our interest in discovering who did it and why, or - as in some of John Le Carre's novels - in discovering who the spy is and why he is a spy. With Oedipus in Oedipus Rex we want to know why the city he rules is afflicted by strange happenings, though - through proleptic irony - we receive intimations of the truth before Oedipus does. And, with K (the main character in Kafka's The Castle), we want to know why he has been hired by the bureaucracy. We - as much as K. - want to make some sense out of the inexplicable goings-on at the Castle. Suspense and other artistic qualities of literary works will not be actualized if we do not have this kind of cognitive interest while reading.

Secondly, we bring what Booth has called practical interests to the work. Through our capacity for sympathy, we are emotionally involved in the fate of Oedipus, Lear and Othello. We care about them and experience hope, fear, pity, disappointment and anxiety as the plot unfolds. The way in which our emotions become attached to different characters is closely related to our moral assessment of these characters.¹⁵ This in turn is based on our moral

beliefs and attitudes towards certain kinds of behaviour in real life. Thus we judge Othello to be a basically good man and Iago to be a bad person. Iago's actions are of a type which, if we were to encounter them in real life, we would abhor. Othello, on the other hand, possesses many qualities which we would admire in a real person. Hence we hope that things will work out well for Othello. We experience fear as disaster approaches for him, and pity when he kills Desdemona and then discovers his tragic error. But we dislike Iago and do not have the same feelings for him. We experience satisfaction rather than pity when he is captured and led to execution.

The emotional structure of tragedy, with its catastrophe and catharsis coming towards the end, is central to the aesthetic unity of works belonging to this genre. To actualize the aesthetic object properly our emotions must be involved with the appropriate characters. The tragedy is Othello's not Iago's. In King Lear the tragedy is Lear's and Cordelia's. We are not to regard the fate of Goneril and Regan as tragic, though they do suffer at the end. The proper actualization would not occur if our moral beliefs were such that we regarded people like Iago, Goneril and Regan as good and worthy of intense sympathy, and regarded people like Lear and Othello as bad and unworthy of sympathy. A reader with bizarre moral

beliefs who thought Iago was the character most worthy of sympathy would actualize a different aesthetic object, which would probably be disunified and amorphous. Clearly, then, it cannot be true to say that our moral beliefs must be bracketed. On the contrary, it is a precondition of our having the proper aesthetic experience that our moral beliefs and our emotions are engaged in the activity of reading. This is also true when the central character is immoral. Shakespeare shows Richard III and Macbeth as having many admirable qualities but he also assumes we will recognize that they are murderers. We sympathize with Macbeth but we experience his death as a fitting punishment. It does not affect us as the unmerited suffering of Desdemona and Cordelia does. Similarly, we sympathize with Raskolnikov in Crime and Punishment, yet we experience the ending as morally and aesthetically satisfying because we believe murder to be a major moral offence. Had Raskolnikov been mildly rude to the old woman instead of killing her, the rest of the novel would not work aesthetically. We would find his guilt silly and neurotic, Porfiry's treatment of Raskolnikov cruel, and the ending absurd (since years of hard labour in a prison camp is an unjust punishment for mild rudeness). The sense of completion, of formal unity, would be destroyed.

Summary

We may now summarize the main conclusions of this chapter:

1. We provide the presupposed truth-to-reality in the world of the work.
2. We take some literary characters to be real people and we contribute background knowledge about these people which is acquired outside the literary work.
3. It is said that our attitude to literature should be an aesthetic one but this should not mean that our cognitive and moral awareness and interests are 'bracketed out' or 'turned off'. It is, in fact, a necessary condition of our having the proper aesthetic experience that our beliefs and attitudes play a role in actualization, in understanding the literary work.

This however, does not entail that the resulting aesthetic object is judged on the basis of its being true or false, morally good or morally bad. We can admit that cognitive and moral awareness play a role within the aesthetic experience without having to say that the appropriate criterion for evaluating the whole work is cognitive or moral as opposed to aesthetic. Cognitive and moral considerations can play a role in actualizing the aesthetic object, but need not be the criteria for evaluating that object. The question of whether cognitive

and moral considerations ever play a role in aesthetic evaluation will be considered in the chapters which follow.

PART II

TRUTH, BELIEF AND AESTHETIC VALUE

...the question of belief or disbelief, in the intellectual sense, never arises when we are reading well. (I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism, p. 277).

The poet must... win our imaginative consent to the aspects of human experience he presents, and to do so he cannot evade his responsibility to the beliefs and prepossessions of our common experience, common sense and common moral consciousness. (M. H. Abrams, "Belief and the Suspension of Disbelief", p. 28).

Does 'culture' require that we make... a deliberate effort to put out of mind all our convictions and passionate beliefs about life when we sit down to read poetry? If so, so much the worse for culture. (T. S. Eliot, The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, p. 97).

CHAPTER FIVE

TRUTH, BELIEF AND POSITIVE EVALUATIONS OF LITERATURE

Introduction:

In Part Two we shall be concerned with the question of whether truth and belief are relevant to literary evaluation. . As we shall see, this question raises the broader issue of how cognitive and moral value affect the aesthetic value of literary works. In Chapter Five we shall look at the ways in which truth and cognitive value can contribute to the aesthetic value of literary works. In Chapter Six our concern will be with the ways in which the reader's experience of cognitive or moral deficiencies in the viewpoint of a literary work can negatively affect his or her aesthetic evaluation of that work. And in Chapter Seven we shall examine Aristotle's treatment of the relations between cognitive, moral and aesthetic value in 'poetry'.

In considering these issues it is important to keep in mind the varieties of literature and the varieties of value which literature may have. Literature includes epic, romance, tragic drama, dramatic comedy, realist novels, magic realist novels, meta-fiction, lyric poetry, minimalist short works such as Samuel Beckett's Lessness or Imagination

Dead Imagine, the haiku, and (according to some) concrete poetry. The relation between literature and life is not the same in a realist historical novel and a fairy tale, in an allegorical romance and a concrete poem, in a discursive poetic essay and in those symbolist poems which aspire to music in their emphatic concentration on internal sensory, aural and rhythmic vividness or intensity. Some works present definite theses, others raise questions or invite reflection but do not provide answers, while others offer the pleasure of a vivid or musical play of language without asking us to think much about life at all.

Nor should it be forgotten that literature can be valuable in many different ways. As Eric Havelock¹ and others have pointed out, in oral cultures (i.e. cultures which have no writing) poems and stories serve a number of valuable non-aesthetic functions. By transmitting stories about the origins and history of a people, literature helps foster and preserve cultural identity and continuity. The same function is served by the transmission of religious and moral teachings in literature. Practical and technical knowledge (eg. advice about agricultural techniques in Hesiod) may also be passed on in this way by storytellers and bards. In the absence of any writing, literature served crucially important functions in oral cultures. (In writing-based cultures, of course, literature and other arts have

continued to serve the valuable function of expressing, transmitting and re-evaluating a people's sense of itself - its past, its present situation, and where it may be heading in the future).

The psychological value of writing literature has been attested to by expressionist and psycho-analytic theorists of art as well as by writers themselves. Reading has also been described as therapeutic. The economic value of literature is well known to those who make a living from writing, reviewing, editing or teaching literary works. Socialist realism and other doctrines see a political utility in literature and the arts.

Literary works of art may have economic, political or therapeutic value, but what makes them literary works of art is the presence of a fairly high degree of aesthetic value. A novel might have economic value for its writer and be politically useful to others, yet it might be a very poor novel (i.e. have very little aesthetic value). In such a case there is little or no connection between aesthetic value and other types of value. Conversely, a great work of literature might have very little economic or political value.

How is truth (and, more broadly, cognitive value) related to aesthetic value in literature? Are they essentially unconnected and independent of each other? Or

does truth (and cognitive value generally) contribute to aesthetic value? Two extreme and diametrically opposed answers are possible, and other answers are possible in between these two poles. At one pole there is the possible position that cognitive and moral value do not affect aesthetic value. This position might be called the absolute autonomy theory, for it conceives of aesthetic value as being absolutely independent of other modes of value. Pronouncements have been made, especially by exponents of aestheticism and formalism, which seem to express such a position. But it is a matter of debate whether the absolute autonomy theory has often or ever been consistently maintained. Arguments from an absolute autonomy perspective will be considered in some detail in Section II of this chapter.

At the opposite pole there is the possible position that a literary work is good if it is cognitively good or morally good. A pure cognitivist theory of aesthetic value would say that the cognitive value of a work determines its aesthetic value. A pure moralist theory of aesthetic value would claim that a work's moral value determines its aesthetic value. These theories may be combined into a pure cognitivist and moralist account of aesthetic value. It is important to note that these hypothetical positions are theories of aesthetic value. As such they are to be

distinguished from views which acknowledge that aesthetic value is to some degree independent of cognitive and moral value, but which argue that cognitive and moral value are higher values than aesthetic value. A person might acknowledge that Genet writes with poetic intensity and narrative skill but argue that his books are evil and are to be condemned despite the aesthetic qualities they contain. Such a person is in effect saying that moral considerations outweigh and override the value of aesthetic enjoyment. Similarly, someone might judge Rolf Hockhuth's play Soldiers to have aesthetic value qualities but nonetheless argue that it should be condemned as untrue because it slanders Winston Churchill. For such a person, cognitive value overrides and outweighs aesthetic value. These views are not theories of aesthetic value. Rather, they are views about the relative weight of different modes of value and they do not attempt to reduce aesthetic value itself to cognitive or moral value. Our interest in this chapter is in the question of whether cognitive value affects aesthetic value, not in the question of whether and when other modes of value should outweigh aesthetic pleasure.

It is doubtful whether anyone has ever seriously and consistently maintained an absolutely pure cognitivist theory of aesthetic value, although strong cognitive tendencies are to be found in Plato,² Emile Zola³ and some exponents of

Socialist Realism.⁴ Nonetheless, it will be useful to see what is wrong with a pure cognitivist theory of aesthetic value before we develop our own account. If truth determined aesthetic value then a novel containing much truth could not fail to be a good novel. But this is not the case. Let us imagine a dull, rambling, disunified, badly written novel whose characters are stereotyped and whose plot is cliched. Such a novel could contain many mundane statements of historical and geographical fact. The presence of a large number of true statements would not redeem an aesthetically poor work.

Our hypothetical cognitivist might now insist that we consider cognitive value and not just truth per se. This is an important distinction, for truth is but one of a number of factors relevant to cognitive value. Other relevant factors include originality, comprehensiveness, logical coherence, depth, marshalling of evidence or reasoning, consideration of evidence or argument against one's theory, and so on. Everyone knows thousands of truths but many of these truths are commonplace and uninteresting. The Nobel Prize for Physics would not be awarded to just any article full of true statements; other relevant cognitive value qualities would have to be present in a high degree. On the other hand, as one philosopher has said, the Nobel Prize would not be awarded to an original or fairly comprehensive theory which

had been shown to be false experimentally (eg. its predictions turned out to be false). To say that truth is only one of a number of cognitive criteria is not to say that truth is not the goal at which we aim in the pursuit of knowledge.

Suppose then, that we have a true (or, at least, plausible) and interesting theory presented in a novel. If cognitive value determines aesthetic value then the presence in a novel of a cognitively valuable theory should guarantee that the novel will be aesthetically good. But this is not so. It is possible that the novel will not have unity of plot, that its language may be too dry and discursive, that the ideas are not integrated into the narrative, that the narrative is unclear and poorly paced, that the characters do not come to life and engage our sympathies, and so on. A serious thinker may be a poor novelist. Einstein or Godel or Weber or Piaget or Chomsky or Habermas might have presented some of their respective theories in a novel but there is no guarantee that such novels would be good literature despite the high cognitive value of their ideas.

Truth per se does not guarantee aesthetic merit. Cognitive value does not ensure the presence of aesthetic value. These conclusion are, perhaps, obvious, but arguing for them reminds us that aesthetic ability is not automatically present in serious thinkers, that aesthetic

qualities in narration, plotting and characterization are not easily achieved, and that we must consider how cognitively valuable elements in literature are integrated into the aesthetic structure of the work. If truth and cognitive value sometimes contribute to aesthetic value we shall have to see how they contribute in this way to the aesthetic value qualities of the work as a whole.

If truth is not a sufficient condition of literary merit, perhaps it is a necessary condition. Let us examine explicitly asserted true statements first. Is it a necessary condition of a literary work's being a good literary work that it contain explicitly asserted true statements about reality? Many nonsense poems and concrete poems contain no complete meaningful sentences (let alone statements about reality), yet may have some literary value. Further, many works written in complete sentences contain no explicit statements by the author about reality (eg. many purely fictional novels, short stories, short poems, plays, etc.). Therefore, the presence of explicitly asserted true statements about reality is not a necessary condition of aesthetic value in literature.

Is truth-to-reality a necessary condition of literary merit? The first point to note here is that the overwhelming majority of literary works (as well as most poor fiction) could be said to be true-to-reality in some respect or other.

Parts of every work will present a world like ours in some respect or other, or present characters who some of the time behave as such characters would if they were real, or contain some scenes which embody some truth about life, and so on. It would be hard to find many works which did not contain one or other of these forms of truth-to-reality at some point. But this is probably trivial. Bad works may also be true to reality in these ways. Even with good works one may list the ways in which they are true-to-reality and some of these ways may not be of any great aesthetic value in this or that particular work. What we should be interested in is examples of truth-to-reality, in particular works, which are aesthetically significant.

A second point to note is that one cannot rule out a priori the possibility of there being literary works which could not be said to be true-to-reality, eg. a nonsense poem, a poem of sensory, rhythmical and 'musical' effects which represents little or nothing. For these reasons I would not wish to argue that truth is a necessary condition of literary merit. What I do wish to argue is that truth sometimes contributes to aesthetic value. A case will be made for this claim in Section I. In Section II some objections to this position will be discussed and answered.

Section I Examples

In this section I shall attempt to show that we value literary works as literature (or as art) for (among other things) the insight they give us into human nature and society. Individual works will be analyzed and examples of literary critical appraisals will be given in support of this claim.

Philosophers, psychologists and sociologists have often praised the poet for his understanding of man and society. Marx had a profound respect for Shakespeare's knowledge of these matters. In the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts⁵, Marx cites Timon's speech against money in Timon of Athens as a brilliant analysis of the power of money to "confuse and invert all human qualities". Freud⁶ claimed that, in his psychology, he was systematizing and treating 'scientifically' what dramatists and poets had already discovered and revealed. Many similar judgements may be cited:

In Lionel Trilling's review of The Lonely Crowd... he says of Middletown, a famous sociological work of the late 1920's, that all it had done was to confirm Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt by statistics. Trilling's remark stands in a tradition of such utterances. Labriola said that Balzac was a better sociologist than Comte, and Ranke that Scott's Quentin Durward was better history than that of most historians. D. W. Harding once observed how little social psychology had added to 'the understanding of national differences shown by Henry James in his novels'.⁷

Tolstoy's War and Peace is widely regarded as one of the greatest novels ever written. Significantly, when writers and critics try to articulate the qualities which make it an outstanding work, they often praise its mimetic achievements, its insight, and the enriched understanding of life which it affords the reader. The reader can see this from the following assessments:⁸

A knowledge of this novel is essential to the intelligent equipment of any young man or young woman who pretends to a view of life. (Compton Mackenzie).

Here is the greatest novel ever written. It has been called "life itself". Everything is in it, and it's also as free as life...A masterpiece like War and Peace helps to restore the balance and to recall our vision of humanity. (E. M. Forster).

There is [in War and Peace] a great testimony to life generously and deeply experienced; to mankind's emotions in peace or strife; to the vast variety of human nature that this one man has embraced and transmuted. (Francis Hackett).

War and Peace is a dictionary of life, where one may look up any passion, any ambition, and find its meaning. (W. L. Phelps).

There is hardly any subject of human experience that is left out of War and Peace. (Virginia Woolf).

Every passion is portrayed, every affection, every propensity... . (William Dean Howells).

The greatest novel of literature... is Tolstoy's War and Peace. This magnificent work has taught me more about life than any other novel in any language. ... It is in this union of all worlds, material and spiritual - a union won without preaching or any falsification of human nature - that War and Peace achieves its final greatness. (Hugh Walpole).

Here is a novel that is worth whatever time one gives to it. There is more of life between its covers than in any other existent fictional narrative. All the normal human emotions find play in this novel; practically every facet of human experience is there. Its characters become as real to us as people whom we have known all our lives; we see them develop and change with the years and the development and change is something that proceeds from within them; Tolstoy does not tell us that the change takes place - we observe it for ourselves. It is a novel of which one cannot accurately state the theme. One can say that it is a broadly inclusive picture of Russian life during the Napoleonic period, but this is merely the accident of its setting and time. In its universal value it is simply human life, greatly grasped and extraordinarily presented over a period of something less than a generation. No intelligent person can read it without a deep enrichment of experience. And having once read it, he is certain to turn to it again, to be amazed once more by its veracity, its tremendous vitality, its epic scope. (J. Donald Adams).

Certain ideas recur in these evaluations of War and Peace:

- (i) Tolstoy depicts an astounding variety of human beings, 'passions', and experiences. A corollary of this is that, by the scope of his work, Tolstoy has managed to convey the unity and complexity of 'life itself'.
- (ii) In War and Peace Tolstoy shows great insight into human nature.
- (iii) He avoids 'falsification of human nature' (Walpole) and achieves 'veracity' (Adams).
- (iv) The reader will learn a great deal about life. (Phelps, Mackenzie, Adams).

(v) The author's attitude towards humanity is praised. Hackett calls it 'generous'; Forster says that it helps us to "restore the balance and to recall our vision of humanity."

(vi) On the evidence of War and Peace, Tolstoy the man must have had a profound knowledge of human beings and a great, noble and loving vision of human life.

All of these points seem to me to be true. Further, these remarks are not untypical of literary critical assessments. The insight, 'veracity' and the quality of Tolstoy's vision of life somehow contribute to the literary value of War and Peace and I think most readers of that novel would agree with this. In Section Two we shall see how truth and insight (which by themselves have cognitive value) contribute to the artistic value of a work. Here we are trying to show, by an appeal to literary experience, that this seems, prima facie, to be the case. We need, however, to note a certain possible pitfall. One could approach War and Peace with the aim of extracting its insights, the knowledge of life it affords us, and its informing 'vision'. We might then try to give a paraphrase of these, assess them cognitively and morally, and judge the novel on the basis of this cognitive and moral assessment. Clearly, such an approach would not constitute "reading War and Peace as literature"; it would be a non-aesthetic approach. The paraphrased insights certainly have cognitive value on their

own, but what we are suggesting is that the insight and veracity play an important role within the work considered as literature, giving it depth, resonance and verisimilitude. The quality of the emotional, imaginative and intellectual experience which the novel affords us would not be what it is were it not for the work's insight and truth-to-life.

From consideration of a particular work we turn to an area of human psychology and behaviour which is illuminated in many literary works: self-deception. Sophocles's Antigone⁹ is 'about' many things, one of them being self-deception. The play's central thematic pre-occupation seems to be the conflict between individual conscience and religious duty on the one hand, and the commands of the state on the other. Yet Creon's defence of the state is shown to be motivated by pride, stubbornness and a fear of being seen to give in to a woman. Antigone, from the beginning, seems driven to self-destruction by something more than religious or filial obligation. She gives many reasons for her obsessive concern with the dead Polyneices, but she in effect cancels these with an extraordinary admission later in the play:

And yet the wise will know my choice was right.
 Had I had children or their father dead,
 I'd let them moulder. I should not have chosen
 in such a case to cross the state's decree.
 What is the law that lies behind these words?
 One husband gone, I might have found another,
 or a child from a new man in first child's place,
 but with my parents hid away in death,

no brother, ever, could spring up for me.
Such was the law by which I honored you.
(11.904-13).

Antigone has been claiming that she disobeyed "the state's decree" in burying her brother because of a general religious duty. Now she is saying that she would not have disobeyed the state if a husband or child of hers had died, since these are 'replaceable' whereas her dead brother is not. It is not therefore religious duty or a general filial obligation which motivates her, if this declaration is true. But what sense is to be made of this? Why should the irreplaceability of her brother make such a difference? In the end we feel that Antigone does not know her own mind. Dark and obscure forces are at work within her which we cannot fully fathom either, and this seems to be the effect Sophocles intended. The play concretely illuminates the nature of self-deception and obscure motivation as well as the nature of obsession and fanaticism.

Self-deception is also one of the significant themes of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar¹⁰ and it manifests itself on many different levels in the play. There is, for example, the frequently invoked ideal of 'Roman' character and behaviour (noble, honourable, manly, fearless) and the actual behaviour we see (the hysterical, irrational, murderous mob; Caesar's fear and weakness; the ambition and cunning of Cassius; the murder of Caesar by Brutus, Cassius and the

other conspirators; the petty bickering of Brutus and Cassius in Act IV). In many of the protagonists there is a rift between the public political figure and the private person. Caesar, Cassius and Brutus think of themselves as the public men, 'Caesar', 'Cassius' and 'Brutus': each tries to act and to conceive of his actions in terms of his unreal public image, the connotations of his name. Each refers to himself not as 'I' but rather as 'Caesar' or 'Brutus' or 'Cassius'. Caesar the man is somewhat deaf, prey to illness, superstitious, fearful; yet he must act as 'Caesar', the all powerful symbol of Rome, who, as Cassius puts it

...doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs...

(I.ii.135-37)

When Caesar is afraid he says

I rather tell thee what is to be feared
Than what I fear; for always I am Caesar.

(I.ii.211-12)

and

Caesar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home today for fear.
No, Caesar shall not; Danger knows full well
That Caesar is more dangerous than he.

(II.ii.42-45)

By ignoring warnings so as to conform to his image and name, Caesar goes to his death.

It is in the characters of Cassius and especially of Brutus that the theme of self-deception and the obfuscation of reality by image asserts itself most significantly.

Whatever the faults of Caesar the private individual, he is not, qua ruler, depicted as sufficiently unjust or tyrannical to merit assassination. He seems anxious to be crowned not so that he can become tyrannical but rather to complete his public image as 'Ruler'. Cassius multiplies motives for the assassination: Caesar is weak and prey to illness; Cassius once saved him from drowning yet Caesar and not Cassius, the stronger man, is ruler (!); Caesar "doth bestride the world like a Colossus" yet he does not seem to be a more outstanding man than Brutus or Cassius; and so on. These reasons, we feel, do not justify the act. Cassius is motivated partly by envy and ambition.

Brutus, on the other hand, does not seem ambitious or self-seeking. Rather, he is a political idealist dedicated to honour and liberty, his name associated with 'honour' because of his eminent ancestors and his own character. At first he is reluctant to join the conspiracy. Cassius has to use his powers of persuasion to "seduce" Brutus; as Cassius himself admits in a soliloquy:

Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet I see
 Thy honourable mettle may be wrought
 From that it is disposed; therefore it is meet
 That noble minds keep ever with their likes;
 For who so firm that cannot be seduced?

(I.ii.308-12)

Once committed to the conspiracy, Brutus has to represent it to himself in idealistic terms, masking the real nature of

the act. A falsifying doublespeak permeates his speech at II.i.162-83. He suggests that he and his fellow conspirators think of themselves as "sacrificers, but not butchers", as "purgers, not murderers", as 'carving' Caesar as "a dish fit for the gods", as really wanting to kill only the 'spirit' of Caesar:

We all stand up against the spirit of Caesar,
 And in the spirit of men there is no blood.
 O, that we then could come by Caesar's spirit,
 And not dismember Caesar! But, alas,
 Caesar must bleed for it.

(II.i.167-71)

After the murder Brutus says that they have benefitted Caesar since he need no longer worry about death or fear it (an absurd justification!).

Grant that, and then is death a benefit.
 So are we Caesar's friends, that have abridged
 His time of fearing death.

(III.i.103-5)

The gap between conception and action, between image and reality is glaringly exposed by the consequences of the assassination. Instead of "Peace, freedom and liberty" (the aim which Brutus avows at III.i.110), the result is chaos, widespread mob killing and civil war. Although Brutus and Cassius regain some of our esteem later in the play, they never see their mistakes, they fail to achieve a full recognition of what they have done.

Reflection on the play deepens our knowledge of men and may even have good moral effects. Human beings often

mask their actions (and perhaps their motivations) with falsifying moral rhetoric. Even the best people may do this. Indeed, the most fervent and singleminded idealist may be more prone to this than the more averagely decent person, since his deep conviction of the rightness of what he is doing may prevent the kind of self-questioning that would uncover less noble underlying motives where such motives exist. In political life the consequences of such idealistic and self-deceiving interventions as that of Brutus can be more devastating than is the case in private life. We see this in Julius Caesar and we have seen it recently in real life (eg. the role of an obfuscating idealistic rhetoric in America's involvement in Vietnam).

Henry James's short story "The Liar" (1888) is, as we noted briefly in Chapter Four, an excellent portrayal of a self-deceiving man, Oliver Lyon. Lyon is a portrait painter who, while staying at a country lodge meets a woman (Mrs. Capadose) to whom he had unsuccessfully proposed some twelve years earlier. Colonel Capadose, the woman's husband, tells many tales, but Mrs. Capadose never gives any sign of being aware that these tales are false even when Lyon knows that she is in fact aware of their falsity. Capadose, though, does not lie for gain or out of any obviously self-interested motive:

The observation of these three days showed him [Lyon] that if Capadose was an abundant he was not

a malignant liar and that his fine faculty exercised itself mainly on subjects of small direct importance. "He is the liar platonic", he said to himself; "he is disinterested, he doesn't operate with a hope of gain or with a desire to injure."¹¹

Other characters know of the Colonel's predilection for the tall tale, but, as one observes, the lies do no harm. Further, the Colonel is actually a brave man and has accomplished some extraordinary feats while hunting and riding, albeit not as out of the ordinary as those he recounts. In addition, his stories are so improbable that no one is likely to be deceived for very long. Wayne Booth tells us that Henry James himself described the character as "a charming man, in spite of his little weakness".¹²

Despite the apparently harmless character of the Colonel's stories, Lyon feels that the beautiful and 'noble' Mrs. Capadose has become corrupted, "morally destroyed" by being married to "such a contemptible man". He decides to force her into a public recognition of her husband's 'flaw'. He ingratiates himself with the Colonel, deliberately stimulating the man to invent more and more wild stories. Over the course of some months he becomes a family friend, painting a portrait of the Capadose's daughter, then offering to paint one of the Colonel. He decides to call the painting "The Liar": it will represent Capadose as a contemptible human being, showing none of his good qualities and exaggerating his 'weakness'. One day, by accident, the

Capadoses see the portrait, unaware that Lyon is watching them. Mrs. Capadose is anguished and the Colonel is enraged. In his fury, the Colonel destroys the painting. Later, when they meet Lyon, they pretend that someone else has done it. For Lyon, this

made his whole vision crumble - his theory that she had secretly kept herself true. Even to her old lover she wouldn't be so.¹³

His final thought is that "She was still in love with the Colonel - he had trained her too well."¹⁴

The events of "The Liar" are presented from Lyon's point of view: we inhabit his consciousness and are given his responses, interpretations and judgements. Yet the reader does not accept his judgement: it is Lyon and not the Colonel who is 'contemptible'. There are indications that Lyon resents the fact that his marriage proposal was spurned and the Colonel's accepted; he is jealous of the Colonel. He is critical of Capadose's 'disinterested' lies yet he himself is deceitful in pretending to become a family friend. The painting of Capadose which Lyon regards as "a masterpiece of truth", is actually a gross distortion of the Colonel's total character: a lie, in short. Significantly, the very name Lyon links him to 'lies', as does his earlier admission¹⁵ that painting (his profession) is a kind of lying. And we notice that he lies to his servants while thinking of himself as a man who "cultivated frankness of intercourse with his

domestics."¹⁶

Lyon justifies his actions morally by invoking the ideals of truth and beauty, and by conceiving of himself as acting to preserve her nobility from being contaminated by the Colonel's lies. Yet he is deceiving himself: jealousy, envy and an increasingly cruel desire to humiliate the Capadoses are the base motivations which he refuses to acknowledge but which we see clearly. In "The Liar" James shows convincingly and with penetrating insight how such self-deception can occur.

Many critical discussions of another work by Henry James, The Princess Casamassima, have concerned themselves with questions of historical and psychological veracity. Contemporary reviewers of the novel tended to regard it as socially and historically inaccurate but the accuracy of James's perception has become more evident to twentieth-century critics. The distinguished American critic Lionel Trilling, in his essay "The Princess Casamassima", tries to demonstrate the veracity and profundity of James's vision in that work. Trilling speaks of this novel as giving

a kind of social and political knowledge which is hard to come by.¹⁷ (my italics)

His overall assessment of the novel is that it is

an incomparable representation of the spiritual circumstances of our civilization. I venture to call it incomparable because, although other writers have provided abundant substantiation of James's insight, no one has, like him, told us the

truth in a single luminous act of creation.¹⁸ (my italics)

Trilling justifies this claim in a number of ways. He argues that the social and political detail of the work is accurate. He takes as true the novel's central assumption that late 19th Century Europe

has reached the full of its ripeness and is passing over into rottenness, that the peculiarly beautiful light it gives forth is in part the reflection of a glorious past and in part the phosphorescence of a present decay, that it may meet its end by violence and that this is not wholly unjust, although never before has the old sinful continent made so proud and pathetic an assault upon our affections.¹⁹

Trilling also praises James for his insight into the psychology of power expressed in his characterization of Paul Muniment, in whom "a genuine idealism coexists with a secret desire for power". Trilling observes that

It is one of the brilliances of the novel that his ambition is never made explicit. ... It is conveyed to us by his tone, as a decisive element of his charm, for Paul radiates... charisma, the charm of power, the gift of leadership. His natural passion for power must never become explicit, for it is one of the beliefs of our culture that power invalidates moral purpose. The ambiguity of Paul Muniment has been called into being by the nature of modern politics in so far as they are moral and idealistic. For idealism has not changed the nature of leadership, but it has forced the leader to change his nature, requiring him to present himself as a harmless and self-abnegating man.²⁰

The final example we shall consider in this section is Pope's Essay on Criticism, a paradigm of what has been called the 'poetry of statement'. Such works are

'discursive', poems of assertion or statement on a given theme, rather than being predominantly dramatic, narrative or 'descriptive' works (eg. descriptions of nature). Pope's work is a poetic essay on the nature of criticism, as his Essay on Man is a poetic reflection on human nature and as Dr. Johnson's Vanity of Human Wishes is a poetic meditation on the possibility of achieving happiness in this life.

Clearly, we will not be assessing it as a poem if we extract its ideas, paraphrase them, and then assess their cognitive value as a theory of criticism. Conversely, we would be equally in error were we to evaluate the poem solely on the basis of its style, rhythm, metre, and assonance, ignoring completely what is said in the work.

Some 18th Century evaluations of the poem illustrate this. When the work first appeared in 1711, Joseph Addison was critical of some things in it but his assessment of the poem as a whole was favourable. The Essay is, he said,

a masterpiece in its kind. The observations follow one another like those in Horace's Art of Poetry without that methodical regularity which would have been requisite in a prose author. They are some of them uncommon, but such as the reader must assent to, when he sees them explained with that elegance and perspicuity in which they are delivered. As for those which are the most known, and the most received, they are placed in so beautiful a light, and illustrated with such apt allusions, that they have in them all the graces of novelty, and make the reader who was before acquainted with them still more convinced of their truth and solidity.²¹
(my emphasis)

And Samuel Johnson, in 1781, said of Pope that

One of his greatest, though of his earliest, works is the Essay on Criticism, which, if he had written nothing else would have placed him among the first critics and the first poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition - selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendor of illustration, and propriety of digression.²² (my emphasis)

Both Addison and Johnson acknowledge that the poem is a certain kind of literary work (a poetic essay). Addison says the poem is "a masterpiece in its kind" and Johnson remarked that it

exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition...

Hence both critics, in their approach to the poem, take account of what is said in it. Thus Addison says of Pope's 'observations' that

some of them [are] uncommon, but such as the reader must assent to, when he sees them explained with that elegance and perspicuity in which they are delivered.

When Johnson refers to "justness of precept" he seems to encompass a concern both with truth and with the question of whether Pope's advice to critics is sensible and well-founded.

And surely the approaches of Addison and Johnson are appropriate, for the Essay is, indeed, presenting views, giving advice and trying to improve the practice of critics who might read the poem. Given its nature, we ought to approach it with these dimensions in mind. The modern reader

is likely to question the larger neo-classical assumptions of the work (the order of art being the order of Nature; the stress on rules) and to note the possible conflict between the doctrine of artistic rules and the view that genius can ignore rules. Nonetheless, most of the observations and advice in the poem are astute and sensible, and are for the most part relatively untheoretical. For example: we are exhorted to be aware of 'blind spots' in our knowledge and taste (ll.46-67); a one-sided critical emphasis on ideas alone, on style alone, or on rhythm and metre alone is effectively criticized (ll.289-93), and we are alerted to the dangers of pride and arrogance.

Pride, where Wit fails, steps in to our Defence,
 And fills up all the mighty Void of Sense!
 If once right Reasons drives that Cloud away,
 Truth breaks upon us with resistless Day;
 Trust not your self; but your defects to know,
 Make use of ev'ry Friend - and ev'ry Foe.

(ll.209-14).

Immediately following this we encounter one of the most memorable passages of the poem, a passage which illuminates the nature of 'Learning' and makes the reader more likely to accept Pope's remarks about 'Pride':

A little Learning is a dang'rous Thing;
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring:
 There shallow Draughts intoxicate the Brain,
 And drinking largely sobers us again.
 Fir'd at first Sight with what the Muse imparts,
 In fearless Youth we tempt the Heights of Arts,
 While from the bounded Level of our Mind,
 Short Views we take, nor see the Lengths behind,
 But more advanc'd, behold with strange Surprise

New, distant Scenes of endless Science rise!
 So, pleas'd at first, the towring Alps we try,
 Mount o'er the Vales, and seem to tread the Sky;
 Th' Eternal Snows appear already past
 And the first Clouds and Mountains seem the last:
 But those attain'd, we tremble to survey
 The growing Labours of the lengthen'd Way,
 Th' increasing Prospect tires our wandring Eyes,
 Hills peep o'er Hills, and Alps on Alps arise!
 (11.215-32)

This passage depicts some aspects of 'Learning' with vividness and insight. And it serves as a didactic reminder to the reader that his knowledge is incomplete, that he must not proudly assume that he has scaled the 'Heights of Arts'. Its dramatic qualities appeal to the imagination, enabling the moral injunctions against pride to be more readily impressed on the reader's mind.

The extended metaphor captures characteristic phases in the journey of 'Learning': slow gradual progress towards limited goals ("Short views we take"); a sudden awareness of the vast amount that still needs to be done ("But more advanc'd, behold with strange Surprize/New, distant Scenes of endless Science rise"); fresh, seemingly tremendous progress (the hyperbolic "Mount o'er the Vales, and seem to tread the Sky"); a renewed sense of the almost infinite extent of what we still need to know or do ("Hills peep o'er Hills, and Alps on Alps Arise"). The journey is seen both from an 'external' point of view which sees how much progress we have actually made, and from the involved, 'subjective' viewpoint of the climber/scholar who is, variously, fir'd, fearless,

surprised, pleas'd, trembling, tired, and who will

...behold with strange Surprise
New, distant Scenes of endless Science rise!

and find that

Th' increasing Prospect tires our wandering Eyes,
Hills peep o'er Hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

Section II Objections and Replies

In Section One we employed the method of appealing to specific cases, to our concrete experience of literature. This method is an essential part of the process of 'testing' theoretical statements in aesthetic theory and of developing one's own aesthetic theory. An adequate theory of the relevance of truth and belief for literary evaluation should try to articulate the nature of our experience of literature, the way (or ways) in which literature is read in our cultural tradition. It must also, of course, consider normative questions (how ought we to read literature?), but the descriptive task requires us to examine our actual experience of literature so as to avoid over-simplified theories about that experience. In this context the over-simplified generalizations being tested and questioned are those found in the absolute autonomy theory. Specifically, we are questioning the claim that truth and belief are irrelevant to literary evaluation, and in Section One we argued, using

concrete illustrations, that we do praise literary works as literature for the insight they give us into human nature, society, history, etc., and that it is appropriate to do this.

In this section we shall consider some objections to the view that we sometimes do (and sometimes should) praise literary works for the truth they contain. Expressed briefly, the objections are as follows:

1. Literary authors lack the qualifications to give us truth and knowledge.
2. The concepts of aesthetic judgement and aesthetic value used in modern aesthetics make it conceptually impossible for truth to affect aesthetic value.
3. Literature may offer personal visions of life or ways of seeing life, but the true/false distinction cannot be applied to these visions or ways of seeing.
4. If literature does contain truth it is not 'rational' or 'paraphraseable'.

1. The first kind of objection rejects the claim that literature contains truth and knowledge on the grounds that the poet is not qualified to give us truth and knowledge. Plato argued that the poet was an illusionist, a master of appearances who skillfully pretended to have knowledge but actually had none. In the realm of technical 'knowledge' (which was not genuine knowledge for Plato), it is the

practitioners of the relevant crafts (carpentry, building, navigation, the art of war etc.) who have expertise in their respective spheres of activity. And where theoretical questions are concerned, only the philosopher can claim to be a source of truth. Knowledge has as its object the world of the Forms (Reality), not the physical, visible world of Appearances. Philosophy is the discipline which studies the Forms and hence is the only discipline which can give us genuine knowledge of Reality. The poet does not employ philosophical method and in his writings he 'imitates' or represents Appearances, not Reality. Hence the poet cannot give us genuine truth and knowledge.

Few would now accept the view that philosophy is the only source of knowledge. Nonetheless the cognitive credentials of literature have been challenged again and again in the history of Western thought. Since the Scientific Revolution, science has become for many the paradigm of knowledge. Positivists have attacked not only poetry but also religion and some of the humanities on the grounds that they do not follow the norms and standards of scientific methodology and hence cannot give us knowledge and truth. The poet is not a physical scientist or a social scientist or a historian, the positivist may say; therefore he is not qualified to provide knowledge which he has experimentally or empirically verified.

The modern cognitive critique of literature has a number of problems. In the first place, even if it were true that poets lack cognitive credentials, it is still possible that some of what they say is, in fact, true. Some independent argument has to be given to show that literature cannot contain true statements at all (eg. the argument, criticized earlier, that the sole function of literary sentences is to present and create).

Secondly, a statement need not have been conclusively verified to be true or to be cognitively valuable. As Popper reminds us, many theories are presented as hypotheses which then have to be examined and tested by the scientific or scholarly community. Asserted or implied statements in literature may have cognitive value as hypotheses.²³ It is not necessary that the originator of the hypothesis should have verified the hypothesis experimentally.

Thirdly, it is not, in any case, true that all literary authors lack the cognitive credentials necessary to legitimate the claim that they can give us truth. This can be shown in a number of ways.

(a) All sane people have a great deal of knowledge but not all people are specialists in an intellectual discipline such as physics, biology, history or sociology. Ordinary intelligence and a certain amount of human experience enable us to know many truths. Most people are capable of uttering

many true statements about their own lives and the lives of their family and friends, about their residential neighbourhood and the town or city in which they live, about the firm for which they work, the places they have visited and the people they have met. Most Canadians know a great deal about Canadian society, politics, history and geography without being academic specialists in these areas. They may also know a great deal about world history and geography, about the character of certain foreign cultures which they have read about or visited, and about international politics and so on.

This is not simply a question of knowing lists of facts. One may speak of the deep understanding of a nation or an international situation which some people have. Lenin understood in 1917 that a revolution was possible in Russia. Churchill understood in the 1930s what Hitler wanted to do and he understood in World War Two what the Soviet Union would do after the war. The English Prime Minister Anthony Eden did not adequately understand the international situation in the Suez Crisis in 1956. Nor did the Argentinian government understand the English national psyche (or the Thatcher government) in the Falklands crisis in 1982. While a knowledge of history is important in such situations, being a professional historian or sociologist will not guarantee that one has this deep overall sense of a situation

that successful world statesmen often have.

Many literary authors have a deep understanding of human emotion, motivation and character acquired from introspection and observation of others. Shakespeare and Dostoevsky are obvious examples and the kind of understanding shown by Tolstoy, James and Pope in the examples cited in Section I also illustrate the knowledge of people and of nations which literary authors have. We all have some understanding and knowledge in virtue of being human beings with some awareness of our own feelings and motivations, our own situation in life, our own involvements with other people and with the shared life of a nation or community. Literary authors tend to have a deeper understanding than the average person.

(b) Literary authors are often people of great learning in an academic sense. Dr. Johnson, Pope, Coleridge, Tolstoy, Goethe, Eliot and Joyce are among those with considerable knowledge of many disciplines. Further, an author may engage in 'specialist' research while writing, as Solzhenitsyn and Tolstoy did when writing historical novels. On the basis of such knowledge, then, an author may justify his or her claim to give us knowledge in his or her works. Similarly, Pope's great knowledge of literature and his own practice as a poet give him some entitlement to write about criticism and literature in his Essay on Criticism.

2. The second objection posits an incompatibility between truth and the aesthetic. In Chapter Three we saw that 'no-truth-value' theorists rejected the claim that literary works contained true statements on the grounds that, in literature, language is used 'presentationally', for aesthetic purposes. Our response to this was that literary language is also used to assert, to try to persuade and so on. In Chapter Four, where we examined the process of reading and understanding the literary work, we discussed the claim that the aesthetic attitude excludes the cognitive attitude. Our response was that, within an overall aesthetic approach, our cognitive awareness (i.e. our awareness of truth and falsity) not only does play a role, but, indeed must play a role if we are to have the appropriate aesthetic experience.

In this chapter we have been concerned with the role of truth and belief in our evaluation of literature. Here the objection that truth and the aesthetic are incompatible may be expressed using the concepts of 'aesthetic judgement', 'aesthetic value' and 'reasons in criticism'.

A. Aesthetic Judgement

Kant, in his Critique of Judgement, argued that when we appraise something aesthetically, we make aesthetic judgements. If we characterize a work of art or a scene in nature as beautiful or elegant or graceful or harmonious, we

are usually making an aesthetic judgement. Kant and many subsequent philosophers and critics regard aesthetic judgements as being a sui generis class of judgements distinct from 'theoretical' (or 'cognitive') judgements and moral judgements. A judgement to the effect that something is true or false is said to be a cognitive judgement, not an aesthetic one. Hence it can not be a judgement which aesthetically evaluates a literary work.

B. Aesthetic Value

When we approach a work of art with an aesthetic attitude, it is said, we evaluate it aesthetically, concluding, perhaps, that it is 'good' or 'fair' or 'bad'. These evaluative terms, so used, concern the work's aesthetic value not its cognitive or instrumental value. But now this question arises: how can truth have aesthetic value in itself or contribute to the aesthetic value of the literary work containing it? Surely, it might be argued, the value of truth can only be cognitive or instrumental, not aesthetic.

C. Reasons in Criticism

In the aesthetic writings of post-war analytical philosophers an area of enquiry has emerged which might be called 'reasons in criticism'. This area can be linked up with the concepts of 'aesthetic judgement' and 'aesthetic value'. When we evaluate a work aesthetically, the judgement

we make is an aesthetic one. The question may now be asked: what kind of reasons or evidence may be given in support of an ascription of aesthetic value to a work of art?

Those who deny the aesthetic relevance of truth and falsity in literature would argue that the presence of truth in a literary work cannot be a valid reason for praising the work, cannot count as evidence that the work is good or bad. The presence of truth in a discursive work (eg. a scientific or historical work) may, of course, count as evidence supporting a positive cognitive evaluation of that kind of work. What counts as a reason supporting an ascription of cognitive value may not count as a reason for an ascription of aesthetic value. The logic of evidence or reason-giving, it is argued, is not the same in 'aesthetic' contexts as it is in 'cognitive' contexts.

The second objection, so expressed, is not an easy one to overcome, but we believe it can be overcome. Our response to this objection will be gradually unfolded. The initial phase of our response is to reaffirm what we concluded in Section One of this chapter. There we argued that critics and ordinary readers do in fact praise literary works for their insight and truth when evaluating them 'as literature' or 'as art'. We also suggested that this seems an appropriate way of experiencing and evaluating these works. A prima facie case, then, has been presented in

support of our intuitions concerning the relevance of insight and truth to literary evaluation.

Yet our intuitions also suggest that literature is judged differently from science or sociology. There is clearly something true in the argument that our approach to literature and our way of evaluating it are not the same as our approach to science, and our way of cognitively evaluating a scientific theory. It is often assumed that these two sets of intuitions are logically incompatible. However, it is one of the central arguments of Part Two of this dissertation that these sets of intuitions are not incompatible: we judge literature differently from the way we judge 'discursive' writings yet truth and insight can sometimes be relevant to literary evaluation.

One of the major causes of the belief that these intuitions are incompatible has been the emergence, since the eighteenth century, of a family of concepts centred around the notion of 'the aesthetic'. (It was in terms of these concepts that the third objection was stated). These concepts constitute a 'gestalt' or 'mind-set' which has powerfully influenced philosophical and critical reflection on art. These concepts have enabled modern thinkers to conceptualize, with far greater directness and simplicity than ever before, the differences between art and other things, and the differences between our experience of art and

our experience of other things. Yet this great advance in the history of aesthetics has been won at a certain cost, for the term 'aesthetic' (and the penumbra of beliefs, assumptions and theories surrounding it) can lead us to misrepresent our experience of literature. It can, as we have seen, wrongly lead us to regard truth, morality and the reader's beliefs as being irrelevant to the understanding and evaluation of literature. New words can illuminate some aspects of a phenomenon, but they may also obscure or distort other aspects.

Aestheticians need to face the possibility that the freight of concepts surrounding the notion of 'the aesthetic',²⁴ have the potential for being misleading if they are interpreted too narrowly. If we continue using these concepts in this context we need to ensure that they are, in fact, adequate to our experience of literature. These concepts must conform to our art experience rather than the other way round. In this connection it is worth noting that the term 'aesthetic' seems to have a narrow sense and a broad sense. This distinction is not easy to make but some examples may help to make it clear. The narrow sense of 'aesthetic' is exemplified by the following statement:

Tolstoy and Dickens are greater novelists than Flaubert, though they are often aesthetically inferior to him.

Such remarks²⁵ may not be very helpful but they are often made. In this instance what seems to be meant is that Flaubert is a superior stylist, has a greater facility with language and, perhaps, writes works which have more 'formal unity' than those of Tolstoy and Dickens. Yet, it might be said, the sweep, power and sense of life in the works of Tolstoy and Dickens make them at least the equal of Flaubert as novelists.

Dostoevsky and D. H. Lawrence have often been criticized as stylists and have been unfavourably compared with writers like Flaubert and James. In the narrow sense of 'aesthetic' they might be said to lack the aesthetic mastery of the latter writers. Yet this judgement does not mean they are inferior as novelists, for their works often have a power, depth, profundity and intensity that marks them as great works of literature. We might say that, in the broad sense of 'aesthetic' they have written works which are at least as good, aesthetically, as those of Flaubert or James even if, in the narrow sense, they are aesthetically inferior. When we say that a novel is aesthetically good in the broad sense, we mean that, considered as a whole, it is a good novel or a good work of literature (we have an intuitive grasp of what this means). But when we say, in the narrow sense of 'aesthetically', that a certain novel is good aesthetically, this remark is not synonymous with the

statement that it is a good novel, for the former remark is considering only some aspects of the novel and not the novel as a whole, qua novel or qua literature.

If we think of aesthetic value in a restricted way (i.e. in the narrow sense of 'aesthetic') we will not encompass the value of a literary work qua literature. The value of a work qua literature would have to be thought of as an amalgam of aesthetic value (narrowly construed), cognitive value and moral value. If, however, we use aesthetic value in the broad sense, it becomes possible to allow such features of a literary work as insight, profundity, truth and originality of vision to contribute to the work's aesthetic value (its value qua novel, qua tragedy, or - generically - qua literature). That is, we need not say it is good aesthetically (in the narrow sense) and it is profound and it contains insight. Instead we can say that it is good aesthetically (in the broad sense) because it is profound, contains insight, is beautifully written, well structured, etc..

We are now in a position to extend our response to the second objection. We have already argued that critics and ordinary readers do, in fact, praise some literary works for the insight or illumination they give us. It can now be argued that, in the broad sense of 'aesthetic', judgements which ascribe aesthetic value to a literary work can

sometimes be supported by (among other things) pointing to the presence of truth in that work. The presence of truth can be a reason for ascribing aesthetic value, can be the evidence for or ground of an aesthetic judgement. Since it has already been shown that truth is not a sufficient condition of literary merit, it follows that the presence of truth is not always a reason for giving a favourable critical judgement. Rather, it is sometimes a reason.

When is it a reason? The best way to answer this question is by adducing particular literary works which may appropriately be praised for the truth or insight they offer (this was the method employed in Section One of this chapter). Why is the presence of truth sometimes a reason for praising a literary work? How can truth or insight contribute to the literary merit of a work if the value which truth has by itself is cognitive rather than aesthetic? To give a general reply to this question is not easy, but the answer seems to be that the presence of truth can sometimes enhance the power or wit or depth or complexity or profundity or intensity of a work and our experience of it. Where a particular scene in a work is insightfully true-to-life the presence of insight can make the scene powerful or moving or convincing or humourous. And the truth of a sentence in a literary work can sometimes contribute to the sentence's felicitousness or power or significance.

We stress the word 'or' because truth can contribute to literary merit in different ways in different works. Many scenes in the works of Dostoevsky and Lawrence which are insightfully true-to-life give power, depth and intensity to those works. Truth-to-life in other novels may not contribute power and intensity but may help make scenes convincing, touching or amusing.

3. A third objection to the claim that truth can contribute to aesthetic value is this: what is important about literary representations is that they offer new ways of seeing, individual personal visions of life, fresh perspectives - not that they be 'true'. Part of the reason Kafka's novels and Sartre's Nausea are praised as literature is that they present original and highly individual visions of life. But it makes no sense to ask whether their respective visions are true or false.

A number of points can be made in response to this objection. Firstly, it is true that artists often express their own sense of life - life as they experience it. It is also true that the originality and individuality of the expressed vision of the artist is part of his or her aesthetic achievement. Someone writing very like Kafka now would be derivative, or, at least, far less original and individual than Kafka was. However, it should be noted that these observations undermine extreme notions of literary

autonomy, for they allow the cognitive value of original visions of life to contribute to aesthetic value. Originality of viewpoint or vision can be important in cognitive and aesthetic contexts.

Secondly, it is true that the true/false distinction cannot be easily and simply applied to artistic visions of life in the same way as it is applied to statements like "The cat is on the mat", "Two and two make four" or "President Abraham Lincoln is dead". But one can ask how true of life a vision is. Is life always like this? How full or comprehensive a picture of life is this? Is the author in effect saying "Life is generally like this" or is he saying "Life is sometimes like this" or "These are certain aspects of life"? If an artist shows people being continuously cruel to each other and never kind, we may feel this is true to certain aspects of life. But if the artist seems to be urging us to believe that life is always like this, we are likely to feel that his vision is not true of all of life as the artist claims, but true only of some of life.²⁶ The question of the adequacy of the vision of the area of life it purports to be about can always be raised, and this is done by questions of the type we have just been asking. The simple true/false distinction is not used here. Rather the notion of "true of all...", "true of some...", "sometimes true of some...", etc., can be used.

Thirdly, it does not follow that there are difficulties in applying the notion of truth to all literary works simply because there might seem to be difficulties in applying the notion to some works expressing a highly personal vision of life. We have already given examples of insight in literature in Section I, and many other examples could be given. Hamlet illuminates the nature of deep psychological conflict and the effects it can have on a person. The Misanthrope shows us why complete honesty, always saying what one really thinks, is undesirable.

4. A fourth objection to the view that truth can contribute to aesthetic value is that literature (and the arts generally) does not contain truth in the sense of rational, paraphraseable 'truth'. If literature contains insight it is 'intuitive' and cannot be stated in propositional form. Discursive writing contains truth apprehended by reason; art contains insight experienced intuitively, non-rationally.

This objection opens up many large questions in epistemology and philosophy of mind which cannot be dealt with here. I would agree that we often experience insight in literature in an aesthetic experience where we perceive the sensory, expressive, formal, representational and intellectual dimensions of the work in one unified many-layered temporal whole. The sense of understanding has an

immediate, concrete and emotional quality, for the understanding is experienced in exactly this sensory, expressive, representational, structured whole. But does this mean that literature does not contain paraphraseable truth? In the first place, literature does contain explicitly stated propositions about reality in prose essays, poetic essays, commentary in novels, and so on. Secondly, in trying to understand the themes of, eg., Julius Caesar or "The Liar" or Princess Casamassima we attempt to describe as sensitively as possible what the work is 'about' thematically, what it illuminates. Such descriptions are important in literary criticism because they enable us to refine and clarify, often by trial and error, our immediate sense of what the work is about. Sometimes our immediate apprehension may be faulty or incomplete. This is one central reason for the existence of literary criticism and the activity of teaching literature. Someone may misunderstand Julius Caesar or "The Liar" and discussion helps the person to a better understanding. Such discussion often involves attempts to paraphrase or outline the general thematic import of the work.

Thirdly, how can we be sure that the alleged 'insight' we experience really is an insight? How do we represent this 'insight' to ourselves or communicate it to someone else? How do we tell others what we think we have

learned from a literary work? We attempt to express it sensitively and accurately in language, abstracting from the work but also referring to it in such a way that the other person can see what the insight is and how it is embodied. (This is what we did in Section I). In these exchanges it is possible that others may point out that the alleged insight is not in fact true, or not quite true as stated, or only partly true. In claiming to experience an insight we are claiming to see or understand that something is the case, that something is true (it may be a complex and not easily stated truth or set of truths). The notion of 'insight' involves the notion of understanding correctly, of seeing correctly how things are, in short the notion of truth.

Summary

- (a) The Cognitivist view that truth guarantees literary merit is erroneous but so is the Absolute Autonomy view that truth has no influence or bearing on literary value.
- (b) Truth can sometimes²⁷ contribute to literary merit. It does so by enhancing certain qualities of the work qua literature. It contributes to the aesthetic value (in the broad sense of 'aesthetic') of the work as a whole.
- (c) The fact that truth can sometimes enhance literary merit does not mean that the standards by which we judge literature

are the same as those by which we judge physics or psychology. It is not the case that we extract the paraphraseable content of a literary work and assess the work in terms of the cognitive value of the statements and ideas thus extracted. Rather, we approach the work as literature, our cognitive and moral awareness operative within an overall aesthetic attitude. Literary evaluation is, therefore, different from cognitive evaluation; the standards by which literature is judged are different from those governing science, social science and philosophy. In this sense literature is autonomous. Yet it is also true that the presence of truth may sometimes enrich the aesthetic value of literature. We can acknowledge the aesthetic relevance of truth without denying the relative autonomy of art and artistic value and without treating literature as if it were science.

CHAPTER SIX

BELIEF AND NEGATIVE AESTHETIC EVALUATIONS

There are ideas and beliefs so prosaic, outlandish, or perverse in their innermost structure that no great or good poetry can come from them: for instance, Hitler's racialism. It is this negative consideration that to me finally proves the intimate positive relation between belief, thought and poetry. If there were no relation, there would be no reason either why the most perverse or idiotic beliefs should not be convertible into great poetry. They are not.

(Erich Heller, The Disinherited Mind, p. 159)

Section I Examples

In experiencing and appraising literature as literature is it permissible to criticize the work on cognitive or moral grounds? Do cognitive or moral deficiencies (or the reader's perception of cognitive or moral deficiencies) in a work negatively affect the aesthetic value of that work? We shall focus primarily on the beliefs, values or attitudes expressed in literature.

The question under discussion has come to be known as the 'problem of belief'. This problem concerns the clash between what poets say and what their readers believe to be true¹

and the consequences of this clash for our appreciation of the poems, plays and novels in question.

In Chapter Five we rejected pure cognitivism and we do so here also. The view that a literary work must be bad (qua literature) if we regard its viewpoint as false, is one that runs contrary to our experience of literature. Secular readers, for example, usually have no difficulty in acknowledging the artistic greatness of literary works informed by a religious Weltanschauung (eg. many Greek epics and tragedies; Christian romances like The Faerie Queene; Christian epics such as Dante's Divine Comedy or Milton's Paradise Lost; the religious short poems of Herbert and Donne; Eliot's Four Quartets, and so on). We judge literature as literature not by purely cognitive or moral standards but by literary standards.

A hard-line autonomy theorist might appeal to such considerations in support of the view that we should never criticize literary works (qua literature) because we disagree with the beliefs expressed or embodied in them. The literary critic must be tolerant of all viewpoints and must suspend his disbelief if the work is to be experienced as literature. The argument here is descriptive and prescriptive: it claims to describe our experience of literature and it also suggests that this is how we should read literature.

This theory has great plausibility and there is much in it that we agree with. The descriptive claim is plausible because readers and critics enjoy and admire many works informed by beliefs they do not themselves accept. The prescriptive claim seems to bear out our view that a critic who regarded as bad all works expressing beliefs different from his own, would have to be characterized as grossly intolerant and unsympathetic. Indeed it would have to be doubted that such a critic really understood what literature and literary standards were, for his or her criteria of evaluation would seem to have been cognitive or moral rather than artistic. Nonetheless, we reject the hard-line Autonomy view that critics never (and should never) criticize a work because its viewpoint is unacceptable.

Let us take the descriptive version first and ask whether it adequately describes our experience of literature and the practice of literary critics. Here we shall employ the method that was used in Section One of Chapter Five - the method of examining specific examples from literature and criticism so as to build a prima facie case against absolute conceptions of literary autonomy.

(a) In The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, T. S. Eliot has this to say of the ideas in Shelley's poetry:

The ideas of Shelley seem to me always to be ideas of adolescence....²

I find his ideas repellent; and the difficulty of separating Shelley from his ideas, and beliefs is still greater than with Wordsworth.³

It might be objected that Eliot is intolerant of ideas which differ from his own but he denies that this is the case:

I am not a Buddhist, but some of the early Buddhist scriptures affect me as parts of the Old Testament do; I can still enjoy Fitzgerald's Omar, though I do not hold that rather smart and shallow view of life. But some of Shelley's views I positively dislike, and that hampers my enjoyment of the poems in which they occur; and others seem to me to be so puerile that I cannot enjoy the poems in which they occur. And I do not find it possible to skip these passages and satisfy myself with the poetry in which no proposition pushes itself forward to claim assent.⁴

(Eliot's language of personal reaction ("I positively dislike", "seems to me", "I do not find") can be re-expressed in a more 'objective' manner as aesthetic judgements about properties of the aesthetic object. When other critical appraisals cited in this chapter are expressed in the language of personal reaction the reader may reformulate them in the language of judgements about the work itself. In the examples given it seems clear that the critics would be willing to commit themselves to judgements of the latter type. A further point to note is that Eliot may be inconsistent in criticizing Shelley while enjoying Fitzgerald's Omar, which he claims contains a "rather smart and shallow view of life").

(b) In Biographia Literaria, Coleridge comments on Wordsworth's Ode: An Intimation of Immortality, a poem in

which the speaker is reflecting on the fact that his youth, and all that goes with youth, is gone. Coleridge agrees that Wordsworth is entitled to use the Platonic myth of metempsychosis as a kind of 'poetic assumption' in the poem (it is not asserted; there is no attempt to persuade us of its truth). But Coleridge objects to a passage in which the poem's speaker, having described the activities and games of a six year old child in a fairly realistic way, eulogizes the child thus:

Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind, -
Mighty prophet! Seer blest!
On whom these truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er the Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by.

Although Coleridge thinks we should "suspend disbelief" about metempsychosis and accept its use in the poem, he finds that these lines strain our credulity. After we have been given the picture of the six year old child playing games we are expected to accept the idea that this child is a philosopher, a prophet, one who has a profound understanding of things. But this clashes so strongly with our common-sense beliefs about what six-year old children are really like, that we cannot go along with it intellectually or imaginatively. Coleridge comments:

In what sense is a child of that age a philosopher?
 In what sense does he read 'the eternal deep'?
...Children at this age give us no such information
 of themselves...

Coleridge reflects on what might be meant by the passage and concludes thus:

In what sense can the magnificent attributes above quoted be appropriated to a child, which would not make them equally suitable to a bee, or a dog, or a field of corn; or even to a ship, or to the wind and waves that propel it? The omnipresent Spirit works equally in them as in the child; and the child is equally unconscious of it as they.⁶

(c) Many modern writers have developed idiosyncratic and intensely private visions of life which are expressed in their poems, plays and novels. Such visions are sometimes opaque and obscure, not least because they lie so far outside the mainstream of Christian and secular humanistic thought and sensibility. Literary works which articulate such 'private apocalypses' (to use a phrase of Harold Bloom's) often evoke highly conflicting responses among critics precisely because of the character of the ideas they embody.

Lawrence and Yeats are two such writers. F. R. Leavis and others regard Lawrence as a great artist and praise, in particular, his profundity and his 'diagnostic insight' into the individual psyche and the difficulty of personal relations in modern civilization. Yet the judgements of Middleton Murry and T. S. Eliot were harshly negative, and even today Lawrence has his detractors. Even though, as Frank Kermode has observed, Lawrence allows his

ideas to be tested and sometimes ironically undercut by what happens in the novels, it nonetheless seems to be the case that some critics find the enjoyment of his works impaired because they cannot go along with his beliefs and assumptions. Thus M. H. Abrams, a critic not given to making immoderate judgements, writes:

We have been assured that D. H. Lawrence is one of the few English novelists in the Great Tradition; yet, for all the power of the individual scenes, perhaps other readers share my imperfect accord with many of his protagonists: the Aaron of Aaron's Rod, for example, who deserts his wife and children to give unfettered scope to his ego, only to end by delivering his will over to the writer Lilly...

(d) In Dante's Divine Comedy there are scenes in which we see sinners, represented in a dehumanized way, undergoing sadistic and revolting tortures in Hell. Humanists (whether Christian, Liberal or Marxist) can hardly believe that any human being deserves such degrading punishment. And how can we accept the poem's view that this suffering is not only required by divine justice but is also an expression of divine love? This is at once a cognitive and a moral problem: a case of apparent contradiction (divine love sanctioning unloving torture) and a deviation from ethical humanism. Since Dante chooses to present these tortures in vivid detail and give them a theological justification, the cognitive and moral difficulties become artistic difficulties, for the reader's negative reaction to these

scenes impairs his or her enjoyment of them. Douglas Bush⁸ has found this part of Dante's poem objectionable in this way.

A number of comments can be made about these examples. In the first place, it should be noted that the works discussed here are important and well known. Our point could have been made even more bluntly by choosing or inventing other examples. Thus, a work which seriously propounded the absurd view that everything in the world is either an orange or a goat would be likely to arouse cognitive dissent in us and hence mar our pleasure. Similarly, a non-comic work depicting vicious tortures and informed by a genuinely held cruel and sadistic viewpoint would probably evoke some moral dissent and revulsion in the reader.

Secondly, one may disagree with some of the critical judgements quote above. Shelley's ideas do not affect all critics as they affect Eliot; Lawrence's ideas and preoccupations do not produce dissent in everyone; Coleridge's reading of Wordsworth's Ode has been challenged (eg. by Cleanth Brooks, in The Well Wrought Urn⁹); and the precise authorial viewpoint of Aaron's Rod has to be established by careful interpretation. We are not suggesting that all of the above appraisals are 'correct'. Rather, our point is that critics do make this kind of appraisal. Indeed

it is possible that every experienced reader of literature can think of some works which have aroused in them a cognitive or moral dissent that interfered with their enjoyment of the work.

Thirdly, one can distinguish between these critical judgements and purely cognitive or purely moral judgements. One might 'extract' the Weltanschauung of a work by Dante or Lawrence and then attempt to decide, by philosophical, scientific or social scientific analysis, whether these ideas were true or false, coherent or incoherent, plausible or implausible. This would be a purely cognitive evaluation and one would clearly be taking a cognitive attitude rather than an aesthetic attitude. And a judgement about the morality or immorality of some of these paraphrased doctrines would be a moral rather than an aesthetic evaluation.

In the examples analyzed above, however, it is clear that the critics in question are not giving such purely cognitive or moral evaluations. Rather they are saying that their literary appreciation of the work as a whole is disrupted by the dissent aroused in them. They are clearly approaching the works as literature.

Fourthly, it should be observed that, while in one literary work the viewpoint obtrudes, in another it may not. In the former case the viewpoint is being pushed strongly: we feel the author is trying to persuade us or even preach at

us. In didactic poetry a 'message' is communicated by explicit statement or by allegory (as in the romance). Drama and prose fiction may also have a message that forces itself on us.

In other works, however, we do not feel that a viewpoint is being forced on us. In Wordsworth's The Prelude, for example, we find many ideas about Nature, the relationship between child and mother, and the development of a child's mind. Yet these ideas seem to lie in the background as assumptions or as brief digressions integrated into the narrative. The poetry of George Herbert is infused with strong religious belief, yet in many of his poems he is not preaching or trying to persuade.

Even within one work there are degrees of obtrusion. Milton believed that both the story of Paradise Lost and his theological analysis of the Fall were true. Nearly all readers will 'go along with' the assumptions on which the plot is based while they are reading the poem. Our awareness that Milton believes the story does not arouse dissent. However, Milton's belief in his theological analysis of the Fall 'stands out' more in the poem. Because of this, some have experienced dissent while reading these passages, though many have not.

And just as, within one work, some beliefs obtrude more than others, so, in the oeuvre of one artist, the same

beliefs may obtrude more in one work than in another. Pontecorvo's films The Battle of Algiers and Burn both have a Marxist, anti-colonialist viewpoint. In the former work - a masterpiece - the viewpoint is perfectly integrated into the dramatic structure of the whole. In Burn, however, the Weltanschauung obtrudes in a clumsy and irritating fashion. The dramatic integration of beliefs in literature and film is as important as the character of the beliefs themselves, though, as we shall see, it is very much to be doubted that just any set of beliefs whatsoever could be adequately integrated into a literary work.

An objection might now be raised. It might be granted that the type of critical judgements quoted above are not uncommon, and, indeed, that they are appropriate and legitimate, considered as evaluations of literature qua literature (or considered as aesthetic evaluations in the broad sense of 'aesthetic'). However, it would not follow from this that everything critics write when evaluating literature is similarly appropriate. It could be argued that such evaluations may contain remarks that should not be counted as aesthetic evaluations (even in the wide sense we are using) but should, instead, be put into the category of philosophical, theological, ideological or scientific analysis and arguments. Thus, it might be said, Eliot's After Strange Gods and William Empson's Milton's God are

attempting to do something more than (or other than), evaluating literature, 'aesthetically', 'as literature' or 'as art'. Hence the 'descriptive' version of our argument needs modification: the fact that critics disagree with the beliefs of a work does not entail that all such disagreements and negative reactions should count as valid reasons in support of an aesthetic or literary evaluation. There may, in a sense, have been something prescriptive or normative in the argument all along.

This objection raises many difficult questions. In the first place, we must admit that not all evaluations of literary works based on a negative reaction to the beliefs embodied in them should count as literary or aesthetic evaluations. One can write a purely cognitive evaluation of the ideas of a work by extracting and paraphrasing them and cognitively judging this paraphrase. Such an assessment is not aesthetic. Further, if someone claimed to be reading works as literature but habitually denigrated all works embodying beliefs different from his or her own, then we should have to say that this reader was not actually treating literature as literature. The intent of the descriptive version of the argument was not to claim that all evaluations of literature are literary evaluations. Rather, it was to show, by an appeal to our actual literary experience, that there are some cases where we seem prima facie to be reading

literature as literature and experiencing negative reactions to the beliefs of the work, reactions which diminish the quality of our aesthetic experience. In stipulating that these are cases in which we seem to be reading literature as literature, we are, of course, presupposing some norms or standards (i.e. how to read literature as literature). But this does not mean that our argument is not descriptive! We are saying, "This is how we read and experience literature", and our literary critical examples were intended to serve as evidence that this description is correct. A distinct (and purely prescriptive) question is whether this approach ought to be continued. Thus we can preserve the distinction between the descriptive claim and the purely prescriptive issue (which will be discussed later).

Secondly, the question of how to categorize literary critical comments was raised. A number of problems have arisen as a consequence of the attempt by the New Critics to draw a circle around a domain of 'pure' literary criticism (or 'intrinsic' criticism or 'aesthetic' criticism) distinct from literary history, the history of ideas, the psychology of the author, and philosophical and moral criticism of literary works. One problem is that this circle has been drawn too narrowly, as is shown by our recognition that insight and our cognitive or moral dissent do play a role in aesthetic experience and can serve as reasons supporting

positive or negative aesthetic judgements. In Chapters Five and Six we have been trying to widen the circle and describe more accurately what goes on within it. Note, though, that we still seem to be committed to drawing a line or a circle somewhere, and this reflects our intuition that there is such a thing as reading a work as literature. But this raises another problem: how wide should the circle be? Should it be drawn in such a way that works like Eliot's After Strange Gods, Empson's Milton's God and George Lukacs's The Meaning of Contemporary Realism fall within it? Or should we insist on pigeonholing each paragraph or page or chapter of these books, placing some in the category of 'intrinsic' or 'aesthetic' criticism and others in the category of extrinsic criticism? (This, perhaps, is categorisation taken to an extreme).

The difficulty may be illustrated by examining Lukacs's "The Ideology of Modernism", the first essay in his book The Meaning of Contemporary Realism. There Lukacs argues that modernist literature is best characterized not in terms of form or stylistic technique, but rather in terms of the Weltanschauung or 'ideology' which underlies it.

Man, for these writers, is by nature solitary, asocial, unable to enter into relationships with other human beings. Thomas Wolfe once wrote: 'My view of the world is based on the firm conviction that solitariness is by no means a rare condition, something peculiar to myself or to a few specially solitary human beings, but the inescapable, central fact of human existence'. Man, thus imagined, may

establish contact with other individuals, but only in a superficial, accidental manner;...¹⁰

Lukacs rejects this ontology. For him, following Aristotle and Marx, man is a social animal and solitariness is "a special social fate, not a universal condition humaine...".¹¹ Lukacs regards 'realist' literature as representing human beings more truly than modernist literature, viz, as social beings rather than isolated, solitary creatures:

Man is zoon politikon, a social animal. The Aristotelian dictum is applicable to all great realistic literature. Achilles and Werther, Oedipus and Tom Jones, Antigone and Anna Karenina: their individual existence... cannot be distinguished from their social and historical environment. Their human significance, their specific individuality cannot be separated from the context in which they were created.¹²

Lukacs's ontological critique of modernism is accompanied by a moral one, for he attacks the nihilism implicit in the image of man as a solitary creature in a meaningless world. His literary criticism is profoundly informed by his uncompromising philosophical humanism, which ultimately leads him to regard modernist writing less highly than most modern critics have done.

Lukacs, then, believes that 'realist' literature is true-to-life in ways that modernist literature is not; the latter, we may say, is informed by a false Weltanschauung. But surely Lukacs would not argue that just any realist work will be better than a work by Joyce or Kafka. By this standard one might conclude that a mediocre popular novel was

better literature than Kafka's The Castle, Joyce's Ulysses or Beckett's Endgame. Perhaps, then, Lukacs means that the best realist literature is superior to the best modernist literature, because the former reflects reality more accurately. But could it not be argued that modernist literature accurately reflects or represents the way many people experience social life in 20th Century industrial societies (i.e. as solitary, atomistic, fragmented and alienated)? These questions, however, cannot be pursued here.

In the Preface to his Book After Strange Gods, T. S. Eliot says

The three lectures which follow were not undertaken as exercises in literary criticism.¹³

I am uncertain of my ability to criticize my contemporaries as artists; I ascended the platform to these lectures only in the role of moralist.¹⁴
(my italics)

Eliot, then, avows that his criticism in After Strange Gods is extrinsic rather intrinsic, and that his approach or attitude is moral rather than aesthetic. From the standpoint of the Church and 'tradition', Eliot condemns modern 'heresy' and 'blasphemy' in the beliefs of Yeats, Pound and Lawrence. He criticizes Yeat's attempt to 'fabricate an individual religion out of

folklore, occultism, mythology and symbolism, crystalgazing and hermetic writings.¹⁵

Lawrence is condemned for his "sexual morbidity" (p. 63), for "an incapacity for what we ordinarily call thinking" (p. 63), and for being "spiritually sick" (p. 65). Of Lady Chatterley's Lover Eliot says

The author of that book seems to me to have been a very sick man indeed.¹⁶

From these quotations it is clear that After Strange Gods is in a different category from the critical examples discussed earlier in this chapter.

Section II Tolerance and Dissent

To approach literature as literature is to approach it with an aesthetic attitude within which our cognitive and moral awareness are present. In Section One we suggested that, when we approach literature in this way, we can enjoy and appreciate works informed by beliefs (Christian, Liberal, Existentialist, Buddhist, Judaic, Marxist) which we do not ourselves accept. However, it was also argued that sometimes, when reading literature as literature, readers may experience a cognitive or moral dissent which adversely affects the quality of their aesthetic experience.

In this section we shall attempt to explain why our reactions to beliefs in literature are as they are. Two questions need to be answered here:

(a) When and why will the viewpoint of a work interfere with the reader's literary appreciation?

(b) Why is it that we can read a work whose viewpoint is radically different from our own, and experience no dissent and hence no disruption in our aesthetic experience?

In answering both of these questions one should note that there is, unavoidably, a personal element in a reader's response to literature. Different readers have different beliefs. A particular world-view may arouse dissent in some but not in others. As we have already seen, Lawrence's ideas are profound to some, repugnant to others.

Bearing these facts in mind we shall now attempt to answer question (a): when and why will the viewpoint of a work arouse in the reader a dissent which adversely affects his or her aesthetic experience of the work? T. S. Eliot and Erich Heller have discussed this issue in an illuminating way and we shall now explore some of their ideas.

T. S. Eliot, in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, said that while one can enjoy poetry which expresses beliefs different from one's own, a reader of "well-developed mind" will not be able to 'go along with' just any set of beliefs while reading poetry. But how is one to characterize the limits of our tolerance? Eliot gives the following criterion:

When the doctrine, theory, belief or 'view of life' presented in a poem is one which the mind of the reader can accept as coherent, mature, and founded on the facts of experience, it interposes no obstacles to the reader's enjoyment, whether it be

one that he accept or deny, approve or deprecate. When it is one which the reader rejects as childish or feeble, it may, for a reader of well-developed mind, set up an almost complete check.¹⁷

'Coherence' presumably means logical coherence. The meaning of 'mature' in this context is less clear but part of what is involved in taking a doctrine to be 'mature' is, perhaps, that one should be able to conceive of serious adults believing it. Taking a view to be "founded on the facts of experience" presumably involves a number of things eg. one does not regard the view as having been falsified by the "facts of experience"; there is some evidence for the view; it makes some sense of our experience, etc. There are difficulties here however. Many believe that Christian theism has not been falsified (and perhaps could not be falsified) and also regard it as a view which makes some sense of our experience. Yet they might deny that there is conclusive or even strong evidence for theism, believing instead that it rests on faith rather than proof and evidence.

Eliot's test seems unamenable to rigorous formulation but this is in part due to the nature of the subject-matter. Nonetheless there is a general point which accords with our literary experience: when a reader, in reading a work which pushes certain ideas strongly, is unable to take the viewpoint at all seriously or regard it as having any real

plausibility, then the reader's aesthetic appreciation of the work may suffer.

In his book The Disinherited Mind, Erich Heller makes some observations about poetry and belief. Commenting on Eliot's essay on Dante, he says

The more serious becomes a reader's love for Dante's poetry the more will he be tempted to accept his beliefs, or else be exasperated by the poet's wrongheadedness in holding them or his own inability to share them; and exasperation detracts from enjoyment. Differences of opinion are more worrying between lovers than between superficial acquaintances...¹⁸

Heller has touched on something of significance here and many readers will be familiar with the response he describes. Anti-semitic remarks in the poetry of Pound and Eliot have disturbed many.

An admirer of Lawrence will at some point have to come to terms with Lawrentian ideas. And if a person who loves the writing of Samuel Beckett eventually comes to think of Beckett's Weltanschauung as self-indulgent romantic pessimism, then that reader's appraisal of Beckett's art may change.

In the same footnote Heller adds:

Where beliefs embodied in poetry are as important as they are in what one may call confessional poetry, we cannot fully appreciate the poetry without being at least tempted to accept the beliefs as well. The measure of our appreciation will be the degree to which we experience the poem's strength in persuasion and our weakness in the face of the challenge. With such poetry before

us, complete immunity from infection would prove either the bluntness of our perception or the worthlessness of the poetry.¹⁹

Two observations are in place here. Firstly, Heller states an important truth about our literary experience but exaggerates when he refers to "the worthlessness of the poetry". To show what this truth is and wherein the exaggeration lies, let us assume that we are dealing with a literary work which strongly expresses certain beliefs and with a reader whose 'perception' is not 'blunt'. If our reader does not experience "the poem's strength in persuasion" then, other things being equal, it seems likely that this reader will value the poem less highly than he would have done if he had experienced it as persuasive. It seems to be an exaggeration, however, to say that in such a situation, our reader's inability to "experience the poem's strength in persuasion" would establish "the worthlessness of the poetry". We can conceive of a poet with the poetic abilities of a W. B. Yeats writing a poem which seriously expressed the view that Greek mythology was literally true. Many readers whose perception was not blunt might feel no inclination to be even partially persuaded by the poem. Yet they might regard the poem as being a reasonably good one.

A second point to observe is the existence of a phenomenon which Heller does not mention but which should be noted in this context. In The Dyer's Hand W. H. Auden

remarks that

There are a few writers, however, who are both artists and apostles and this makes a just estimation of their work difficult to arrive at. Readers who find something of value in their message will attach unique importance to their writings because they cannot find it anywhere else. But this importance may be shortlived; once I have learned his message, I cease to be interested in a messenger and, should I later come to think his message false or misleading, I shall remember him with resentment and distaste. Even if I try to ignore the message and read him again as if he were only an artist, I shall probably feel disappointed because I cannot recapture the excitement I felt when I first read him.²⁰

A 'persuaded' reader may admire the work initially but then at a later time value it less highly, for one of two reasons. (a) One possibility is that, though the reader still accepts the work's beliefs, the 'message' is no longer new and the reader experiences the work as having less power or force than it had in his earlier encounter with it. (b) The other possibility is that the reader now rejects the viewpoint by which he was once persuaded, and this change in beliefs affects the quality of his aesthetic experience of the work. It may now seem lacking in depth, profundity or power. And, as Auden observes, one may feel 'resentment' at the work or the author because one was seduced into wrong beliefs.

Having noted these qualifications to Heller's remarks, we may now examine a claim which he goes on to make in the same paragraph:

There are ideas and beliefs so prosaic, outlandish, or perverse in their innermost structure that no great or good poetry can come from them: for instance, Hitler's racialism. It is this negative consideration that to me finally proves the intimate positive relation between belief, thought and poetry. If there were no such relation, there would be no reason either why the most perverse or idiotic beliefs should not be convertible into great poetry. They are not.²¹

This is an insight of fundamental significance, stated in Heller's characteristically bold and forthright manner. Heller mentions 'prosaic', 'idiotic' and 'perverse' beliefs, and these adjectives invite commentary. By 'prosaic' beliefs he presumably means beliefs about uninteresting facts (eg. that dogs have tails, that rocks exist, that $1+1=2$, that most human beings have two legs). Heller is clearly right in saying that a literary work which had, as its serious and centrally informing viewpoint, one of these beliefs, could not be great literature. Such beliefs are uninteresting; they lack general significance for human life and hence are unlikely to contribute to the depth or resonance of a literary work's meaning. Only if the belief is expressed ironically or as an illustration of a more significant belief, would good literature be likely to result (Swift's slight piece, Meditation on a Broomstick, is a parody of Robert Boyle's Meditations).

'Idiotic' beliefs might include the following: rocks are more intelligent than human beings; all human beings live on the sun; the planet Earth has always had zero gravity; all

human suffering throughout history has been caused by New Zealanders. No sane person could seriously believe such patently false propositions. And surely Heller is right in saying that no great work of literature could be created around such 'idiotic' beliefs.

Heller's reference to "Hitler's racialism" seems intended as an example of perverse beliefs. Let us imagine a novel about the Holocaust, which depicts the murder of Jews in considerable detail, and in which the author repeatedly tells us that these killings are morally right actions motivated by altruism. This novel, no matter how well written, could hardly be great literature. Our cognitive and moral dissent and revulsion would disrupt and perhaps destroy our aesthetic appreciation.

Similarly, a novelist who hated infants might write a novel embodying this attitude. Particular scenes might depict the torture and mutilation of babies and show these actions as being enjoyable and even morally good. Surely such a novel could not be great art.

Reflection on such examples makes it very clear that literature does not have an absolute autonomy. The aesthetic value of a work is not unaffected by the cognitive or moral value of the beliefs and attitudes in that work. Cognitive and moral judgements are sometimes good reasons or evidence for certain aesthetic judgements. Reason and the moral sense

are not anaestheticized in aesthetic experience. Literature is not read by just one part of the mind (imagination or emotion or the aesthetic sense). The whole of man's mind is active in reading literature as literature. Our cognitive, moral, emotional, imaginative and aesthetic capacities and awareness acts in cooperation in a certain kind of relationship, in which imaginative and aesthetic awareness try to predominate and to unify the whole experience. The concept of the 'aesthetic attitude' should be understood in this broader, more inclusive sense, rather than in the narrow sense of a totally 'pure' aesthetic attitude, wholly disengaged from reason and moral consciousness.

At the beginning of this section two questions were asked:

(a) When and why will the viewpoint of a work interfere with the reader's literary appreciation?

(b) Why is it that we can read a work whose viewpoint is radically different from our own and experience no dissent and hence no disruption in our aesthetic experience?

We have been answering question (a) and it is to question (b) that we now turn. These questions - and the answers to them - are clearly interrelated. If Heller is right in saying that works informed by "prosaic, outlandish or perverse" beliefs will arouse negative reactions in us, then it would seem to follow that works which we admire, but

whose seriously expressed viewpoint we do not accept, must be informed by beliefs which are not prosaic, outlandish or perverse. But we need to say more than this in answer to question (b).

An artist who wishes to write a play or poem or novel embodying his beliefs cannot afford to ignore his reader's common sense beliefs about reality and about what is right or wrong. He need not change the beliefs of his readers but he should be able to gain what M. H. Abrams has called our 'imaginative consent'.

The poet must still win our imaginative consent to the aspects of human experience he presents...²²

Abrams distinguishes imaginative consent from 'intellectual assent'. The latter involves our accepting the beliefs embodied in the work (eg. accepting Milton's theology when one reads Paradise Lost). Imaginative consent, on the other hand, does not require this. It is enough that what is presented in the work should not arouse cognitive dissent in us. Abrams quotes Coleridge's famous remark in the Biographia Literaria about the need for

a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith.²³

Thus, in reading Paradise Lost, our imaginative consent would not be won if at various points we felt that the ideas were absurd or completely implausible. Abrams's dissatisfaction

with the ending of Aaron's Rod would be an example of a failure to win imaginative consent: Abrams cannot go along with the ending because it impinges strongly on some of his beliefs about marriage and right action, thus evoking his dissent.

On what factors would, say, a secular reader's imaginative consent to Christian poetry depend? In his essay "Tradition and Experience", Douglas Bush asks the question

how far can the non-Christian reader appreciate and assimilate poetry more or less based on Christian belief, and belief of an older and more fundamentalist kind than that of modern liberal Protestantism.²⁴

Bush discusses some of the works of Dante, Milton, Herbert, Donne, Marvell and others, and concludes that

while we may not share the religious creeds of these poets, and while they would not be what they are if they had not held those creeds, their full and enduring appeal to us - artistic power being taken for granted - depends upon the degree to which their vision of the world and human experience transcends particular articles of belief.²⁵

The religious poet, says Bush, must "establish some common ground" on which both he and the secular reader may stand. This common ground is found in general human experience. The religious poetry of Herbert, for example, is accessible not only because of its apparently simple and direct style but also because it deals with

worldly allurements, rebellious self-will, the desire for discipline and humility and for the

renewal of spiritual energy, with conflicts and aspirations and defeats and victories that belong to all human life.²⁶

The difficulties which the anti-humanist depiction of human sinners in Hell pose for many readers was mentioned earlier. Significantly, Dante's artistic strategy attempts to overcome these problems by using a 'common ground'. As M. H. Abrams notes

...Dante inserts himself, a mortal like us, into the poem as the experiential center through whose eyes and sensibility we invariably view Hell, as well as Purgatory and Heaven. And he exhibits with entire credibility the terror, the anguish, the incomprehension, the divided mind and emotions of the finite and temporal intelligence which is forced to look upon the universe under the aspect of eternity. He repeatedly misapplies his sympathy, feels an irrepressible admiration for the strength and dignity of some of the sinners in their ultimate adversity, weeps with such an abandon of fellow-feeling that Virgil must sternly reprimand him, and when he hears Francesca's tender story, faints with pity.²⁷

To do so he appeals not merely to our theological beliefs (which we may yield or deny him) but also to beliefs and attitudes which are broader than any particular creed, and almost irresistably compelling; for all of us, whatever our doctrinal differences, share the humanity of his central character and so follow and consent to his entirely human experiences whether of the inhuman horrors of the doomed in Hell or the inhuman felicity of the Saints in Heaven.²⁸

Some readers may disagree with Abrams's view that Dante wins our imaginative consent, but the important point to note here is that a writer can use his artistry to create some common ground with the reader, based on our shared human experience, and thereby attempt to win our imaginative consent.

The importance of creating a common ground with the reader so as to elicit his or her sympathy and involvement can be seen in many works, not just in Christian poems. Authors are aware of how readers are likely to respond to certain authorial beliefs and attitudes or to certain kinds of depictions of sex or violence. They will usually want to avoid provoking the reader's cognitive and moral dissent from the overall attitude of the work. Consider the difficulties facing an author who wishes to write a novel with the following plot: a New York psychoanalyst, married with children, is bored with his life and decides to enliven it by throwing dice. He selects possible actions, lists them and throws dice to decide which actions he will undertake. His first list includes the option of raping his friend's wife and this option is selected for him by the number which comes up when he throws the dice. Later he includes such options as adopting new personalities. Now, if the author chooses to present these actions from the standpoint of the character and also invites us to accept and go along with the character's attitudes, he is faced with problems, for how can we go along with rape and hazardous experiments with one's personality. One of the strategies adopted by Luke Rhinehart in his novel The Dice Man²⁹ is to create common ground between the reader and the main character by showing the character being drawn into his dice experiments almost

against his will, feeling he shouldn't be doing what he is doing, finding it exciting and liberating. The reader is similarly drawn in and shares these responses with the main character. In the first half of the novel the author succeeds in involving us sympathetically with the character and his actions and feelings by creating this common ground.

A second way in which authors may win our imaginative consent to attitudes and actions we would not usually accept is by presenting the actions in a highly comic manner. Most of The Dice Man is extremely funny, especially when the main character develops a new type of therapy based on throwing dice in which the main aim is to break down the constricting routines of one's normal self by developing many selves. He becomes famous and sets up dice therapy centres throughout the United States. All of this is presented with a comic exuberance and the character's theories are presented with considerable rhetorical skill so that we continue to sympathize with him, though doubts and worries about where all of this may be leading increase in the reader's mind as the novel progresses. A comic presentation of unpleasant actions is also effectively used in farce, black comedy, and so on (eg. in many of Joe Orton's plays, Nabokov's Lolita, the film Eating Raoul which sympathetically presents murder and cannibalism, and in Lina Wertmuller's film Seven Beauties in which the main character is prepared to debase himself in

any way to survive in a German concentration camp). In many works of this type the strategies of creating a common ground and presenting the characters and events in a comic way are combined. In literature, as in life, of course, the comic attitude may be ineptly or distastefully deployed so that our imaginative consent is not won. But very often it is successfully employed and we go along with attitudes and actions we would not go along with in a non-comic literary work.

A third way in which attitudes and actions we would not usually accept may be successfully presented is by the ability of the writer to present these attitudes and events in a highly poetic, lyrical or beautiful manner. (A bitter pill is given a sugar coating, the strict moralist would say. It was not for nothing that Plato feared the seductive poetic and rhetorical abilities of the poet, nor is it an accident that he disliked laughter and the comic attitude). Other things being equal, depictions of sexual activity are more likely to be accepted if they are presented poetically rather than clinically. Joyce, in the final chapter of Ulysses, and Nabokov in Lolita, are often poetic in their descriptions.

Finally it might be argued that, although we do in fact have negative reactions to the viewpoint of a work, we ought to read literature in such a way that we never experience these reactions. There are compelling reasons for

rejecting this suggestion. In the first place, it is to be doubted that we could in fact bracket out our negative responses to a Hitlerian novel or a poem expressing utterly banal or obviously false beliefs. Secondly, such an artificial way of reading would be achieved at great cost. The reader's intelligence, common sense and moral awareness would have to be dulled considerably: he would take the idiotic and the banal seriously and might thereby become more receptive to nonsense, propaganda and morally repugnant ideas.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TRUTH, BELIEF AND POETRY IN ARISTOTLE'S POETICS

Introduction

Aristotle's Poetics¹ is one of the most profound and influential treatises in literary theory and aesthetics. Our interest in it is twofold.

In the first place, it contains philosophically important ideas about cognitive, representational and moral aspects of literature. Proleptic mention may be made of the following: poetry aims at 'universal' truth rather than 'particular' or historical truth; characters should be true to life, good and consistent; literary works may sometimes be criticized for containing contradictions, for depicting immoral actions, and for representing things that are 'impossible'; the tragic emotions of pity and fear have an ethical component (e.g. we feel pity at the sight of undeserved suffering).

Secondly, we have an interpretative aim. Whereas neo-classical theorists (such as Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds) stressed Aristotle's mimetic concerns (e.g. the doctrine that poetry imitates the universal), many modern

interpreters emphasize Aristotle's treatment of form, structure and organic unity. Oscar Wilde said that, in the Poetics, "we have art treated, not from the moral but from the purely aesthetic point of view".² Catharsis, he says, is "essentially aesthetic, and is not moral".³ In his article "A Marginal Commentary on Aristotle's Poetics",⁴ Roman Ingarden says of Aristotle that "he applies a criterion to the poetic work that has nothing to do either with how "true" it is or how closely it resembles the extra-artistic reality"⁵ (my underlining).

If someone claimed that Aristotle judged art by purely moral criteria, we should say that this person was quite mistaken. We might go on to use words similar to Wilde's and say that Aristotle approaches art from an aesthetic, not a moral point of view. As we shall see, however, this does not mean that, for Aristotle, morality has nothing to do with aesthetic appreciation. Similarly, if someone claimed that Aristotle judged art by purely cognitive criteria, we would reject this claim and we might well repeat Ingarden's words in a polemical spirit. Vis a vis the pure cognitivist, Ingarden's statements are valid. But considered as a detailed interpretation of the Poetics Ingarden's article is misleading, for it leaves out a great many statements in the text which connect representational, cognitive and moral factors with aesthetic experience and

aesthetic value. It is not, for instance, literally true that Aristotle "applies a criterion to the poetic work that has nothing to do with how "true" it is or how closely it resembles the extra-aesthetic reality" (my underlining). As we shall see, Aristotle says a number of things which show that, for him, such mimetic considerations have something to do with aesthetic criteria. In short, it is a mistake to ascribe to Aristotle an absolute conception of artistic autonomy. In this chapter we shall try to show that Aristotle was a moderate autonomy theorist who recognized that literature has its own standards while at the same time believing that cognitive, representational and moral factors are linked to, and influence, aesthetic value.

Section One of this chapter looks at Aristotle's notion of 'universal truth' and its relation to his account of beauty and structural unity. Section Two analyzes the five types of critical judgement (which include cognitive and moral criticisms) outlined in Poetics Chapter 25. Section Three shows that representational and moral factors are involved in his four requirements for good character-portrayal. And Section Four argues that, for Aristotle, the reader's moral beliefs are 'in play' within the aesthetic experience of tragedy.

Section I 'Universal Truth', Beauty and Structure

Aristotle's treatment of truth and representation in literature has to be seen in the light of Plato's critique of poetry in the Republic. As we noted earlier, Plato thought of poetry as imitating the ceaselessly changing 'world of appearance' (the spatio-temporal physical world), which itself is a mere imitation of 'Reality' (the eternal, unchanging 'world' of the Forms). Because it does not imitate Reality, poetry cannot be a source of truth.

Aristotle rejects the Platonic idea of a world of transcendent universals. For him, the universal cannot exist apart from the particular substance, so that Plato's 'Reality' does not have an autonomous existence and his 'world of appearances' (when it is understood that universals exist in the particular things in this world) is real for Aristotle. Obviously, then, Plato's criticism is rejected. Imitation in poetry has to be imitation of particulars in this world.

Yet at the same time Aristotle links art with the universal, thereby forging a possible connection between art and truth. Literature, like works of history, imitates particular actions. Unlike works of history, however, it is not primarily interested in them in their particularity. It is, rather, interested in the universal features present

in a sequence of particular actions. As Aristotle says in Chapter 9 of the Poetics,

it is not the function of the poet to narrate events that have actually happened, but rather, events as they might occur and have the capability of occurring in accordance with the laws of probability or necessity. (Ch. 9, 1451 a 36-38).

The difference between the historian and the poet is that

the historian narrates events that have actually happened whereas the poet writes about things as they might possibly occur. (Ch. 9, 1451 b 4-5).

Because of this, poetry

is more philosophical and more significant than history, for poetry is more concerned with the universal, and history more with the individual. By the universal I mean what sort of man turns out to say or do what sort of thing according to probability or necessity.... By the individual I mean a statement telling, for example, "what Alcibiades did or experienced". (Ch. 9, 1451 b 5-11).

It may be noted in passing that Aristotle's conception of works of history as the recitation of facts about particular people and events is excessively narrow. We know that a historian may try to analyze and explain historical events, interpreting them within a broad analysis of an era or in terms of a general theory of human nature or social and historical change, social stratification, the 'organic' life-cycle of civilizations, or the influence on history of geography, climate, technological change and changes in modes of communication. Unaccountably, Aristotle ignores the 'philosophical'

perspective on human nature which informs the historical writings of, for instance, Thucydides.

Another point - and a more significant one - is that Aristotle uses the terms 'philosophical' and 'universal' in connection with poetry. This is very strong evidence against the view that Aristotle has no interest in truth in literature, no interest in the relation between the literary work and reality. 'Philosophy', for Aristotle, is a discipline which gives us truth or knowledge of reality (specifically, truth about universal features of reality). Therefore, in saying that poetry is 'philosophical' and concerned with the 'universal', Aristotle is saying that poetry accurately represents certain 'universal' characteristics of reality.

But which universal characteristics of reality is poetry "concerned" with? Aristotle answers this question rather cryptically in one sentence in the passage at 1451 b 8-9

By the universal I mean what sort of man turns out to say or do what sort of thing according to probability or necessity...

Or, in Gerald F. Else's⁶ translation,

'Universal' means what kinds of thing a certain kind of person will say or do in accordance with the law of probability or necessity...

In speaking of a 'sort', 'kind' or 'type' of person, Aristotle is not suggesting that characters in epic

or tragedy must be 'types' in the sense of abstract or allegorical figures or caricatures (as in Theophrastus, Medieval Morality plays, or the commedia dell' arte). Yet a tragic character can be a 'kind' or 'type' of person in a second sense of 'kind' or 'type', which refers to the person's central personality traits. Thus Hamlet is a melancholy, intellectual, indecisive type of person. In real life, when asked what sort of person so-and-so is, we reply by describing his or her dominant character-traits.

Further, in real life a certain kind of person will be likely to do a certain kind of thing in a particular situation. Thus it is highly probable that Mahatma Gandhi, Brendan Behan and Groucho Marx would each react in different ways if confronted by a rude and belligerent person. Every day we make judgements about how this or that person will probably act in this or that situation. And our capacity to make such judgements with some degree of accuracy rests on our knowledge of human nature (e.g. our knowledge that what one does is influenced considerably by the kind of person one is; our awareness of the profusion of personalities that exist, etc.).

Ordinary people have such knowledge but the poet should have a superior understanding of human beings. In answer to Plato's objection that the poet lacks knowledge, Aristotle sees the great poet as having a deep knowledge of

people and life. When the poet creates characters and places them in situations, he or she must be concerned with what that kind of person would probably do in that kind of situation, and this presupposes that he or she has some knowledge of human psychology. As Else remarks, Aristotle's answer to Plato

posits that the poet must know Man, in some way, before he sets out to write about him. Aristotle, like his master, requires the poet to go to school and discipline himself; only the school is not the Academy but the broad scene of life itself, and the discipline is not metaphysics.⁷

And, as Monroe Beardsley puts it, Aristotle believes that the poet

cannot fake psychological knowledge - he must understand human nature. He must have true general knowledge of certain psychological mechanisms; for without these he cannot even make a good play.⁸

Aristotle, then, believed that poetry is more 'philosophical' and more 'significant' than history. History aims at a true representation of particular events whereas poetry is concerned with truly representing general features of human action (what such-and-such a person would probably or necessarily do in a particular situation). In saying this, Aristotle is saying that poetry must be true-to-reality. But it is not just any feature of reality that poetry should represent accurately. The proper domain of poetry is human action (and not, say, the movements of the planets). Within this domain the poet's interest is in

general features of human nature. This species of truth-to-reality has been called 'truth-to-human-nature' by John Hospers.⁹

But now there is a problem. Elsewhere in the Poetics Aristotle says that a good literary work must have a structure possessing organic unity. How, it might be asked, can a concern with truth-to-human nature (which seems to involve a relation between the literary work and a reality external to it) be reconciled with the emphasis on formal unity (which is said to be 'internal' to the work)? If it is assumed that aesthetic merit is based on 'formal', 'internal' matters, how can truth-to-human nature have any aesthetic relevance?

Before we attempt to answer this question we must examine what Aristotle has to say about literary structure. Aristotle assumes that a good tragic plot must be beautiful. A thing is beautiful¹⁰, he says, if it (a) has a unified ordering of parts and (b) has a "proper magnitude". The second condition is necessary because an object with a unified arrangement of parts cannot be perceived to be beautiful if its 'magnitude' or size is too small or too large:

therefore, neither would a very small animal be beautiful (for one's view of the animal is not clear, taking place, as it does, in an almost unperceived length of time), nor is a very large animal beautiful (for then one's view does not

occur all at once, but, rather, the unity and wholeness of the animal are lost to the viewer's sight as would happen, for example, if we should come across an animal a thousand miles in length). (Ch. 7 1450 b 37 - 1451 a 3).

This general theory of beauty is applied to tragedies: a tragedy is beautiful if it has (a) a unified ordering of parts and (b) a magnitude large enough to allow us to perceive parts, but not so large that it becomes impossible for us to perceive it as a unified, single thing. Since tragedy is the imitation of action (1450 a 16-17), the parts of a tragedy will be individual incidents and parts of such incidents. In a unified tragedy the incidents will be interconnected in a plot which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Each incident must play an essential role in the work, otherwise it will not be an 'organic' part of the whole. Much of this is expressed at the end of Chapter 8 of the Poetics in Aristotle's classic articulation of the idea of aesthetic or organic unity:

a plot, since it is an imitation of an action, must be an imitation of an action that is one and whole. Moreover, it is necessary that the parts of the action be put together in such a way that if any one part is transposed or removed, the whole will be disordered or disunified. For that whose presence or absence has no evident effect is no part of the whole. (Ch. 8, 1451 a 31-35).

Medieval, Renaissance and post-Renaissance theorists have also subscribed to the idea that beauty is "unity in variety", but this did not inhibit them from thinking that art could communicate truth. Post-Kantian

thinkers, however, found it far more difficult to combine the notions of formal unity and mimesis. The new emphasis on the autonomy of art and the new family of terms (e.g. 'aesthetic') that were used to articulate this modern vision of art, seemed to make cognitive and mimetic questions inapplicable to art qua art. The philosophical problem of whether one can consistently think of art, qua art, in terms of aesthetic or formal unity and truth becomes an interpretative problem for modern readers of the Poetics. Theoretically, four possibilities are open to such a reader:

(a) One could deny that Aristotle had a doctrine of organic or aesthetic unity. However, no modern reader could say this without being unintelligent or disingenuous, for it is clear from the passage just quoted that Aristotle does have a theory of aesthetic unity.

(b) One can deny the claim that Aristotle considered truth to have some bearing on aesthetic value. Thus Ingarden (and, most of the time, Telford¹¹) gives an 'internal' or 'structural' reading of apparently mimetic passages to support their view that Aristotle is an absolute autonomist with respect to cognitive and mimetic questions. (Telford, in his comments on Chapter 25, allows that, in Aristotle's view, the poet is not "free to violate truth or offend moral sensibility". His reading of mimetic-cognitive

passages in other chapters, however, is usually structural).

Strategies (a) and (b) try to make Aristotle consistent by denying that he espoused both of the allegedly inconsistent views. Strategies (c) and (d), however, agree that Aristotle expressed both views, but differ on the question of whether the views are consistent. (c) Murray Krieger, in his Theory of Criticism, argues that Aristotle inconsistently propounds an organicist theory (which Krieger thinks is original and true) and a mimetic theory (which Krieger views as outmoded and false):

In the midst of such prescriptions, all of which rest on the assumption of the tragic action as an utterly fabricated formal structure, the more static inheritance from Plato, both philosophical and terminological, keeps Aristotle fastened to more literally mimetic notions while he moves into his dynamic and organic theories. And we have noted that he retains a stubborn, if sporadic, faithfulness to the more reactionary doctrine throughout the treatise.¹²

(d) Finally it could be argued that Aristotle's formal and mimetic concerns are consistent.

Interpretation (a) is clearly false. Interpretation (b), while it is brilliantly argued and offers many philosophical insights, is, in the end, inadequate. Ingarden and Telford are forced to distort or ignore many passages which do not fit in with the view that Aristotle is a hard-line autonomist. We shall attempt to

demonstrate this in some detail in the rest of this chapter through an examination of the chapters and passages in which Aristotle's mimetic and moral concerns are most visibly present.

But are his mimetic and formal interests compatible? To the extent that one holds a hard-line autonomy theory, excluding truth and morality altogether from the aesthetic realm, one is likely to see Aristotle as being very inconsistent. Throughout this dissertation, however, we have been arguing that a more moderate conception of literary autonomy (a conception which allows a role for cognitive and moral awareness within the aesthetic experience) furnishes a more accurate account of our experience of literature - an account which acknowledges that we judge literature as literature while at the same time showing and explaining how cognitive, representational and moral factors are involved in and related to such aesthetic judgements.

If one can see that such connections exist, it becomes easier to see that many of Aristotle's mimetic and moral references posit such connections within the aesthetic experience and are, therefore, consistent with his view of literary autonomy. I say 'many' rather than 'all' because there do seem to be some inconsistencies in the Poetics. Our position, then, lies between (c) and (d):

Aristotle may not be completely consistent but he is much more consistent than he is often said to be by those who discern mimetic and formal interests in his work.

From these general reflections let us turn again to specifics. In Chapter 9 of the Poetics, as we have seen, Aristotle expounds a mimetic-cognitive doctrine - the doctrine that poetry is more philosophical than history because it is more concerned with the universal (what a certain kind of person will probably or necessarily say or do in a certain kind of situation).

Interpreters of type (b) (e.g. Ingarden) do not see this statement as expressing a concern with truth or accurate representation in literature. The world of the play is seen as a fictional realm, unconnected to and quite distinct from the real world. Ingarden and Telford claim that when Aristotle refers to probability and necessity he is not talking about probability and necessity in life, but, rather, about probability and necessity within the play. The 'principle' of probability and necessity is, for them, a purely internal, structural principle by which the events of the play are connected to each other, thereby making structural unity (and hence beauty) possible. On this view, our judgement that Hamlet would probably do X in situation S in Hamlet is not at all based on our belief that Hamlet, if he were a real person, would probably do X

in situation S in real life.

From our earlier discussion it is clear that we do not accept this interpretation. Aristotle's use of the terms 'philosophical' and 'universal' imply a connection between poetry and truth, between the literary work and reality. Thus, our judgement that Hamlet would probably do X in situation S in Hamlet is, in Aristotle's view, based on our belief that that type of person would probably do X in situation S in real life. Probability in the play is closely linked to probability in life.

But is this mimetic doctrine compatible with Aristotle's organic-structural principles? To answer this question we should note, first, that the principle of probability and necessity is 'internal' in the sense that it operates within the literary work. But it is wrong to think that it is solely internal (i.e. internal in the much stronger sense which entails that what is probable in a tragedy is not at all based on what is probable in life). The poet's knowledge of general psychological patterns in actual human behaviour is deployed in his construction of a unified plot in which character expresses itself in action and actions express character, in which the events seem to be causally interconnected. Beardsley points to the link between truth-to-human nature and structural unity in Aristotle's thought when he says of the poet that

he must understand human nature. He must have true general knowledge of certain psychological mechanisms; for without these he cannot even make a good play.... The assumed psychological laws must be true ones, because if they are not, the dramatic developments will not be inevitable, and the play will fall apart.¹³ (my italics).

Thus the artistic aim of creating a unified structure of interconnected events cannot be achieved if the artist lacks psychological knowledge and fails to represent with some degree of accuracy the general psychological patterns implied by the notion of "what a certain kind of person would probably or necessarily say or do in a certain situation". The principle of probability and necessity, then, is an internal artistic principle which is based on what is probable in life.

This intertwining of likelihood in life with artistic structure can be illustrated by citing some critical judgements which Aristotle makes in Chapter 16, where he discusses recognition scenes. The best kind of recognition scene arises naturally out of the plot (i.e. it occurs because the character does what that type of person would be likely to do in that situation).. Oedipus's recognition of who he is falls into this category, says Aristotle,¹⁴ as does the recognition of Iphigenia by Orestes in Euripides's Iphigenia in Tauris (ll.769-786). In that situation it is likely or probable that Iphigenia would wish to write a letter. By contrast, Aristotle

criticizes the other major recognition scene in the play (Iphigenia's recognition of Orestes, ll.800-830) on the grounds that it is highly unlikely, in that situation, that Orestes would say what he does. In a contrived fashion, Euripides has to put words into the character's mouth because he cannot find a better way of bringing about the recognition. The result, says Aristotle, is an aesthetically flawed scene. Orestes's action is not successfully integrated into the structure of events in the play. The underlying 'logic' of Aristotle's assessment might be represented thus:

improbable in life improbable in the play inartistic.

To sum up: Aristotle might not agree that "Beauty is truth, truth beauty", but he does believe that to achieve beauty in a literary work the artist must also achieve a considerable amount of 'truth-to-human-nature' or 'universal truth'. And the artist is interested in this kind of truthfulness not as an end in itself but, rather, as a necessary means to an artistic end.

These highly original ideas have considerable plausibility. To clarify and critically assess them it will be useful at this point to explore, in some detail and independently of Aristotle's thought, the problem of the aesthetic relevance of 'universal truth' or 'truth to human nature'. When we have reached some philosophical

conclusions on this question, we will then return to Aristotle's theory and consider (or re-consider) its strengths and weaknesses.

In the epic, the romance, ballad poetry, novels, short stories, and drama we typically find representations of the actions of characters. When a character does something in a certain situation we may ask whether such a person, in real life, would be likely to do the same thing in the same situation. Or, to use John Hospers's schematic rendering of the question, "would a person of type T, in circumstance C, [be likely to] do act A?"¹⁵ If the answer is yes, the character's act is true to human nature, and if the answer is no, the character's act is not true to human nature. How is truth to human nature related to aesthetic value in literary works which represent a sequence of actions?

There is no doubt that a failure to be true to human nature is sometimes a weakness in such literary works (and in film and television drama, which also represent a sequence of human actions). The reader can easily verify this from his own experience of literature. If he is in doubt he might subject himself to a steady diet of junk fiction and television, or, if he wishes to retain his sanity, he might examine literary critical writing to see that critics sometimes criticize works for 'psychological

improbability' or 'unrealistic character portrayal'.

To exemplify such critical appraisal I shall quote at length from a review of P. D. James's Innocent Blood (1980) written by Julian Symons,¹⁶ biographer and critic of Edgar Allan Poe, and a theorist and practitioner of English crime fiction.

P. D. James is an English mystery novelist who in 1980 published her first non-mystery novel. One of the central characters, an 18 year old girl, Philippa, was reared by 'adoptive' parents and now wishes to discover the identity of her natural parents.

Philippa learns that her real father raped a twelve year old school girl, and her mother then strangled the girl. They were sentenced to life imprisonment. Her father died in prison, her mother Mary Ducton is due for release in a month's time. Philippa sees her mother in prison, and after Mary's release rents a flat which they share. In the meantime Norman Scase, father of the raped girl, is planning to kill the released murderess, partly as a duty, partly in accordance with a promise made to his wife when she was dying of cancer.

The plot, says Symons, has "a melodramatic power", and James's writing often "has a solid stylishness touched by flashes of wit and observation". Despite these merits, Symons regards Innocent Blood as a failure, mainly because of its improbabilities. The minor characters are "much more plausible than Philippa, her mother, and the unlikely avenger Scase". Part of James's difficulties arise from the fact that she is not writing a crime story:

The puzzle element in a crime story has been a crutch for many.... Throw away the crutch and you stand on your own two fictional legs, with the need to justify action by means of character, not of mystery. And judged by its characters, Innocent Blood is strikingly implausible. (My italics)

Symons supports this assessment by examining the central characters, Philippa and her mother.

First, Philippa. An ordinary girl of eighteen, on learning that her mother is a murderess, might feel that she did not want to renew the family connection. Philippa's determination never falters, however, and in an attempt to make her very unlikely actions plausible, the author turns her from a human being into a quotation machine, a sure winner in any literary quiz. The first thing that comes to her mind on learning the appalling truth about her parents is a quotation from Bunyan. In a chat with her mother she quotes Heine's last words, at other times she quotes Donne and L. P. Hartley to herself, and at another still "some words of William Blake fell into her mind". Nor is her knowledge confined to literature. She is capable of making nice discriminations about eighteenth-century painting, and of distinguishing a trainee journalist from an experienced one almost at first glance. It is true that we have been told she is a clever girl, but she seems rather to be crammed with facts, facts which she is dismally eager to communicate.

Philippa's mother also belongs more to literature than to life. Although no more than a hospital medical records clerk before her imprisonment, Mary Ducton is not fazed by the Heine quotation, and says things like "You must excuse me if I seem socially inept", this acknowledgement of an ineptness hardly ever apparent being the only sign of her years in prison. This is indeed a highly literary novel, in which even a private detective employed by Scase quotes Thomas Mann. What would mother and daughter have talked about if Mary, as seems more probable, had been an ordinary woman damaged or brutalized by prison life, not interested in visiting the Brompton Oratory to see the Mazzuoli marbles?

It is because the loving relationship between Philippa and her mother is essential to the plot that it is - not very skillfully - forced on us. In such a book too we must be sympathetic to the central characters, and for this reason the actual crime is greatly softened, at least in Mary's telling. Her husband was gentle and timid, not sadistic. "It was a technical rape, but he wasn't violent". And when Mary came home and learned what had happened, she did not mean to strangle the child but only to stop her crying. This seems a kind of cop-out, making it easier for Philippa to love her mother. (my italics)

We do, then, criticize literary works on the grounds that the character would not have done A in circumstances C. But is 'truth-to-human nature' or 'universal truth' a necessary or a sufficient condition of literary merit in literary works which contain characters and depict a sequence of human actions?

It is surely not a sufficient condition, for one can imagine a boring, disunified novel in which all the actions are probable or plausible for the characters in question. One can also imagine a tragedy, in which all the actions are true to human nature, which fails to arouse pity and fear, contains many 'inorganic' scenes and is far too long to be experienced as a unity.

Nor does it seem to be a necessary condition of literary value that all the represented actions be true to human nature. A very good novel might contain an improbable and unconvincing action by a minor character in a scene that was not central to the plot or to the work's

thematic preoccupations. Though it is an aesthetic flaw, it may not disturb the entire novel's quality because of its peripheral location in the whole work.

Perhaps, then, truth to human nature is one of a number of determinants of aesthetic value. Or - focusing on the failure to be true to human nature rather than on the achievement of it - perhaps we can say that it is always an aesthetic flaw for a literary work to contain an action A, done by a character B, who we feel would not do A in that situation.

But Rene Wellek¹⁷ and others would disagree with this suggestion on the grounds that character-consistency and 'psychological probability' are not required in farce, comedy, surrealist works or fairy tales. 'Bad' characters often become benevolent or at least conciliatory at the end of a comedy, thereby helping to produce the 'happy ending' which is a convention of the genre. We can give our imaginative assent to this conversion without believing that such a person in that situation in real life would be likely to undergo such a change. In such surrealist works as the film L'Age D'Or (1930) by Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali, we accept bizarre actions and do not ask whether they are in character. And there is nothing to stop a writer from creating an experimental work in which motives are sometimes incomprehensible, in which characters lack

consistency and even spatio-temporal continuity. Such a novel or play would not be true to human nature but this need not be an artistic weakness if the work is intended to be a 'philosophical' examination of personal identity and consistency of character traits in human beings, or if it is a meta-fictional work whose real theme is the conventions of realist fiction.

From this we conclude that it is not always an aesthetic flaw for a literary work to contain an action that is not true to human nature. But perhaps a failure to be true to human nature is always an aesthetic flaw in certain kinds of literary works which are 'closer to real life' than fairy tales, farces, comedies, surrealist and meta-fictional works. The question is, what kinds of literary works would these be?

Here it will be helpful to use Northrop Frye's¹⁸ classification of what he calls 'fictional modes'. In his Anatomy of Criticism, Frye distinguishes between five types of fictional mode:

1. Myth
2. Romance
3. High Mimetic
4. Low Mimetic
5. Ironic

The principle underlying this typology is Aristotelian.

Aristotle conceived of the arts as being mimetic and analyzed them under the headings of the medium of imitation, the objects of imitation (i.e. what is represented) and the manner of imitation. The objects of imitation in 'poetry', he says, are human beings in action. 'Poems' can be classified in a number of ways, one of them based on the kind of human being imitated. Tragedy, he says, imitates people 'nobler' or better than ourselves, while comedy imitates those who are 'baser' or worse than ourselves. This, as we shall see later, seems to be a moral distinction, but Frye interprets it in a non-moral sense. Fictional plots, he argues, show a person doing something. The hero's "power of action" (i.e. what he is capable of doing) can be "greater than ours, less, or roughly the same" (p. 33). In myth the hero's power of action is greatest and it decreases as one goes down the list of modes until one reaches the ironic mode, where the hero's power of action is minimal. 'Our' power of action is conceived as being just below the centre of the list, in the fourth category (the low mimetic). The hero of myth, romance or the high mimetic enjoys a power of action "greater than ours"; the 'hero' of the ironic work has a power of action which is "less" than ours; and the low mimetic work has a hero whose power of action is "roughly the same" as ours.

To flesh out this skeletal outline we need to say more about the five modes, and we may begin with 'myth', a term which Frye uses in a restricted sense to mean "a story about a god" (p. 33). The divine hero (e.g. Zeus, Apollo) is "superior in kind both to other men and to the environment of other men" (p. 33) and because of this can do things which actual human beings cannot do.

The typical hero of a romance, says Frye, is a human being, not a god, but he is "superior in degree to other men and to his environment" (p. 33). The knights in Spenser's The Faerie Queene would be examples of this kind of hero, whom Frye describes as moving in a world

in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended: prodigies of courage and endurance, unnatural to us, are natural to him, and enchanted weapons, talking animals, terrifying ogres and witches, and talismans of miraculous power violate no rule of probability once the postulates of romance have been established. (p. 33).

The high mimetic mode includes "most epic and tragedy". The typical hero of a high mimetic work is a leader, a person "superior in degree to other men but not to his natural environment" (pp. 33-34). Thus a character like Odysseus, Oedipus, Lear and Othello has

authority, passions, and powers of expression far greater than ours, but what he does is subject both to social criticism and to the order of nature. (p. 34).

Though superior in degree to us, he cannot escape the

possibility of pain and death or the power which society has over him through law and moral condemnation.

The hero of a work in the low mimetic mode is "one of us", being "superior neither to other men nor to his environment" (p. 34). Because of this,

we respond to a sense of his common humanity, and demand from the poet the same canons of probability that we find in our own experience. (p. 34).

The low mimetic mode includes "realistic fiction" and "most comedy". Its heroes, says Frye, include Pamela, Clarissa Harlowe, Tess, Emma Bovary, Lord Jim and Kurtz.

Finally, we have the hero of the ironic mode who is inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration or absurdity.... This is still true when the reader feels that he is or might be in the same situation, as the situation is being judged by the norms of a greater freedom. (p. 34).

The ironic mode is characteristic of much of the fiction written in the last hundred years, especially 'modernist' fiction. Typical 'heroes' are: Murphy, Watt, Molloy and most of the other characters in Samuel Beckett's novels and plays; K. in Kafka's The Trial and K. in The Castle.

Three points should be noted here. Firstly, 'mode' does not mean 'genre'. The high mimetic mode, for instance, is found in two genres (tragic drama and narrative epic poetry); myth can be in prose or poetry; the low mimetic includes plays, novels and short stories.

Secondly, though Frye here speaks as if a particular literary work will be in one mode, he later allows (pp. 50-51) that a writer may combine modes in one work (e.g. Chaucer specializes in romance but is skilled in the use of low mimetic and ironic 'techniques'). Thirdly, Frye suggests that to move down the list of modes is to follow not only their logical order but also their historical order. Post-Classical European fiction, he says, "has steadily moved its center of gravity down the list" (p. 34). From premedieval myths (Christian, Teutonic, Celtic, late Classical) we move to medieval romance and thence to tragic drama and national epic during and after the Renaissance. Then,

a new kind of middle-class culture introduces the low mimetic, which predominates in English literature from Defoe's time to the end of the nineteenth century. (p. 34)

In the late nineteenth century and in this century "most serious fiction has tended increasingly to be ironic in mode" (p. 34). As modernist ironic literature moves away from realism, however, it seems to return to myth (as in Joyce and Kafka), which suggests to Frye that "Our five modes evidently go around in a circle" (p. 42).

The validity of Frye's historical thesis need not concern us here. Nor will we linger over Robert Scholes's assertion that the principle underlying Frye's classification requires him to have more than five

categories.¹⁹ The typology as it stands will suffice for our purpose, which is to see whether the representation of actions which are not true to human nature is always an artistic error in at least some kinds of literature.

As the reader may have noted, truth to human nature seems most relevant to the third and especially the fourth of Frye's five categories. The low mimetic hero's power of action is said to be closest to 'our' power of action, so that

we respond to a sense of his common humanity, and demand from the poet the same canons of probability that we find in our own experience. (p. 34; my emphasis)

The high mimetic hero of epic and tragedy, though superior in degree to us, is not superior to his natural environment and, further, must be sufficiently like us to engage our sympathy (and, in particular, our pity and fear). It is also true that in tragedy his actions must express his character and his character must be expressed in action. Hence, it might be said, in the high and low mimetic modes we generally expect the hero to act, think and feel as that type of person would be likely to act, think and feel in such situations in real life. (This, of course, does not mean that the writer of works in the other modes can completely forget about psychological coherence and probability. It would mean, rather, that these modes allow

the writer greater latitude in choosing actions for his characters in particular situations).

However, it is one thing to say that we usually or generally expect truth to human nature in high and low mimetic works, and quite another to say, as a universal rule admitting of no exceptions, that a failure to be true to human nature in a high or low mimetic work is always an aesthetic flaw. Is this second and much stronger claim valid?

It would seem not to be, for we can think of exceptions to the proposed rule. In Sophocles's Oedipus Rex we learn that, prior to the beginning of the play, both Oedipus and Jocasta had received prophecies foretelling their incestuous marriage. There is a great age difference between them and Oedipus's single-minded pursuit of the truth is one of his distinctive character traits. Despite these fears, Oedipus and Jocasta seem to have made no effort, either prior to their marriage or in the years since, to establish conclusively that they are not mother and son. When Oedipus entered Thebes after killing Laius, he would surely have heard the citizenry discussing the king's death, and Jocasta would surely have talked about it with Oedipus. When one thinks about these and other things in the play, one comes to the conclusion that many of these actions are improbable for the characters in question. Yet

Oedipus Rex is a great work of literature despite these improbabilities. In fact most of these improbabilities do not even occur to one when seeing a performance of the play or when reading it. We accept the 'premises' of the plot and allow Sophocles to work from them, as we might not do watching a naturalist drama with the same plot but without the atmosphere of Greek tragedy. The lack of truth to human nature in some of the actions of Oedipus and Jocasta does not seem to be an artistic problem in Oedipus Rex.

(The argument of the preceding paragraph, of course, presupposes the almost universally accepted view that Oedipus and Jocasta did not know that their marriage was incestuous. However, Philip Vellacott²⁰ in his article "The Guilt of Oedipus" (1964) and in his book Sophocles and Oedipus (1971), uses the improbabilities as evidence that Oedipus had sensed the truth all along but had hidden it from others and even from himself. E. R. Dodds²¹ accuses Vellacott of "treating Oedipus as an historical personage and examining his career from the "common sense" standpoint of a prosecuting counsel..." and concludes that "the common sense of the law-courts is not after all the best yardstick by which to measure myth.")

Shakespeare's King Lear seems to me to be one of the most magnificent and sublime works of literature ever created, yet Goethe, Tolstoy and A. C. Bradley thought it

full of improbabilities. (Bradley, in Shakespearean Tragedy,²² outlines at least fourteen improbable actions in the play). Cordelia's failure, in the opening scene, to express her love for Lear more strongly, may be taken as an example. If Cordelia is the embodiment of virtue she must be acting out of character. Yet the scene is convincing and dramatically effective despite the (alleged) improbability. How is this possible? The explanation is that the opening scene has a formal, stylized, ritualistic quality, so that we do not experience or appraise it by strict naturalistic norms. This quality establishes the characters as symbolic entities (Cordelia is a dramatic embodiment of the idea of unadorned goodness. Her symbolic role is later reaffirmed when, for instance, she says "O dear father, It is thy business that I go about" - a statement which links her with Christ). Though the ceremony of the first scene gives way to a more realistic mode of representation, the symbolic significance of the characters manifests itself throughout the play. Actions which would be improbable in life or in a naturalist or realist work are imaginatively convincing in King Lear.

But it might now be objected that King Lear and Oedipus Rex are high mimetic works, and that we should confine ourselves to the low mimetic category when arguing that a failure to be true to human nature is always an

artistic error. The low mimetic mode, after all, is the mode in which the hero's "power of action" is most "like ours". It is also the mode from which, as Frye observed, we demand "the same canons of probability that we find in our own experience" (op. cit., p. 34). But even here we can find counter-examples. As we have already seen, comic works (most of which Frye places in the low mimetic category) which are fairly 'realistic' throughout, may end happily when a 'bad' character reforms in a way that would be highly unlikely for such a person in such a situation in real life. Further, the possibility (which Frye allows) of an interweaving of fictional modes means that improbable actions in a predominantly low mimetic play or novel may work aesthetically in a phase of the work which is not in the low mimetic mode.

We have not, then, been able to find a type of literary work in which a failure to be true to human nature is always an artistic weakness. We could, of course, try to find a species of the genus 'low mimetic' in which psychological improbability is always an aesthetic mistake. Such a species could be defined as the class of literary works in which truth to human nature is always aesthetically necessary, but this circular definition would be useless. Any non-circular characterization of the species, however, will probably admit of counter-examples,

in which an improbable action may work aesthetically (e.g. in a mythic or 'romantic' phase of a predominantly low mimetic work).

But this does not mean that truth to human nature or 'universal truth' is aesthetically irrelevant. As we saw earlier, a failure to be true to human nature is often an aesthetic flaw. We know this on the basis of our aesthetic experience of particular literary works in which out-of-character-actions were experienced as aesthetic weaknesses. A non-circular, universal aesthetic rule cannot be derived from this experiential evidence, though the evidence does suggest some rough and ready generalizations or guidelines which will, of course, allow for exceptions. Thus: if an author wants us to be sympathetically involved with a character, he must be careful not to disrupt the involvement by showing the character doing psychologically improbable things which we do not find credible or convincing; if an author is aiming at realism (i.e. writing in a predominantly low mimetic mode), actions which are not true to human nature are more likely to be experienced as unrealistic. The exceptions to such maxims are usually provided by great writers who can make an improbable action imaginatively convincing.

We may now return to Aristotle's theory and make some comments on it. In the first place, it is quite

clear, as we hinted earlier, that Aristotle did not consider truth to human nature to be a sufficient condition of literary merit. A tragedy, for him, is good if, among other things, it arouses pity and fear and the catharsis of these emotions. A play which failed to do this would not be a good tragedy even if all the depicted actions were 'in character'.

Secondly, it does not seem that he considers it to be a necessary condition of a play's being quite good that it contain no actions which are untrue to human nature. Though he thinks Euripides's Iphigenia in Tauris contains an improbable (and hence artistically flawed) recognition scene, he does not seem to think that it is a bad play.

Thirdly, does Aristotle think (as Hospers,²³ for instance, did) that a failure to be true to human nature is always an aesthetic flaw? There are two reasons for thinking that he did not mean this. In Chapter 25 (as we shall see in Section Two) Aristotle states that the depiction of 'the irrational', 'the impossible' and 'the immoral' is an error and should be avoided if possible. But then he qualifies this by saying that if such depictions are artistically necessary they will not be errors. Aristotle's characteristic approach to aesthetic questions is to classify and generalize wherever possible, but to be aware of exceptions.

He offers approximate generalizations in Chapter 25 but does not propose strict universal rules. In doing this he follows his own maxim which says that one should only look for as much certainty as the subject-matter allows for. Given this approach we would expect Aristotle to say (a) that it is generally best to be true to human nature but (b) if a poet can make a scene work well aesthetically, he should include it in the play even though it contains an out of character action.

This general point is supported by a more particular one: in Chapter 9 Aristotle does not say that a failure to be true to human nature is always an aesthetic flaw. What he actually says is that "poetry is more concerned with the universal, and history more with the individual" - a far weaker claim. To say this, it is not necessary for Aristotle to maintain that every out-of-character action is an artistic mistake.

Fourthly, it should be noted that whereas Aristotle was discussing 'poetry' (especially epic and tragedy), we broadened the discussion to include all literary representations of human action. Aristotle could hardly have reflected on modes and genres that were unfamiliar to him (e.g. modern meta-fictional works). If his theory was original and insightful in showing the aesthetic relevance of truth to human nature, within a conceptual framework

that accorded autonomy to literature, it needs to be supplemented, and I have attempted to do this in this section. Character-realism does not have exactly the same importance and relevance in all types of literary representation of human action. Frye's theory of fictional modes was used to help us see how and why truth to human nature has this varying aesthetic relevance.

Section II Critical Judgement

In Chapter 25 of the Poetics Aristotle considers (a) the grounds on which a literary work might be criticized and (b) some possible answers to such criticisms. He is, in effect, investigating the nature of critical judgement, anatomizing the type of reasons which may be given in the practice of literary criticism. Five kinds of critical objection and twelve kinds of answers are examined.

Things in a literary work may be censured as being

- (a) 'impossible'
- (b) 'irrational'
- (c) 'immoral'
- (d) 'contradictory'
- (e) 'contrary' to 'technical' or 'artistic' correctness.

Of these five categories three seem to be mimetic-

cognitive in nature (i.e. the impossible, the irrational and the contradictory). The meaning of 'the impossible' and 'the irrational' is not defined but is, rather, suggested through the use of examples. If a poet shows a horse throwing both right legs forward at the same time (1460 b 18-19) or depicts a female deer with horns (1460 b 31-32), he is, says Aristotle, representing something which is impossible. The paradigm cases of 'irrationality' given by Aristotle concern the depiction of the gods of Greek mythology (he assumes they do not really exist). Impossibility and irrationality, then, are slightly different modes of representational inaccuracy, slightly different ways of failing to be true-to-reality. 'The contradictory' refers to inconsistent descriptions or inconsistent 'facts' within the world of the play (e.g. if Ulysses's father-in-law, Icarius, is a Spartan, it would be absurd that Ulysses's son Telemachus, who visited Sparta, did not know him. Cf. 1461 b 4-9). In addition to these mimetic-cognitive categories there is a moral category ('the immoral' or 'the morally hurtful') which refers to the depiction of evil in the literary work.

The fifth source of censure (being contrary to technical or poetic 'correctness') seems to invoke a conception of 'pure' aesthetic, literary or artistic evaluation. This is also suggested by the assertion that

there is not the same standard of correctness for politics and poetry, nor for any other art and poetry. (Ch. 25; 1460 b 13-15).

Each 'art' has its own criteria of 'goodness' or 'correctness'. The criteria for judging poetry differ from the criteria by which we evaluate the 'arts' of physics, philosophy, political leadership, building, or cabinet-making. It is evident that Aristotle is here articulating, with great originality, a conception of the autonomy of literature. But is this conception a moderate one, which allows cognitive, representational and moral factors to have some influence on literary merit, or a hard-line one, which considers such factors to be irrelevant to aesthetic evaluation? Ingarden and other interpreters from category (b) favour the latter interpretation.

It might seem as if this interpretation could be buttressed by referring to the sentences immediately following the remark just quoted. Writing of 'mistakes' or 'errors' in connection with 'rightness' or 'correctness' in poetry, Aristotle says

In regard to poetry itself, two categories of error are possible, one essential, and one accidental. For if the poet chose to imitate but imitated incorrectly through lack of ability the error is an essential one; but if he erred by choosing an incorrect representation of the object (for example, representing a horse putting forward both right hooves) or made a technical error, for example, in regard to medicine or any other art, or introduced impossibilities of any sort, the mistake is an accidental, not an essential one. (Ch. 25;

1460 b 15-21).

Shortly after this Aristotle says

Further, we must ascertain whether an error originates from an essential or an accidental aspect of the art. For it is a less important matter if the artist does not know that a hind does not have horns than if he is unskillful in imitating one. (1460 b 29-32).

It would, however, be a mistake to assume that in these passages Aristotle regards all types of representational inaccuracy as being aesthetically irrelevant. Let us suppose that an artist chooses to paint a scene in a realistic style and succeeds in capturing an incident in a life-like way except for his representation of a cat. He represents the cat as having the right number and type of limbs, organs etc. in more or less the right proportion and relative position, but somehow he fails to capture a cat's way of standing, sitting or lying. The cat looks stilted or stiff, like a statue, whereas the humans and other living creatures in the painting look alive and natural. Because of this we feel that the picture "doesn't look right". In this case (assuming that the cat's stiffness and stiltedness are not intended to have some symbolic or other meaning) the painting would have a flaw which was not the result of a wrong "choice" (e.g. choosing to represent a cat as having five legs; choosing to represent a horse "putting forward both right hooves"). The artist, then, has not made an error in the art of

biology or medicine. He has not, in short, made an "accidental" error. Rather, he has in this case made an "essential" error:

For if the poet chose to imitate but imitated incorrectly through lack of ability the error is an essential one; (My emphasis)

Having "chosen" a biologically correct conception of a cat, the artist has "imitated (it) incorrectly through lack of ability", has been "unskillful in imitating one" (1460 b 32). His 'essential error', then, is both an artistic and a representational mistake. Or rather: it is an artistic flaw precisely because of the lack of verisimilitude. By imitating incorrectly (= inaccurately) he has imitated incorrectly (= inartistically). In this case our mimetic-cognitive judgement about the representation of the cat supports our aesthetic judgement.

(As we saw in Chapter Six, cognitive and moral problems in a literary work may sometimes be, at the same time, aesthetic problems. Our dissent from a viewpoint we find absurd or highly immoral may impair the quality of our aesthetic experience. Cognitive and moral judgements may sometimes be the ground of an aesthetic judgement. The fact that artistic standards differ from scientific standards does not mean that questions about representational accuracy are never relevant to aesthetic evaluation).

Aristotle's remarks about artistic 'rightness' and 'inessential mistakes', then, need not be interpreted as meaning that cognitive and representational questions have no bearing on aesthetic evaluation. That this is so becomes very clear when we consider that Aristotle has outlined five sources of critical censure, of which 'artistic correctness' is only one. If Aristotle were a hard-line autonomy theorist, he would have excluded the other four categories - categories which involve representational, cognitive and moral factors. Those who regard Aristotle as a strict autonomist might now object by saying that his intention was to outline five possible sources of criticism, of which only one is relevant to the evaluation of literature as literature. If this were the case, however, we should expect Aristotle to say that the other four kinds of criticism could always be answered, could never be valid. But Aristotle does not say this. On the contrary, his view is that such criticisms cannot always be answered.

This is evident from such passages as the following:

- (a) ...if impossibilities have been represented, an error has been made; but it may be permissible to do this if the representation supports the goal of the imitation (for the goal of an imitation has been discussed) and if it makes the section in which it occurs, or another part of the poem, more striking. An example of such a situation is the pursuit of Hector in the Iliad. If, indeed, the goal of the imitation admits of attainment as well,

or better, when sought in accordance with technical requirements, then it is incorrect to introduce the impossible. For, if it is all feasible, no error should be committed at all. (Ch. 25; 1460 b 23-29; my italics).

- (b) There is justifiable censure for the presence of irrationality and depravity where, there being no necessity for them, the poet makes no use of them, as Euripides' handling of Aegeus in the Medea (in regard to the irrational) or in the same poet's treatment of the character of Menelaus in the Orestes (in regard to depravity). (Ch. 25; 1461 b 19-21).

In (a) and (b) Aristotle is saying that the depiction of the impossible or the irrational or the immoral is, prima facie, an error. Such errors are sometimes defensible, for the scenes in question may serve a valuable aesthetic purpose in the work. Where such artistic justification is lacking, however, the errors are not defensible and the work may legitimately be criticized for representational inaccuracy or a failure to be true-to-reality (the impossible and the irrational) and for depicting the immoral.

- (c) We must consider contradictions in the same way as the refutation of arguments is carried on: that is, with reference to whether the same object is involved, and in the same relationship, and in the same sense, so that the poet, indeed, has contradicted himself in regard to what he himself says or what a sensible person might assume. (Ch. 25; 1461 b 15-18).

Two things should be noted here. Firstly, Aristotle's defence of a literary work against the charge of contradiction does not consist in saying that

contradiction is a cognitive, non-aesthetic matter. On the contrary, he says that

We must consider contradictions in the same way as the refutation of arguments is carried on:...

Secondly, he does not tell us what happens if, after examining the apparent contradiction in this way, we find that there is, indeed, an inconsistency in the work. Presumably we should seek an artistic justification: the poet is, perhaps, being ironic, or the inconsistency may be in a speech by one of the characters and hence be intended by the author to reveal character (e.g. that the person is a liar, has a bad memory, is confused, etc.). But what if the inconsistency lacks such an artistic justification? Aristotle does not give an explicit answer to this question. However, given his view that a literary work is flawed if it contains impossible, irrational or immoral actions which lack an aesthetic rationale, it is reasonable to suggest that he would make a similar judgement about works containing contradictions which served no aesthetically valuable function. Further, if this were not so there would be no point in seeking (as Aristotle does) an aesthetic justification for some contradictions. If a contradiction in a work of literature is never a flaw its presence therein will never require aesthetic justification.

From an examination of Chapter 25 of the Poetics,

then, it is clear that, for Aristotle, literary works may sometimes be flawed if they contain cognitive or moral 'errors' of the type we have been discussing. It is, therefore, wrong to think of Aristotle as a hardline autonomy theorist who considers cognitive, representational and moral considerations as having no bearing on aesthetic evaluation.

Section III Character Requirements and Truth to Reality

Though character and plot are interconnected, we can, by a process of mental abstraction, attempt to consider character in isolation from plot and other aspects of the literary work. We can then ask the following question: if the poet wishes to write a good tragedy, what general principles should govern his or her depiction of characters? Or: what features of character-portrayal will, other things (e.g. plot) being equal, tend to make the tragedy a good one?

Aristotle is, in effect, answering this question when he abruptly opens the fifteenth chapter of the Poetics by saying

In regard to character, there are four points to be aimed at. (1454 a 15).

Characters should be (a) 'good', (b) 'appropriate', (c) 'like' and (d) 'consistent'. Insofar as the tragedian's characters have these characteristics the play will tend to be good; insofar as they lack them the play will tend to be flawed.

The precise meaning of these four categories has been the subject of much debate by commentators. Our purpose is not to enter into all of these complex debates but, rather, to show (a) that at least some of the desirable character-properties involved truth-to-reality

and hence (b) that since these features contribute to aesthetic value, Aristotle is in effect arguing that truth-to-reality in character-portrayal can contribute to aesthetic value.

The first desirable feature of characters is that they should be 'good'. This statement is most naturally and plausibly read as meaning that characters should be morally good. In Chapter 2 of the Poetics Aristotle had already said that tragedy imitates 'noble' men while comedy imitates 'base' men. In Chapter 25, as we have just seen, he says that the poet should not depict immoral actions unless they play some necessary aesthetic function in the work as a whole. And as we shall see later, Aristotle believes that the best kind of tragedy has a hero who is morally better than average but not morally perfect.

Aristotle suggests that different types of people are 'good' in different ways:

For, both a woman and a slave have their particular virtues even though the former of these is inferior to man, and the latter is completely ignoble. (1454 a 20-22).

Modern readers might disagree with this judgement. Nevertheless it is clear that Aristotle (and many of his contemporaries) believed that certain things are true of women and slaves in real life. If the poet wishes to represent female or slave characters as being 'good', he must represent them as being good in ways that are possible

for actual women and slaves, given their social position in Ancient Greek society. The poet, Aristotle is saying, must be true-to-reality in this way. More precisely, he must be true-to-reality as Aristotle and his contemporaries believed it to be.

Since the goodness of characters contributes to aesthetic value in Aristotle's view, and since a certain type of truth-to-reality (as reality is believed to be) is involved in depicting 'good' characters, it follows that for Aristotle, this type of truth-to-reality (as reality is believed to be) contributes to aesthetic value while the absence of it may reduce the work's aesthetic quality.

The second principle of character-portrayal is that character must be appropriate. For it is possible for a person to be manly in terms of character, but it is not appropriate for a woman to exhibit either this quality or the intellectual cleverness that is associated with men. (1454 a 22-24).

As with goodness, so with appropriateness: because women in real life lack (or are believed to lack) certain properties, the poet must not represent female characters as having those qualities. A failure to be true-to-life (or true to life as Ancient Greeks conceived it) in the respects will result in a lack of appropriateness and, consequently, in a diminution in aesthetic quality. It is unlikely that this doctrine will have a seminal influence on modern feminist aesthetics. However, we come not to

praise Aristotle on this point, but rather to clarify the way in which he may be burying himself. Aesthetic value, he suggests, is enhanced if the characters are 'appropriate' and diminished if they are not. To create appropriate characters the poet must achieve a certain type of truth to life (as it is believed to be). Therefore that type of truth to life contributes to the aesthetic quality of a tragedy, in Aristotle's view.

The third desirable feature of characters is that they should be "like" (homoios). But like what? Regrettably, in this sentence (1454 a 24) Aristotle does not tell us. However, as Butcher, Else and others suggest, he seems to mean "like us" (i.e. like human nature, like human beings in general). He has already used the term homoios in saying that the ideal tragic hero, though morally superior to us and of high social rank, must be "someone like ourselves" (1453 a 5). If the hero does not have a disposition to feel in some degree the normal universal human emotions (anger, fear, affection etc.) and does not have any imperfections or human frailties, we will not find his or her fate tragic, we will not feel sympathy. Tragedy requires a sense of shared humanity; hence tragic characters must be "like us". Each character, then, must be true to life in the sense of representing or embodying the universal trait of 'being human', and this truth to

life is aesthetically necessary.

Aristotle's fourth principle is that characters should be "consistent". If the author represents a character who is inconsistent or changeable, then the character should be represented as being consistently inconsistent. In Iphigenia at Aulis, says Aristotle,

the heroine's role as a suppliant does not fit in with her character as it develops later in the play (1454 a 32-33).

The consistency requirement has its basis (or part of its basis) in Aristotle's beliefs about human character and personality in real life. We are able to say what kind of person so-and-so is because that person exhibits at least some consistency in his or her behaviour. However, if we examine a person's behaviour over a certain period and find it hard to see consistency, we would say that the person was inconsistent, erratic or changeable during that period. This changeability was consistently exhibited and hence we would say that the person was consistently inconsistent.

For a tragedy to work aesthetically the catharsis of pity and fear must take place. This requires that the audience have an emotional involvement with the tragic hero, and this involvement, in turn, is dependent on (among other things) the believability and plausibility of the character, on the poet's capacity to create the 'illusion of reality' (the sense that the character is a real

person). If the tragedian depicts one of the dramatis personae doing things which are 'out of character', there is a danger that the 'illusion of reality' may be lost and with it the involvement which readers must have if the tragedy is to work aesthetically. Hence, for Aristotle, the consistency requirement is a mode of truth-to-reality and, further, a mode of truth-to-reality which contributes to aesthetic value.

Section IV Aesthetic Emotions and Moral Belief

If Aristotle is a pure autonomist we should expect him to place not only truth, but also morality, outside the realm of the aesthetic. We have already seen that Aristotle does not consider cognitive and representational questions to be aesthetically irrelevant. We shall now argue that he does not exclude the moral from the aesthetic sphere either.

In the Poetics he does not explicitly raise or discuss the question of the relationship between the moral and the aesthetic, between moral judgement and aesthetic judgement, between the moral attitude and the aesthetic attitude. Indeed, a modern reader who approaches the Poetics with these questions in mind cannot easily tell how Aristotle might have answered them.

It is clear that he rejects Plato's strict moralism

as well as his strict cognitivism. We do not treat poetry as poetry if we adopt a pure moral attitude to it and evaluate it by purely moral criteria, for poetry has "its own standard of correctness" (1460 b 14). But is he arguing that we should adopt a pure aesthetic attitude to literature? Is he suggesting that our moral awareness be switched off, that our moral beliefs be placed in abeyance, for the duration of the play?

Careful study of the Poetics reveals that he is not suggesting this. In the first place, as we have already seen, Aristotle believes that characters should be "good" (Ch. 15) and that depiction of evil actions is a prima facie flaw (Ch. 25), justifiable only when aesthetically necessary. The moral objection is overridden by artistic criteria when the scene containing evil actions is a necessary or organic part of the whole structure.

A contemporary liberal might object that Aristotle is being too moralistic in regarding the depiction of evil as being prima facie offensive. Aristotle could respond by saying that the modern liberal will adopt exactly the same position on the depiction of violence, viz. that 'gratuitous' (aesthetically unnecessary) violence should be avoided, but violence which is artistically essential is justifiable. The offensiveness of an unnecessary scene involving violence impairs and disrupts our aesthetic

response.

But why does the depiction of evil or violence cease to be offensive when it plays an essential function in the work as a whole? Since Aristotle does not answer this question one has to speculate. Possibly the answer is this: scenes of evil or violence often arouse pain and horror, and if we feel the scene was unnecessary we respond negatively, feeling irritated that the artist should have subjected us to it. This impairs the quality of our aesthetic experience. When the scene is an organic part of the whole, however, we do not have this negative response. Rather we accept it as part of the natural and inevitable progression of the plot. A further point is that the integrated scenes of evil or violence in, say, Macbeth, remain in the memory assimilated into the moral meaning of the plot as a whole (ambition and evil are seen to result in fear, guilt, and punishment). By contrast, a gratuitous scene of evil or violence may linger by itself in memory, lacking the implicit moral commentary in which assimilation would have cloaked it. There, in its a-moral isolation, it is more likely to be 'imitated' and thus produce real evil or violence.

If these suggestions are correct, Aristotle was concerned with two things. Firstly, as a theorist of art, he was concerned with the negative effect which the

presence of (aesthetically unnecessary) immoral actions in a play can have on our aesthetic response to it. Secondly, as a pure moralist, he was concerned about the effects which those scenes may have on our future actions. In the Poetics he writes as a theorist of art. Hence it is the first concern which is evident in that book.

To support the claim that Aristotle allows a place for the moral within the aesthetic experience, we may also appeal to his analysis of the tragic emotions of pity and fear. These have to be understood in the context of his account of the 'function' of tragedy.

In Aristotle's view, we cannot fully understand a thing unless we know its 'final cause' (i.e. its function or purpose). To understand the nature of tragedy, then, we need to know its function. We read tragedies or go to see them in theatres because the experience is pleasurable in some way. Yet the pleasure afforded by a tragedy is different from the pleasure we take in watching a comedy. Hence Aristotle tries to discover the distinctive type of pleasure (the "proper pleasure" as he calls it) which it is the function of tragedy to produce in us. This "proper pleasure" arises when we experience

(I) pity and fear at the imitation of pitiable and fearful actions in the play, and

(II) the 'catharsis'²⁴ of pity and fear.

A tragedy is aesthetically good insofar as it successfully fulfills its function of producing this "proper pleasure" in us, and aesthetically bad when it fails to fulfill its function.

What kind of plot is most likely to produce the desired tragic emotions? This is the question with which Aristotle is grappling in Chapters 13 and 14 of the Poetics. But before we can elucidate his answer to it we need to know exactly what he means by 'pity' and 'fear'.

Pity, he says in Chapter 13, is "aroused by someone who undeservedly falls into misfortune" (1453 a 5; my emphasis). The word 'undeservedly' is significant, for it implies a connection between emotion and moral belief. To know that someone's fall into misfortune is 'undeserved', we must have certain beliefs about what is just and unjust, deserved and undeserved. Therefore, to feel the emotion of pity during a tragedy our sense of justice must be operative, our moral beliefs (about what is 'deserved' and 'undeserved') must be 'in play'.

This connection²⁵ between pity and moral judgement is clearly stated in the Rhetoric, Book II, Chapters 8 and 9. Early in Chapter 8 Aristotle says

Pity may be defined as a feeling of pain caused by the sight of some evil, destructive or painful, which befalls one who does not deserve it, ... (1385 b 13-14; my italics)

And in Chapter 9 Aristotle explicitly links the emotions of pity and indignation with 'moral character'.

Most directly opposed to pity is the feeling called Indignation. Pain at unmerited good fortune is, in one sense, opposite to pain at unmerited bad fortune, and is due to the same moral qualities. Both feelings are associated with good moral character; it is our duty both to feel sympathy and pity for unmerited distress, and to feel indignation at unmerited prosperity; for whatever is undeserved is unjust, and that is why we ascribe indignation even to the gods. (1386 b 9-16; my italics).

People with moral character regard both unmerited bad fortune and unmerited good fortune as unjust. Pity is the ethically-based emotional response to the former as indignation is to the latter.

The function of tragedy, then, is to produce pity and fear. It is a necessary requirement of feeling pity and fear that one has moral beliefs of the type just described. Therefore, for Aristotle, the reader or spectator of a tragedy must have these moral beliefs present and operative within his or her aesthetic attitude. We do not turn off our humanity and become 'pure aesthetic perceivers' for the duration of a tragedy.

Having examined Aristotle's account of pity and fear we may now turn to his views on plot. Certain types of plot enable a tragedy to perform its function well, while other types do not. In Chapter 13 Aristotle describes three unsuitable types of plot and then outlines

what he considers to be the ideal tragic plot. The three undesirable kinds of plot are characterized in the following way:

it is clear, first of all, (1) that unqualifiedly good human beings must not appear to fall from good fortune to bad; for that is neither pitiable nor fearful; it is, rather, repellent. (2) Nor must an extremely evil man appear to move from bad fortune to good fortune for that is the most untragic situation of all because it has none of the necessary requirements of tragedy; it both violates our human sympathy and contains nothing of the pitiable or fearful in it. (3) Furthermore, a villainous man should not appear to fall from good fortune to bad. For, although such a plot would be in accordance with our human sympathy, it would not contain the necessary elements of pity and fear; for pity is aroused by someone who undeservedly falls into misfortune, and is evoked by our recognizing that it is someone like ourselves who encounters this misfortune (pity, as I say, arising for the former reason, fear for the latter). Therefore the emotional effect of the situation just mentioned will be neither pitiable nor fearful. (Ch. 13; 1452 b 1453 a 7).

A great deal of thought and argument is packed into these sentences. The principle underlying the categorization of undesirable plots involves two sets of variables, each set containing two members. Two types of person are considered: (i) the perfectly moral person and (ii) the extremely evil person (people in between these extremes are not, for the present, taken into account). There are also two types of outcome in a plot involving a change of fortune: (i) a change from good fortune to bad (happiness ---> unhappiness) and (ii) a change from bad

change from bad fortune to good (unhappiness → happiness). The first is often called a 'fatal' plot and the second a 'fortunate' plot.

Our two sets give us four possibilities: a good hero in a fortunate plot, a good hero in a fatal plot, a bad hero in a fortunate plot, and a bad hero in a fatal plot. Or, schematically:

Good man → happiness

Good man → unhappiness (1)

Bad man → happiness (2)

Bad man → unhappiness (3)

The first of these possibilities is not mentioned by Aristotle since he thinks it self-evident that there is nothing tragic about a good man becoming happy. Accordingly, the other three possibilities are labelled plots 1, 2 and 3, respectively, following the order of Aristotle's exposition.

Plot 1 (good man → unhappiness) is untragic because it is a "neither pitiable nor fearful; it is, rather repellent" (1452 b 36). We feel fear for someone "like ourselves", but the perfectly moral person is not like ourselves. Consequently, we do not fear strongly for him. We feel pity at the sight of undeserved suffering. Ex hypothesi, the "unqualifiedly good" hero's suffering is undeserved. Yet Aristotle says that his fate is not

pitiable. Why? The answer must involve a distinction between the "unqualifiedly good" hero and the hero of the plot type which Aristotle will favour. The suffering of both is undeserved, yet the latter's fate is pitiable while the former's is not. The hero of the best tragedy, as we shall see, must be morally above average but not perfect, and must make some miscalculation or mistake which helps cause his bad fortune. His suffering is undeserved in the sense that it cannot be considered a just punishment for his mistake or miscalculation (or for anything else he has done). Yet he has done something which leads to his suffering and this fact deepens and intensifies our sense of pity. By contrast, the moral perfection of the hero of Plot 1 seems to rule out the possibility of miscalculations which can cause suffering. This hero, then, does nothing to cause his own fate; his destiny is not influenced by his character but seems, rather, to happen by chance. Consequently, we feel morally repelled and outraged at the sight of this undeserved and gratuitous suffering.

In all of this it is clear that Aristotle presupposes the involvement of the reader's moral sense. Without this involvement we would not know that the hero was morally perfect, that his punishment was undeserved, and we would not feel moral indignation.

Plot 2 (evil man → happiness) is

the most untragic situation of all because it has none of the necessary requirements of tragedy; it both violates our human sympathy and contains nothing of the pitiable or fearful in it. (1452 b 37 - 1453 a 1).

We feel no fear on the evil person's behalf during the play since he is not going to meet an unfortunate end. And at the denouement we feel no pity since he is not suffering.

Aristotle here introduces a third 'necessary requirement' of tragedy, but, unfortunately, does not explain what it means. In addition to pity and fear there is 'philanthropia'. This word is the root of the English words 'philanthropy' and 'philanthropic', and it has been translated in different ways. Thus a plot is said to be 'philanthropon' if it

- (a) is "in accordance with our human sympathy" (Golden)
- (b) "appeals to" or "arouses" our "sympathy" (Else)
- (c) "appeals to" or "arouses" the "human feeling in us" (Bywater²⁶)
- (d) "is humane" or "befitting or appropriate to human values" (Telford).

Philanthropia seems to involve both emotion ("sympathy", "human feeling") and moral belief ("human values"). In the case of plot 2, our belief that evil ought not to be rewarded with happiness leads us to judge that an evil character does not deserve to prosper. Because of this we cannot sympathize with the evil hero of

plot 2; we cannot be glad that he has prospered. Our moral judgement guides and structures our emotional response.

Whereas plot 2 fails to satisfy any of the "necessary requirements" of tragedy, plot 3 (evil man → unhappiness) fails two of the tests but passes one:

although such a plot would be in accordance with our human sympathy, it would not contain the necessary elements of pity and fear; (1453 a 2-4)

Since we believe that evil deserves to be punished, we feel that the plot 3 ending is just and we are glad that the evil hero suffers misfortune. The ending does not go against the grain of our ethically grounded sympathies and feelings. As Aristotle remarks in the Rhetoric,

If you are pained by the unmerited distress of others, you will be pleased, or at least not pained, by their merited distress. Thus no good man can be pained by the punishment of parricides or murderers. (Book II, Chapter 9; 1386 b 26-27).

To see an evil man fall into unhappiness may be in accordance with our human sympathy but it is not pitiable or fearful. Since we consider the unhappiness to be deserved we do not feel pity, and the fact that the hero's extreme villainy makes him unlike "ourselves" prevents us from feeling any great fear on his behalf. Again, our moral beliefs are involved (a) in judging that the hero's fate is deserved or just and (b) in seeing that the hero is extremely evil and therefore unlike "ourselves".

Having criticized plots 1, 2 and 3 Aristotle now describes the type of plot which, he believes, will result in the finest or best tragedies. The outcome must be fatal rather than fortunate, and the hero must be neither perfectly good nor exceedingly evil.

What is left, after our considerations, is someone in between these extremes. This would be a person who is neither perfect in virtue and justice, nor one who falls into misfortune through vice and depravity; but rather, one who succumbs through some miscalculation. He must also be a person who enjoys great reputation and good fortune, such as Oedipus, Thyestes, and other illustrious men from similar families. (1453 a 7-12).

In saying that the ideal tragic hero should be "in between" the two extremes of perfect goodness and perfect evil, Aristotle does not mean that the hero should be a morally average person. He has already said in Chapter 2 of the Poetics that tragedy imitates people who are "noble", "better than the norm". And shortly after the passage above he adds that the hero should be

the type of person we have described (or a better rather than a worse one). (1453 a 16-17; my italics).

The hero should not be morally perfect for, as Aristotle has already argued in connection with plot 1, the sight of such a person suffering is "repellent". Such a plot makes us feel moral indignation rather than pity and fear. Yet he should be ethically superior to the average person and of a higher social rank, for this makes his downfall more

pitiful and momentous.

To be pitiful, the hero's fate must be undeserved. Therefore Aristotle says that the hero suffers not because of "vice and depravity" but rather from some mistake or miscalculation. Plot 3 was rejected because we will not feel pity and fear if an evil man suffers, deservedly, as a consequence of his "vice and depravity".

Yet the ideal hero must do something which helps bring about his downfall: a mistake or miscalculation must be made. This ensures that he is imperfect and therefore distinct from the "unqualifiedly good" hero of plot 1. It also ensures that his character and actions are connected to his misfortune. Without this connection the tragic sense of the character's destiny or fate - the sense of an inevitable chain of causes to which the character contributes - will be lost and the play will not perform its function of producing in us the "proper pleasure" of pity and fear. In relation to his character and actions, his downfall will seem the product of chance, and we shall feel moral outrage instead of pity and fear.

In describing the ideal tragic plot and in criticizing plots 1, 2 and 3, Aristotle exhibits connections between emotion (pity and fear) and moral beliefs, and, more broadly, shows that our moral beliefs are 'in play' within the aesthetic experience of tragedy.

This provides a response to Plato's moral critique of poetry.

Plato believed that poetry appealed not to reason, the faculty which gives us truth and enables us to act morally, but rather to our emotions, the 'irrational part' of the soul. Further, he believed that people tend to imitate what they see on the stage. Because of this he would not allow poets to represent evil characters lest the audience imitate their moral actions (Republic 392-98). And in the Laws (662 b c) we are told that anyone (including poets) who claims that wicked men can lead pleasant lives should be punished. The State, then, will not allow plays with plot 2 or plot 3 to be presented and will punish those who write plays using plot 2 (in which an evil man prospers). Nor will plays with plot 1 be regarded favourably since they may suggest that virtuous people will be rewarded by suffering. Finally, plays with the ideal tragic plot involve much emotion (e.g. the anger and grief of Oedipus) and are disliked by Plato since they appeal not to reason but to our 'irrational' tendencies. Even the greatest works of tragic art will be censored or banned by Plato.

Aristotle would have agreed that good moral character was desirable in the citizenry. He did not, however, advocate Plato's draconian system of censorship to

achieve this end. But this does not mean that his discussion of tragedy - which accords to art some autonomous value - is without moral concern. Whereas Plato discusses the link between art and morality in the context of his metaphysical system, Aristotle proceeds in a more pragmatic fashion, beginning with certain psychological facts about readers and audiences. Given the fact that most of us have certain moral beliefs and a propensity to feel certain ethically-based emotions, Aristotle urges, plays with plot 1, 2 or 3 will not work aesthetically. Our sense of justice, present within our aesthetic attitude, places limits on what can be great tragic drama. As Beardsley remarks

What Plato feared most as a bad example for Athenian youth was the suggestion that good men are unhappy and that bad man prosper. Aristotle's reply might be understood in this way: there is no need to have a moral censorship of plays, but only an aesthetic one. For the play about the good man who becomes unhappy or the bad man who becomes happy will simply not be a very good tragedy; other things being equal, morality and justice will coincide with aesthetic excellence.²⁷

In Aristotle's eyes, Plato's tripartite psychology in the Republic had proposed too sharp a separation between emotion and reason. In Aristotle's psychology, emotion and moral judgement are interconnected; pity and fear may be allied with reason. The poet cannot achieve the fullest tragic emotional effect unless we judge the hero to be (a) "like ourselves" and (b) to have suffered undeservedly.

Thus the poet must take the reader's moral sense into account when constructing the plot,

for the poet is above all a builder and his job is to construct his plot so that the two judgements [i.e. (a) and (b)] will run straight and the flow of emotion will issue unimpeded.²⁸

Aristotle's analysis in Chapter 13 contains profound insights of fundamental importance to aesthetics. He shows convincingly that the tragic emotions involve moral beliefs, that our moral awareness is not suspended during the aesthetic experience of tragedy. But this is not to say that all the details of his account are correct.

In the first place, he has been accused of dismissing plots 1 and 3 too easily. His rejection of plot 1 (good man → unhappiness) has been criticized on the grounds that

we learn from anthropology as well as from such medieval survivals as the Oberammergau Passion Play that tragedy preserves a ritual element and that a play on the Crucifixion can be absorbing drama. Evidently, no defect at all is necessary in a ritual drama; in fact, the sinlessness of the victim is sometimes the central fact of the sacrifice, as is the case in Christian ritual.²⁹

Further, the character of Cordelia in King Lear is sometimes cited as a counter-example to Aristotle's claim that unqualifiedly good characters who suffer are not suitable figures for tragic drama.

Aristotle might respond by saying that drama as such is no longer ritual, even though it has its origins in

ritual. And not all drama is tragic. A Christian plot 1 play about Christ might be interesting drama but it will not be very good as a tragedy. Such a dramatic representation of the suffering of Christ may arouse some pity in us but it is far less tragic than the suffering of Lear or Oedipus, because Christ is the Son of God, will be resurrected, and will bring about a divinely pre-ordained good (the redemption of man).

The case of Cordelia is more difficult, for her death is not meant to be seen as a good thing. Aristotle could argue (with Dr. Johnson) that Cordelia's fate is shocking rather than tragic, or (with Coleridge) that Cordelia exhibits the moral flaws of pride and sullenness in the opening scene of the play. More plausibly, he could point to the fact that Cordelia makes a 'mistake' (in the opening scene) which helps cause her downfall. Since a mistake implies imperfection (though not necessarily sin), it would follow that Cordelia is not really a plot 1 heroine. Her unadorned goodness precludes flattery, even where her father is concerned, and this affects the course of the dramatic action. A further point is that, in Chapter 13, Aristotle is analyzing the central tragic figure. In the play we are considering, this figure is Lear, not Cordelia. Indeed much of the dramatic impact of Cordelia's death lies in its effect on Lear himself.

Criticism of Aristotle's rejection of plot 3 (evil man → unhappiness) is, if anything, more severe than criticism of his dismissal of plot 1. Medea, Macbeth and Richard III are evil characters. Richard III is surely an "exceedingly villainous" character, and yet Richard III is generally thought to be a good tragedy. On Aristotle's theory this should not be possible.

Aristotle might respond by saying that we feel little pity or fear for Richard. We experience his downfall as deserved, not tragic. The play does not perform the function of tragedy, for it does not induce in us the "proper pleasure" of the genre. By contrast, the undeserved suffering of Oedipus and Lear is pitiful and fearful. Aristotle would say that, other things being equal, the more undeserved the suffering, the more tragic it is (with the exception of the suffering of the "unqualifiedly good" person). Thus, on this view, we will find Lear and Oedipus deeply tragic, Medea and Macbeth less tragic, and Richard least tragic.

But how can a good tragedy be untragic? How can a member of a class of things, whose goodness is equated with the capacity to perform a certain function, be good when it performs that function badly? To avoid this apparent contradiction Aristotle may have to exclude Richard III from the genre of tragic drama. Then he can say that

Richard III is a good play but not a good tragedy, for it is not a tragedy at all. This response invites another, and perhaps more fundamental, objection: perhaps 'the tragic' is not to be identified solely with 'the pitiful and fearful'.

Is Aristotle's equation of 'the tragic' with 'the pitiful and the fearful' correct? Some might argue that Aristotle should have included the feeling of 'the sublime' in his account of the emotional effect of tragedy. 'The sublime' includes feelings of "admiration and awe, elevation and abasement".³⁰ Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and, more recently, D. D. Raphael³¹ have seen the tragic effect as being sublime. Raphael argues that the power and inexorability of fate produces feelings of the sublime. He also suggests that the heroic grandeur of the hero's response to the workings of fate is sublime. Thus Lear and Oedipus, in rising above their suffering, exhibit a greatness of spirit that constitutes an affirmation and exaltation of humanity:

...our sympathy for him as a fellow human being gives to his sublimity a stronger appeal than that exerted by the sublimity of the alien power with which he contends. By such devices Tragedy exalts man in our eyes. Its creed is humanistic.³²

This greatness of spirit, it could be argued, is also present in the respective heroes of Richard III and Macbeth, which are, in consequence, tragic, even though we

feel little pity for Richard or Macbeth.

Aristotle's account of the tragic emotions, then, seems to be incomplete (which explains why Richard III does not fit into his theory). In defense of Aristotle it might be said that his discussion of pity and fear is brief, and his account of 'catharsis' almost non-existent. It is possible that an account of sublimity is either implicit in his theory or, at least, could consistently be incorporated into it. Fear, for instance, may include awe when the object of fear is the sweeping movement of fate, as in Oedipus Rex. A number of writers regard fear as an element in the sublime (e.g. Edmund Burke,³³ Kant,³⁴ etc.). As for the catharsis of pity and fear, this, perhaps, occurs after the hero has suffered. There is nothing left to fear (for the worst is over), and our pity is transformed into sublime admiration and elevation when the hero shows his magnificence and grandeur in the face of suffering. This may be the sense (which Aristotle does not explain) in which the ending of the ideal tragic plot is 'philanthropon': the affirmation of humanity provided by the hero's heroic response to suffering is "in accordance with our human sympathies" or, in Telford's phrase, is "humane" or "befitting or appropriate to human values".

CONCLUSION

We may now summarize the principal conclusions of this work:

1. In Chapter One we organized the field of representational phenomena into six categories. We then presented five features which are 'characteristic' of representation, which are 'relevance conditions' for correct applications of the concept of representation. This analysis was applied to (a) linguistic representation in literature, (b) iconic representation in literature and (c) symbolic and allegorical representation in literature.
2. In Chapter Two we focussed our attention on iconic representation in literature. Four areas were discussed: (a) sound associations, (b) onomatopoeia, (c) rhythm and (d) the visual appearance of written or printed literary works. The interaction of each of these with linguistic representation was examined and the aesthetic significance of each was explored.
3. Chapter Three examined the ways in which literature may be 'about' reality, may 'represent' reality, and may be true of or true to reality. In the first place, literary sentences and theories about them were discussed. A

distinction was drawn between literature and literary fiction. The no truth value theory was shown to be a better theory of literary fictional sentences than the falsity theory. However, it was argued that both theories are inadequate as a theory of literary sentences (which include both fictional and non-fictional sentences). Some literary sentences are used to refer to reality and to make a statement about reality - and some of these statements are true. Acknowledging this fact does not require us to adopt a purely cognitive attitude to literature, to judge literature by purely cognitive criteria. Rather, we adopt an aesthetic attitude (broadly conceived) within which our cognitive and moral awareness are operative.

In the second place, it was argued that, even in the case of purely fictional works, literature may be about reality and contain truth about reality in virtue of having a theme. Such works are about something more general than the particular characters and events depicted, and may contain truth about that general feature of life (e.g. perfectionism in "First Sorrow"). Symbolic or allegorical representation may be involved in such works (e.g. in The Faerie Queene).

4. Through an examination of the role of the reader's knowledge and beliefs in the actualization of literary aesthetic objects (including the 'world' represented

therein), we argued in Chapter Four that

(a) our knowledge of (e.g.) laws of nature, human psychology, particular historical figures, history and geography is presupposed by literary authors, who rely on us to 'fill in' the unstated background of truth to reality in the world of the literary work. Readers lacking the relevant knowledge may actualize a deficient aesthetic object and have an inferior aesthetic experience.

(b) not all literary worlds are imaginary worlds. Not all 'characters' in literature are imaginary people. One literary work may present an imaginary world, another a blend of the real and the imaginary, and yet another a world containing no imaginary phenomena.

(c) within the aesthetic attitude our moral beliefs play an essential role in the actualization of aesthetic structure (e.g. the emotional structure of tragedy). If we took a narrow aesthetic attitude, turning off our cognitive and moral awareness, both our understanding of literary works and the quality of our aesthetic experience would be greatly impoverished.

5. The Cognitivist equation of literary merit with truth is clearly mistaken. Truth is not a sufficient condition, or even a necessary condition, of literary quality. However, it would be a mistake to think that truth and belief never affect aesthetic value. Truth often enhances

aesthetic value by contributing to such aesthetic qualities as depth, power, resonance, wit and complexity. In such cases, cognitive judgements support aesthetic judgements and cognitive value enriches aesthetic value.

6. To pass negative aesthetic judgement on all works of literature expressing beliefs one does not hold is philistine. Christian, Buddhist, Marxist and liberal works may win our 'imaginative consent' without commanding our 'intellectual assent' to the beliefs they express. But this does not mean that our disagreement with a work's viewpoint should never affect our aesthetic evaluation of that work. To say this is to propound a dogmatic aestheticism, unacceptable either as a description of, or a prescription for, "reading literature as literature". The viewpoint of some works arouses our cognitive or moral dissent in a way that impairs the quality of the aesthetic experience. In such cases cognitive and moral judgements are 'reasons' for aesthetic judgements; poor cognitive or moral value can impair aesthetic quality.

7. Aristotle's Poetics articulates a conception of literary autonomy that is moderate, not absolute. Aristotle connects truth to reality with 'form', 'unity' and 'beauty', and links moral beliefs with the aesthetic emotions (pity and fear) which constitute the 'proper pleasure' of tragedy. Using modern terminology, we can say

that he regards our cognitive and moral awareness as playing an essential role within our aesthetic experience of 'poetry'.

Reflection on Aristotle's claim that the poet imitates the 'universal' led to an independent enquiry into the aesthetic relevance of character-realism. Using Frye's theory of 'fictional modes' as a context for our analysis, we showed that character-realism (or 'truth to human nature') is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of literary merit. Further, we argued that a failure to be true to human nature is not always an aesthetic flaw in literary works, or even in works belonging to a particular 'mode'. However, we also argued that a failure to be true to human nature is often an aesthetic weakness, and that it is more likely to be a weakness in the mode of 'low mimetic' writing than in other modes.

In this work we have not denied the artist's freedom to invent, imagine and create. We have not denied, either, that literature is different from science, history, philosophy, or social science. Nor have we denied that there is such a thing as literary or aesthetic value, distinct from pure cognitive value and pure moral value.

What we do deny, however, is the validity of absolute autonomy conceptions of literary language, literary 'worlds', and literary value. Through

philosophical argument, supported by analyses of particular literary works, we argued that an absolute autonomy model oversimplifies matters. Literary sentences may have more than one 'use' or 'illocutionary force'. Literature can be about the real world. And there are subtle and complex connections between literary value and truth, belief and morality - connections which theory may blind us to, though we are intimately familiar with them in the practice of reading and criticism.

We have attempted to exhibit some of these connections, within a more complex and moderate autonomy theory, in a way that does not reduce literature to science, sermons or propaganda. Literature does not exist in a hermetically sealed realm, wholly cut off from life, thought, truth and the moral life. If it did it would not have the fundamental significance and value for human beings which it indisputably does have.

APPENDIX
PICTORIAL POETRY

HEART, CROWN AND MIRROR

L F A M E
 D E T R E V N I
 N A K E
 M Y H
 E A R
 T K H D I E
 H E I N G S O
 O N E B Y O N E
 A R E R E B O R N I N P O E T S ' H E A R T S
 W

I N
 T I O N S T H I S
 F L E C M I R
 R E R O R
 L I K E I
 A L L A M
 A T E N
 N O T G u i l l a u m e C L O S E D
 A N D A p o l l i n a i r e L I
 G E L S V I N G
 A N A N D
 T H E R E A L
 N E J U S T
 G I A S
 M A Y O U
 I

Calligram (15 May 1915)

The sky's as blue and black as ink
My eyes drown in it and sink

Darkness a shell whines over me
I write this under a willow tree

The evening
shines
like a
carnal
gem
at a
punctual
gem
d
e
m
i
d
i
d
s
k
a
r
a
j
a
h
s
c

look some lovely she
sends
or like the shining
on our
battery

Ian Hamilton Finlay

a c a c a c a c a
r o r o r o r o r o
b a b a b a b a b a
t s t s t s t s t s
t a t a t a t a t a
b o b o b o b o b o
r c r c r c r c r c
a c a c a c a c a c

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

1. Kant uses a very broad concept of mental representation (Vorstellung) under which sensation is included. In Norman Kemp Smith's translation of the Critique of Pure Reason (London: Macmillan, 1970) Kant says "The genus is representation in general (repraesentatio). Subordinate to it stands representation with consciousness (perceptio). A perception which relates solely to the subject as the modification of its state is sensation (sensatio), an objective perception is knowledge (cognitio). This is either intuition or concept (intuitus vel conceptus). The former relates immediately to the object and is single, the latter refers to it mediately by means of a feature which several things may have in common. The concept is either an empirical or a pure concept. The pure concept, is so far as it has its origin in the understanding alone (not in the pure image of sensibility), is called a notion. A concept formed from notions and transcending the possibility of experience is an idea or concept of reason". (A320 = B376-7; I have omitted numbers referring to the translator's footnotes). This passage raises a host of questions which cannot be answered here. Why are memory and imagination not mentioned? Are they excluded or implicitly included? From the transcendental idealist standpoint, what could sensations and sensory perceptions be representations of? Kant can regard them as being representations in the 'internal' sense but can he consistently regard them as being representations in the 'external' sense?
2. Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (New York: Anchor Books, 1959).
3. Cf. Ferdinand De Saussure's Course in General Linguistics (London: Peter Owen, 1974), pp. 67-70. I have not followed Saussure's definition of a linguistic sign as a "two-sided psychological entity" which unites a concept and a psychological "sound image" (Ibid., p. 66).

4. I use the term 'iconic' in its ordinary or dictionary sense. C. S. Peirce's highly technical use of the term is much broader and includes algebraic equations as 'icons'. Cf. C. S. Peirce, Philosophical Writings of Peirce, ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), pp. 104-107.
5. W. B. Yeats, The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (Macmillan, 1956), pp. 184-85.
6. Samuel Johnson, The Vanity of Human Wishes, ll. 1-6, in Rasselas, Poems and Selected Prose, ed. Bertrand H. Bronson (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1967).
7. Monroe Beardsley, Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1968), pp. 269-78.
8. Arthur Danto, The Transfiguration of the Commonplace (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 71-2.
9. Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Reference", in Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege, ed. Peter Geach and Max Black (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), p. 63.
10. Nelson Goodman, Languages of Art (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).
11. A number of quotations from Languages of Art may be given to illustrate Goodman's distinction between "represents an X" or "is a representation of an X", on the one hand, and "X representing picture" or "X picture" on the other: "But a picture may be of a certain kind - be a Pickwick picture or a man picture - without representing anything" (p. 22); "A picture must denote a man to represent him, but need not denote anything to be a man representation" (p. 25); "Not every man picture represents a man, and conversely not every picture that represents a man is a man picture" (p. 26). In reading the following well-known passage from Languages of Art it is important to realize that Goodman is talking about the external sense and not the internal sense: "The plain fact is that a picture, to represent an object, must be a symbol for it, stand for it, refer to it; and that no degree of resemblance is sufficient to establish the requisite relationship of reference. Nor is resemblance necessary for reference; almost anything may stand for almost anything else" (p.

- 5). It we were to remove the word 'reference' from the last sentence and put in its place the phrase "pictorial representation in the internal sense", the sentence would surely be false. If I want to create a pictorial representation (in the internal sense) of a man on a horse by a lake, I cannot just put "almost anything" on a canvas and expect everyone to see a man on a horse by a lake in the painting. The configurations of paint I put on the canvas must look like a man on a horse by a lake. This point is persuasively argued by, eg., Gene Blocker in "The Languages of Art", British Journal of Aesthetics, XIV (Spring 1974), pp. 165-173, and by James W. Manns in "Representation, Relativism and Resemblance", British Journal of Aesthetics, XI (Summer 1971), pp. 281-287.
12. Richard Bernheimer, The Nature of Representation: A Phenomenological Inquiry (New York: New York University Press, 1961).
 13. Hanna Pitkin, The Concept of Representation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).
 14. Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics", J.A.A.C., Vol. XV (September 1957), pp. 27-35.
 15. Arthur Danto has also spoken of the 'space' between representer and represented. Cf. "Artworks and Real Things", Theoria, 39 (1973), pp. 1-17.
 16. G. E. M. Anscombe, Intention (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963).
 17. Ibid., p. 1.
 18. The notion of 'representational seeing' is used by Richard Wollheim in Art and its Objects (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 16.
 19. Nicholas Wolterstorff, Works and Worlds of Art, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).
 20. Wolterstorff equates world projection and mimesis in his Preface.
 21. Op. cit., p. 144.
 22. Ibid., p. 145.
 23. Op. cit., pp. 205 ff.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Roman Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, translated by George G. Grabowicz (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 30 and pp. 34-61.
2. Roman Jakobson and Linda Waugh, The Sound Shape of Language (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979).
3. Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, translated by Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1970), A166 = B207.
4. Cf. Jakobson and Waugh, op. cit., pp. 188-194.
5. Alexander Pope, The Rape of the Lock, in The Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. John Butt (London: Methuen, 1968).
6. I have here modified Ingarden's distinction between free and regular rhythm (cf. The Literary Work of Art, op. cit., p. 48). Ingarden uses the term "regular" to mean absolutely or strictly regular. For him, a rhythmical pattern we would be inclined to call "fairly regular" must fall under the heading of "free rhythm". I prefer to use the notion of regular rhythm in a broader sense, so that it applies to "absolutely regular" and "fairly regular" patterns (as we would say in ordinary usage).
7. Mikel Dufrenne, The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience, transl. Edward S. Casey (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 256.
8. William Carlos Williams, The Collected Later Poems of William Carlos Williams (revised edition; New Directions, 1963), p. 11. I have benefitted from comments on the metre of this poem and Roethke's poem by Northrop Frye, Sheridan Baker and George Perkins in The Practical Imagination (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 240 and pp. 250-251.
9. Theodore Roethke, The Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p. 45.
10. D. H. Lawrence, The Collected Poems of D. H. Lawrence, Volume One (London: Heinemann, 1964), pp. 110-111.

11. Derek Attridge, The Rhythms of English Poetry (London: Longman, 1982), p. 293.
12. Ibid., p. 293.
13. Ibid., p. 294.
14. Alexander Pope, Essay on Criticism, ll. 364-373.
15. Ian Hamilton Finlay's "Au Pair Girl" is reprinted on p. 434 of 20th Century Poetry and Poetics, ed. Gary Geddes (2nd edition; Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973). Finlay's "Acrobats" is on p. 438 of the same work and Emmett William's "Like Attracts Like" is on p. 443.
16. Cf. Guillaume Apollinaire's Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War (1913-1916), translated by Anne Hyde Greet (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), and his Selected Poems, translated by Oliver Bernard (Penguin, 1965).

CHAPTER THREE

1. M. H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 276-78.
2. Cf. Abrams, Ibid., pp. 276-77.
3. Cf. pp. 6-7 of M. H. Abrams, "Belief and the Suspension of Disbelief", in Literature and Belief, ed. M. H. Abrams (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958).
4. Some of S. H. Butcher's ideas about coherence and poetic truth are discussed below. See also f. n. 9 below.
5. In Anonymity (London, 1925), p. 14, E. M. Forster says that in reading a poem "we have entered a universe that only answers to its own laws, supports itself, internally coheres, and has a new standard of truth. Information is true if it is accurate. A poem is true if it hangs together". (Cited by Abrams in "Belief and the Suspension of Disbelief", op. cit., p. 10).
6. See Chapter Four (introduction and f. n. 3).
7. Cf. Roman Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, transl. George G. Grabowicz (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 160-162 and pp. 301-303. Ingarden says that 'objective consistency' has "nothing to do with truth in the strict sense" (p. 302).
8. A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 423-429.
9. S. H. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art (New York: Dover Publications, 1951; 4th edition), pp. 172-173.
10. Roman Ingarden, "A Marginal Commentary on Aristotle's Poetics", Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Spring 1962), p. 283.
11. John Hospers, Meaning and Truth in the Arts, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946), pp. 141 ff.
12. Roman Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, op. cit., pp. 300-304 and pp. 160 ff.

13. Fyodor Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment (Penguin Books, 1979), p. 104.
14. Gilbert Ryle, "Imaginary Objects", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XII (1933), pp. 18-43.
15. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 75-76.
16. Bertrand Russell, "On Denoting", Mind, Vol. 14 (1905), pp. 479-493.
17. P. F. Strawson, "On Referring", Mind, Vol. 59 (1950), pp. 320-344.
18. Morris Weitz, "Truth in Literature", in Introductory Readings in Aesthetics, ed. John Hospers (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 216.
19. Margaret Macdonald, "The Language of Fiction", in Collected Papers on Aesthetics, ed. Cyril Barrett (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), pp. 107-124.
20. Ibid., p. 110.
21. Ibid., p. 121-122. Macdonald allows that novels may be about non-existent and real entities. She says that it "is true that these real objects and events are mentioned in such fictional expressions" (p. 121). She also says that one "might say that the mention of realities plays a dual role in fiction: to refer to a real object and to contribute to the development of a story" (p. 121-122; my italics). But Macdonald also says that "a storyteller is not making informative assertions about real persons, places, and incidents even when they are mentioned in fictional sentences" (p. 121). (By 'fiction' Macdonald means a work whose story is "largely, if not wholly, composed of what is invented" (p. 121). For her a 'fictional sentence' is a sentence in such a work, even when all the items mentioned in the sentence are real).
22. Ibid., p. 117.
23. Marcia Eaton, "The Truth Value of Literary Statements", British Journal of Aesthetics, XII (Spring 1972), p. 164.

24. Ibid., p. 164.
25. T. S. Eliot, "The Social Function of Poetry", in Critiques and Essays in Criticism, ed. R. W. Stallman (New York: Ronald Press, 1949), p. 107.
26. A. J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (London: Gollancz, 1936).
27. I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), Chapter 24, "The Two Uses of Language".
28. Cleanth Brooks, The Well Wrought Urn (New York: Harvest Books, 1975), p. 252.
29. Northrop Frye, The Well-Tempered Critic (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), p. 149.
30. Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 128.
31. Ibid., p. 130.
32. Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Reference", in Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege, ed. Peter Geach and Max Black (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), p. 63.
33. Roman Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, op. cit., pp. 160-181. Ingarden claims that literary works do not contain seriously intended 'judgements' about objective states of affairs in the real world. But he does not regard literary sentences as being simply unasserted sentences, since there is a kind of saying or asserting going on in, e.g. a fictional narrative. He uses the notion of 'quasi-judgements' to characterize literary indicative sentences.
34. Richard Ohmann, "Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature", Philosophy and Rhetoric, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Winter 1971), pp. 1-19.
35. Barbara Herrnstein Smith, "Poetry as Fiction", New Literary History, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Winter 1971), p. 271. For effective criticism of Smith, Ohmann, and Culler, see Gerald Graff, Literature Against Itself (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp. 155 ff. See also Monroe Beardsley, "The Philosophy of Literature", in Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology, ed. George Dickie

- and R. J. Sclafani (New York: St. Martins Press, 1977), pp. 329 ff.
36. Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace, Part Two, Chapter Nineteen.
 37. Kenneth Rexroth, "Andree Rexroth", reprinted in The Practical Imagination, eds. Northrop Frye, Sheridan Baker and George Perkins (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), pp. 169-171.
 38. J. L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words, ed. J. O. Urmson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).
 39. Marcia Eaton, "Liars, Ranters and Dramatic Speakers", in Art and Philosophy, ed. W. E. Kennick (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979; 2nd edition), pp. 356-357.
 40. Austin, op. cit., p. 94.
 41. Ohmann, op. cit., p. 14. Frege (op. cit., p. 85) had already described "ideas" in literature as being "verbal formulas which imitate real propositions".
 42. Frege, op. cit., p. 63.
 43. Ibid., p. 63.
 44. Ibid., p. 63.
 45. Beardsley, Aesthetics, op. cit., p. 403.
 46. Seymour Chatman, "On the Notion of Theme in Narrative", in Essays on Aesthetics, ed. John Fisher (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), p. 164.
 47. Franz Kafka, The Penguin Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (London: Allen Lane, 1983), pp. 446-448.
 48. Chatman, op. cit., p. 171.
 49. Cf. Hospers, op. cit., Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1970), p. 25.
2. Ibid., p. 25.
3. A. C. Bradley, Oxford Lectures on Poetry (London: Macmillan, 1959), p. 5.
4. Wellek and Warren, op. cit., p. 25.
5. A. Solzhenitsyn, Lenin in Zurich, transl. H. T. Willetts (New York: Bantam Books, 1977), p. 3.
6. Similar arguments can be found in Francis Sparshott's "Truth in Fiction", Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Fall 1967), pp. 3-7, and in J. O. Urmson's "Fiction" American Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 13, No. 2 (April 1976), pp. 153-157.
7. Sparshott, op. cit.
8. R. K. Elliott, "The Aesthetic and the Semantic", British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol. 8, No. 1 (January 1968), pp. 35-48.
9. Ibid., p. 38
10. Ibid., p. 40.
11. For a brilliant analysis of this variety, see Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).
12. Elliott, op. cit., p. 41.
13. Booth, op. cit., p. 318.
14. Ibid., p. 319.
15. This topic is explored further in Chapter Seven, Section Four of this work, where we argue that Aristotle posits a connection between moral beliefs and the 'tragic emotions' of pity and fear.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Eric Havelock, Preface to Plato (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963).
2. Plato, Republic, 598-601.
3. Cf. Emile Zola, The Naturalist Novel (Montreal: Harvest House, 1964). Zola's view is effectively criticized by John Hospers in Meaning and Truth in the Arts (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946), pp. 145-54.
4. In The Meaning of Contemporary Realism (London: Merlin Press, 1972), Georg Lukacs said "In no other aesthetic does the truthful depiction of reality have so central a place as in Marxism" (p. 101). In 1934, at the First Congress of Soviet Writers, "Socialist Realism" was declared to be the official aesthetic theory of Marxism - Leninism. Andres Zhdanov became the official Soviet theorist of Socialist Realism and characterized this doctrine as being "the fundamental method of Soviet Literature and criticism: it demands of the artist a true, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Further, it ought to contribute to the ideological transformation and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism" (quoted by Monroe Beardsley in Aesthetics From Classical Greece to the Present, New York, 1966, p. 360). For Plekhanov, Zhdanov and Lukacs, truth is a major criterion of artistic value.
5. Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, transl. Martin Milligan (New York: International Publishers, 1968), pp. 166-68.
6. Cf. Lionel Trilling's "Freud and Literature" in The Liberal Imagination (New York: Scribner, 1976), pp. 34-57.
7. Frank Cioffi's, "Information, Contemplation and Social Life", in The Proper Study: Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, Volume Four 1969-70 (London: Macmillan, 1971), p. 105.

8. These critical appraisals are taken from Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace, transl. Louise and Aylmer Maude (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1942), pp. ii-iv.
9. Sophocles, Antigone, transl. Elizabeth Wyckoff, in Greek Tragedies: Volume One, ed. David Greene and Richard Lattimore (Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1960), pp. 177-226.
10. All references are to the Signet Classic edition of Julius Caesar (New York: New American Library, 1963), ed. William and Barbara Rosen.
11. Henry James, "The Liar", in The Complete Tales of Henry James Volume Six, ed. Leon Edel (New York: Lippincott, 1963), p. 411.
12. Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 348.
13. Henry James, "The Liar", op. cit., p. 438.
14. Ibid., p. 441.
15. Ibid., p. 411-12.
16. Ibid., p. 427.
17. Lionel Trilling, The Liberal Imagination, op. cit., p. 89.
18. Ibid., p. 92.
19. Ibid., p. 61.
20. Ibid., p. 90.
21. F. W. Bateson and N. A. Joukovsky, Alexander Pope: A Critical Anthology (Penguin, 1971), p. 45.
22. Ibid., p. 138.
23. This point is also made by Peter Mew in "Facts in Fiction", Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol. 31, No. 3, (Spring 1973), pp. 329-37.
24. The English literary and cultural critic Raymond Williams has argued that "we have to reject 'the aesthetic' both as a separate abstract dimension and as a separate abstract function. We have to reject

'Aesthetics' to the large extent that it is posited on these abstractions". Cf. William's Marxism and Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 156. In Formalism and Marxism (London: Methuen, 1979) Tony Bennett writes: "The inheritance of the conceptual equipment which goes with the concerns of aesthetics constitutes the single most effective impediment to the development of a consistently historical and materialistic approach to the study of literary texts" (p. 104). These approaches represent too strong a reaction to the autonomist tenor of modern aesthetics, for they seem to lose sight of the phenomenon of aesthetic value. To read or see King Lear is to undergo a deep, powerful and moving experience - the phenomenon of experiencing great literature, great art. The concepts of 'aesthetic value', 'literary value' and 'artistic value' are abstractions from such experiences, and some such concept is hardly dispensable. Aesthetics is a general enquiry into such experiences and the things which produce them in us, and it does not seem indispensable if one considers such experiences important in the order of things. The danger lies in completely separating 'the aesthetic' from questions of truth, morality and human interests, not in attempting some distinctions (as in the moderate autonomy theory presented in this work).

25. Another example would be Francis Ford Coppola's statement that the end of his film, Apocalypse Now, does not work "either aesthetically or philosophically". Here, I think, 'aesthetically' is being used in the narrow sense (i.e. Coppola was dissatisfied with the melodramatic and rather hokey air of the Brando scenes). I would surmise that 'philosophically' refers to Kurtz's explanation of what he has done, and the much-debated 'meaning' of Kurtz and of the film as a whole. Coppola may have felt either that this was not clear and/or that it did not provide an imaginatively satisfying and unifying end to the film. If we use the broad sense of 'aesthetic' we can say that Coppola felt the ending was aesthetically imperfect because (a) it was aesthetically flawed in the narrow sense of 'aesthetic' and (b) Kurtz's utterances did not result in a clear or unifying thematic resolution.
26. This point has also been made by R. W. Hepburn on p. 5 of his Wonder and Other Essays (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984). See also his paper "Poetry

and 'Concrete Imagination': Problems of Truth and Illusion" (pp. 56-74 in the same volume).

27. The view that truth can sometimes contribute to literary merit has also been expounded by, e.g., Alexander Sesonske in "Truth in Art", Journal of Philosophy, LIII (1956), pp. 345-353, Morris Weitz in "Truth in Literature", reprinted in John Hospers's Introductory Readings in Aesthetics (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp. 213-224 and by R. K. Elliott in "Poetry and Truth", Analysis, XXVII (October 1966), pp. 77-85. Links between truth and depth have been explored by, e.g., Anthony Savile in The Test of Time (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), Chapter Seven. See also R. W. Hepburn's "Poetry and 'Concrete Imagination': Problems of Truth and Illusion" (op. cit.) for an examination of the way in which "an imaginative writer may make far reaching claims about the world...by presenting, not an abstract argument or statement, but a concrete description or image of some phenomenon which points beyond itself and reveals the way things are" (ibid., p. 58).

CHAPTER SIX

1. M. H. Abrams, "Belief and the Suspension of Disbelief", in Literature and Belief, ed. M. H. Abrams (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 1.
2. T. S. Eliot, The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), p. 89.
3. Ibid., p. 89.
4. Ibid., p. 91.
5. S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria (London: Everyman edition, 1956), p. 260.
6. Ibid., p. 261-62.
7. Abrams, op. cit., pp. 29-30.
8. See Douglas Bush "Tradition and Experience", in Abrams (op. cit.), pp. 42-43.
9. Cleanth Brooks, The Well Wrought Urn (New York: Harvest Books, 1975), pp. 140ff.
10. George Lukacs, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, transl. John and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1972), p. 20.
11. Ibid., p. 20.
12. Ibid., p. 19.
13. T. S. Eliot, After Strange Gods (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934), p. 9.
14. Ibid., p. 10.
15. Ibid., p. 48.
16. Ibid., p. 66.
17. T. S. Eliot, The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, op. cit., p. 96.

18. Erich Heller, The Disinherited Mind (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1975), p. 158.
19. Ibid., p. 159.
20. W. H. Auden, The Dyer's Hand (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 278.
21. Heller, op. cit., p. 159.
22. Abrams, op. cit., p. 28 (This distinction is similar to Eliot's distinction between 'philosophical belief' and 'poetic assent').
23. Coleridge, op. cit., p. 168-169.
24. Bush, op. cit., p. 33.
25. Ibid., p. 49.
26. Ibid., p. 39.
27. Abrams, op. cit., p. 23.
28. Ibid., p. 24.
29. Luke Rhinehart, The Dice Man (London: Granada Publishing, 1972).

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are from Aristotle's Poetics, translated by Leon Golden, commentary by O. B. Hardison (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1968). Reprinted at Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1981.
2. Oscar Wilde, The Artist as Critic, ed. Richard Ellmann (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 352.
3. Ibid., p. 353.
4. Ingarden's article "A Marginal Commentary on Aristotle's Poetics" is printed in two parts in The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Part I is in Volume 20 (Winter 1961), pp. 163-173, Part II in Volume 20 (Spring 1962), pp. 273-285.
5. Ibid., p. 281.
6. Gerard F. Else, Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument (Cambridge: Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957).
7. Ibid., p. 321.
8. Monroe C. Beardsley, Aesthetics From Classical Greece to the Present: A Short History (New York: Macmillan, 1966), p. 63.
9. John Hospers, "Art and Reality", in Art and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook (New York University Press, 1966), pp. 121-152.
10. 'To kalon' is translated as 'beauty'. In its general meaning it applies to what is admirable, excellent or desirable, and has both aesthetic and non-aesthetic applications. It is not identical with the aesthetic sense of 'beauty'.
11. Kenneth A. Telford, Aristotle's Poetics: Translation and Analysis (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, Gateway Edition, 1970).
12. Murray Krieger, Theory of Criticism (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 99.

13. Beardsley, op. cit., p. 63.
14. Poetics 1455a 17-19.
15. Hospers, op. cit., p. 125.
16. Julian Symons, "Threats of Violence", New York Review of Books, Vol. 27, No. 12 (July 17, 1980), pp. 39-40. All quotations are from p. 39.
17. Rene Wellek, "What Reality? A Comment", in Art and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook, op. cit., pp. 153-56.
18. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 33-67.
19. Robert Scholes, Structuralism in Literature (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 118-27. Scholes argues that Frye needs a minimum of nine categories.
20. Cf. Philip Vellacott's "The Guilt of Oedipus", Greece and Rome, Vol. 21 (1964), pp. 137-48, and his Sophocles and Oedipus (London: Macmillan, 1971).
21. E. R. Dodds, "On Misunderstanding the Oedipus Rex", in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Oedipus Rex, ed. Michael J. O'Brien (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1968), p. 21, f.n. 4.
22. A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 423-29.
23. Cf. Hospers, op. cit. However, Hospers modifies his position in "Truth and Fictional Characters", Journal of Aesthetic Education, Vol. 14 (July 1980), pp. 5-17. There he allows that the poet may "violate plausibility of characterization" if "there is a payoff in doing so" (p. 13). He makes the same point in Understanding the Arts (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1982), p. 245.
24. Aristotle does not explain what he means by the catharsis of pity and fear. Over the centuries commentators have assumed that the arousal and then the catharsis of pity and fear occurred in the spectator or reader. There was disagreement, however, on the question of whether catharsis meant the purging and elimination of these emotions, or, rather, their purification (but not elimination). In Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument, Gerard F. Else offered a

revolutionary interpretation of catharsis. In the first place, he argues that catharsis occurs in the play, not the spectator or reader. It is a structural property of the work, not a feature of the spectator's emotional experience of the work. In the second place, Else argues that what is purified is not pity and fear, but, rather, certain actions in the plot - specifically, actions in which a character harms or kills a blood-relative. Crimes of 'blood-pollution' required 'purification' in Ancient Greece, and Else suggests that catharsis means the purification of such an action (e.g. Oedipus's killing of his father) by the hero's recognition that he or she has unintentionally committed a blood-crime. This recognition of error, and the remorse which accompanies the recognition, purifies the hero's pitiable and fearful crime. Else's interpretation, as he himself admits, has a number of difficulties. First, many Greek tragedies do not have this pattern (e.g. Antigone), so that Aristotle becomes a very narrow theorist of tragedy on this view. Second, the term 'katharsis' is used in the Politics, Book VIII, to mean a purging of the spectator's emotions by music, and Aristotle there says that he will discuss the notion of a release of emotion in his lectures on poetics (this is thought to be an allusion to a part of the Poetics which has disappeared). This makes it seem likely that Aristotle's discussion in the Poetics is continuous with what he said in the Politics. At a more general level, it is worth noting that Else's first point (catharsis occurs in the work) can be detached from his second (catharsis is a purification of actions). Catharsis may be a purification (or a purging) of emotions in the work itself, or, more plausibly, in the work and in the audience, for there is a structured movement of emotion in the work and in the audience. However, even if Else's account of catharsis is correct, this does not mean that we do not feel pity and fear in reading or seeing a tragedy, nor does it make illegitimate all talk of the emotional structure of tragedy. Else can (and does) allow all of this, and he also acknowledges the role of the audience's moral beliefs and their connections with the tragic emotions. Cf. Else, op. cit., pp. 224-232, and pp. 423-447, and f.n. 28 of this chapter.

25. Aristotle, Rhetoric, transl. W. Rhys Roberts, in The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941). All quotations from Aristotle's Rhetoric are taken from this translation.

26. Ingram Bywater's translation of the Poetics is reprinted in The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon, op. cit.
27. Beardsley, op. cit., p. 67.
28. Else, op. cit., p. 375.
29. Golden and Hardison, (1981 edn.), op. cit., pp. 185-86.
30. D. D. Raphael, The Paradox of Tragedy (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), p. 32.
31. Raphael, ibid., pp. 13-36.
32. Ibid., p. 31.
33. Beardsley, op. cit., pp. 194-95.
34. In his Critique of Judgement, transl. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1968), Kant says "If nature is to be judged by us as dynamically sublime, it must be represented as exciting fear..." (p. 99).

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