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## ABSTRACT

# HALF BEAST: IMAGE, THEME, AND SATIRICAL PURPOSE IN THE NOVELS OF TOBIAS SMOLLETT

By

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Smollett's novels are badly flawed in many ways, and this has led critics to see art only in his narrative style and to deplore his failure to achieve other kinds of artistic merit. Study of the relationship between the imagery, the themes, and the satiric purpose of his novels reveals a greater depth of vision and seriousness in his aims than most critics have seen. This study also provides insights into the intent behind the presentation of some of the characters, a problem critics have found almost insoluble.

The largest portion of Smollett's imagery falls into three large categories--images of food and eating, those of hunting and preying, and animal imagery. Analysis of the relationship of this imagery to the other elements of the novels reveals a vision of a world in which the majority of men act according to their animal nature more consistently than to their human nature. It is a world in which men see

others as "food" with which they may satisfy their appetites, a world of prey and predators analogous to that of the forest and jungle. A statement of this vision constitutes a major theme in all of the novels, and there is a profound moral and satiric intent behind this statement.

Although Smollett's vision of man and his society is profoundly dark, he did not believe the human condition hopeless. He did not want to change the basic economic and social system. He believed that men needed only to learn to control their bestial nature and to be kind and generous. Kindness and the capacity for social love were for Smollett the characteristics that distinguished man's human nature from his animal one.

Each of the novels is structured around a conflict between the two halves of man's nature. Roderick Random is a development novel, the action of which consists of a young man's journey from innocence to knowledge of man's bestial nature and condition and adaptation to it. Both the imagery and the grotesques are used satirically to suggest the nature of the world. Study of imagery and theme in Peregrine Pickle leads to the conclusion that Peregrine is not presented merely as an internal satirist, but also as an evolutionary step toward the fully predatory anti-hero and as such is the target of Smollett's satire on the appetitive man. This is Smollett's purpose in presenting so vicious a hero.

In Ferdinand Count Fathom Smollett makes his moral purpose clear by presenting Fathom as a fully predatory man who believes that "the sons of man prey on one another, and that is the end and condition of their being." Working with the same themes as in the first two works, Smollett is experimenting with form and embodies the human and divine half of man's nature in a stiff personification of virtue, Reynaldo. In Launcelot Greaves Smollett continues this experiment with more success by presenting Greaves as a satire on the man of feeling, the man who goes to the opposite extreme and tries to live as if he had no animal nature. In Humphry Clinker Smollett is successful in solving the problems inherent in the forms of the earlier novels. He presents an internal satirist who is also a target of satire himself and makes his intention in doing so clear. He comes to a more tolerant stance toward the lower half of man's nature, and he provides a positive moral standard by illustrating the ways in which men can live by their human nature.

Although Smollett saw life as a struggle for survival, he believed that it need not be ~~that~~ way. Each of his novels is an experiment in a search for a form that would convey that idea most effectively. Basic in each novel is a satiric and serious morally exhortatory intent, as both the imagery and themes show. If his books are read in the light of his intent, his aims are admirable and his achievement memorable.

HALF BEAST: IMAGE, THEME, AND SATIRICAL  
PURPOSE IN THE NOVELS OF  
TOBIAS SMOLLETT

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## INTRODUCTION

Yet, though you judge (as sure some  
critics will)  
That some before him writ with greater  
skill . . .

-John Dryden, "Epilogue to  
the Second Part of the  
Conquest of Granada by  
the Spaniards"

## INTRODUCTION

Between 1739, when he arrived in London with an insipid and adolescent play in his pocket, and 1771, when he died, Tobias Smollett turned out a prodigious amount of work. He translated Le Sage, Cervantes, and Voltaire. For many years he edited and wrote for the Critical Review, which by following his direction quickly became a leading periodical and remained so long after his death. He was a pamphleteer for the Bute administration, in defense of which he produced thirty-eight issues of The Briton. He was a compiler of scientific treatises and travel accounts; he wrote a many-volumed History of England and a Continuation of the Complete History of England; how much more hack work he did is indeterminable. Although the body of his poetical work is small, there are poems yet to be added to this remarkable canon. And there are three plays, possibly four. In addition to all of this output, there is the work on which his reputation rests today, the novels: The Adventures of Roderick Random, The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom, The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves, and The Expedition of Humphry Clinker, usually considered his masterpiece. Generally attributed to Smollett also are A Faithful Narrative

of the Base and Inhuman Arts That Were Lately Practised upon the Brain of Habbakkuk Hilding, a vicious attack on Henry Fielding and a work fortunately almost forgotten today and enhancing Smollett's reputation in no way, and The History and Adventures of an Atom, a scatological satire on contemporary politicians and policy little read today. Near the end of his life he also published Travels Through France and Italy, one of the best of the eighteenth-century travel books.

During the years when so massive a volume of work flowed from his pen, Smollett was not a scribbling recluse confined to a secluded study. He found time for travel. He was a sociable man with a fairly large circle of friends and acquaintances, and for a number of years he was a practicing physician. The demands made upon his time by his family, his friends, and his patients, and those made by the production of so massive a body of work in so few years suggest that much of his writing must have been done hastily, and so it was. Some of Smollett's fiction was written almost on its way to the post. Scott says of the way Smollett composed Launcelot Greaves, the first novel written to be serialized in a magazine:

. . . when post-time drew near, he used to retire for half an hour or an hour to prepare the necessary quantity of copy, as it is technically called in the printing house, which he never gave himself the trouble to correct, or even look over.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Lewis M. Knapp, Tobias Smollett, Doctor of Men and Manners (New York, 1963), p. 228.

Such a pace makes almost inevitably for work uneven in quality, and Smollett's novels are badly flawed in many ways, a fact which has led many critics to dismiss him contemptuously as a writer without any serious or controlling vision.

Some of these flaws, however, are attributable not to haste, but to historical period. Growing as it did out of a fusion of the "character," the periodical essay, the rogue biography, Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, the picaresque tale, and the romance, the eighteenth-century novel had to mold the diverse inheritance of its mixed parentage into a form that was its own. The result was at times a kind of adolescent superficiality, awkwardness, and clumsiness—according to twentieth-century standards, that is. Modern criticism has sometimes ignored the fact that the early novel is an art form that must, to an extent, be evaluated in terms of its historical context and that its form is based on assumptions different from those of the present. The early novel is an experimental entity, and any artist working with it must be evaluated in terms of the achievement of the contemporary form. Yet some twentieth-century critics, valuing that literature most which provides the most scope and challenge to the techniques of formal analysis, have tended to regard this struggling young genre with either amused and condescending tolerance or intolerant disdain.

Because of both the flaws for which he can be held accountable and those for which he should not, Smollett has suffered from these derogatory attitudes more than any other major novelist of this period. Yet, in his own century Smollett's reputation grew until it began to rival those of Richardson and Fielding. In the first third of the nineteenth century his reputation was at its highest peak, and of all the eighteenth-century novelists he was the acknowledged favorite of most of the major figures of the early Victorian literary world. As the century moved on, however, his reputation began to diminish, primarily because of the Victorians' prudish rejection of his "vulgarity," "lowness," and "obscenity," and he was nearly forgotten. By 1890 his reputation was at a very low ebb. At the beginning of the twentieth century, with the rise of interest in the history of literature and in realism and naturalism, he regained importance. As Fred Boege says in his Preface to Smollett's Reputation as a Novelist, "His reputation has suffered more vicissitudes in two centuries than Horace's in two milleniums."<sup>2</sup> Even the Smollett Renaissance beginning in 1930 has not brought agreement as to Smollett's status as an artist.

Although much of the work done on Smollett has been a matter of filling in the facts of his biography, literary criticism has centered around five related problems: the

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<sup>2</sup>Princeton, 1947

reasons for the constant celebration of Smollett's style; the form, or more often the formlessness, of his novels; his heroes and the intention behind the presentation of them; the seriousness of his aims; and the worth of his final achievement.

One of the main criticisms of Smollett, first made by Thackeray and repeated in every decade, is that he "did not invent much, as I fancy, but had the keenest perceptive faculty and described what he saw with wonderful relish and delightful broad humor."<sup>3</sup> Thackeray's stricture reappears in succeeding critics, David Hannay and Lewis Melville<sup>4</sup> for example, up to the present. The latest book length study of Smollett, Robert Spector's Tobias Smollett, reiterates, "His was never a simple inventive genius; he borrowed his materials and, through his powerful style, his own verve, gave them a personality that was his."<sup>5</sup>

Implicit in these criticisms is a judgment made more explicit in the comments of most twentieth-century critics. The majority of them have insisted that Smollett's only art is in his narrative style and that his novels lack structure, unity, and depth of vision. That his work lacks unity and structure is a critical commonplace. The tenor

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<sup>3</sup>The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1916), p. 194.

<sup>4</sup>Life of Tobias Smollett (London, 1887), pp. 65-6, and The Life and Letters of Tobias Smollett (New York, 1966), p. 39. Reprint.

<sup>5</sup>New York, 1968, p. 37.

of most of these judgments is illustrated by Ernest Baker in The History of the English Novel:

Smollett had little constructive ability and less creative ability. Within its limits his technique was masterly, but in the powers that make the artist he was singularly deficient . . . (215).

In Smollett, serious criticism of life will be looked for in vain, though he probably thought he was dispensing it in some of his flashes of malign humor. He gets what amusement he can out of the human spectacle, and that is the whole content of his philosophy (237).<sup>6</sup>

A few voices have spoken out for the defense. Very recently attention has been given to the problems of Smollett's satiric purpose and to his experiments with form, a fact signifying a growing tendency to regard Smollett's artistry more seriously. But this new evaluation has only barely begun, and the majority opinion of twentieth-century critics is still represented in the two following comments:

Among the pleasures of Smollett is that one swift reading does him. He wrote quickly and not too carefully, and might as well be read that way; close and repeated goings over of Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, and the rest will add little to what one gathered the first time . . .<sup>7</sup>

. . . it is difficult to think of many writers of comparable status who have been as little concerned as Smollett with the deeper ambiguities and conflicts of the human spirit, or have been less susceptible to the kind of symbolic, mythic, many-leveled interpretation which is central to modern criticism.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>IV (New York, 1936). Reprint, 1968.

<sup>7</sup>John Barth, "Afterword" to Roderick Random (New York: New American Library, 1964), p. 469.

<sup>8</sup>Robert G. Davis, "Introduction to Humphry Clinker" (New York: Rinehart, 1950), p. vi.

Yet, as shallow and lacking in serious purpose as twentieth-century criticism would often have it that Smollett's novels are, they continue to be read, to be argued about, and to be studied. It would seem evident that something is drawing the critic back for another look and that there is a need for further study of the novels. In dealing with the problems of Smollett's intention behind the presentation of his characters, the seriousness of his aims, and the worth of his final achievement, critics have left an approach to them almost untouched. This is the study of the relationship between the imagery, the themes, and the satiric purpose, an approach which has proved very useful in providing new insights into a writer's art. This approach reveals a greater depth of vision and seriousness of purpose and achievement in art than most critics have found in the novels.

The editions used in this study are: The Adventures of Roderick Random (New York: New American Library, 1964), hereafter abbreviated RR; The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle (London: Oxford, 1964), hereafter abbreviated PP; The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom, Maynadier Edition (Cambridge U.S.A., 1902), hereafter abbreviated FF; The Adventures of Launcelot Greaves, Maynadier Edition (New York, 1902), hereafter abbreviated LG; and The Expedition of Humphry Clinker (London: Oxford, 1964), hereafter abbreviated HC.

CHAPTER I

SMOLLETT'S IMAGERY

AND PURPOSE

He hangs between, in doubt to act  
or rest:  
In doubt to deem himself a god, or  
beast.

-Alexander Pope, "Essay on Man"

## CHAPTER I

### SMOLLETT'S IMAGERY AND PURPOSE

Smollett was a serious writer, and it is the purpose of this study to examine three major groups of images in the novels--those of animals, those of hunting and preying, and those of food and eating--in relation to other elements of the fiction in order to show that this imagery points to a depth of vision which is neither superficial, simple, nor lacking in serious purpose. This is a vision of a world in which the majority of men act according to their animal nature more consistently than to their "human" nature, a world in which both by instinct and conditioning men come to see their fellow men as "food" with which they may satiate their various appetites, a world of prey and predators analogous to that of the forest and jungle. This is a theme Smollett states explicitly only in his third novel:

He had formerly imagined, but was now fully persuaded, that the sons of man preyed upon one another, and such was the end and condition of their being. (FF, 66-67)

But it is a major theme in all of the novels.

One indication of the force this idea had in Smollett's mind is the proportion of imagery suggesting this

idea. A full description of Smollett's imagery is given in Appendix A, but the significance of the dearth of certain kinds of images and the plethora of others may be pointed out here. It is that Smollett, with overwhelming frequency, chose images that suggest this kind of world. There are no images at all from such common sources as gardening, alchemy, or law; very few from medicine, the sea, music, religion, sport, or games; and an absolute dearth of domestic imagery. Images of war and weapons appear more frequently; but, as Paul Fussell has pointed out in The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism<sup>1</sup> these are common stylistic devices of eighteenth-century prose and hence of no significance in analyzing the relationship between Smollett's imagery and his themes and purpose. There are larger groups of images of fire and light, water, and weather, largely violent in nature. Outnumbering all of these and appearing with so exceptionally great a frequency as to suggest their significance as a key to Smollett's habits of thought are the three large groups to be discussed, particularly the animal imagery.

Critics have noted some of this imagery, but have seen its importance only dimly or not at all. Alan D. McKillop in The Early Masters of the English Novel speaks of Smollett's world as "a jungle in which amazing fauna are to be found, a region of endless absurdities."<sup>2</sup> But

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<sup>1</sup>Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1965, pp. 139-170

<sup>2</sup>Lawrence, Kansas, 1968, p. 174.

McKillop seems to see the animal imagery as primarily a comic device, and he leaves discussion of its relationship to Smollett's satirical purpose and moral intent with a somewhat tenuous and ambiguous paragraph.<sup>3</sup> V. S. Pritchett in "The Shocking Surgeon" sees more clearly that Smollett's "lumps of animal horror or stupidity" are presented with serious moral purpose, but does not examine the idea fully.<sup>4</sup> Most critics agree with Albrecht B. Strauss, who, in commenting on the use of animal imagery to characterize and dehumanize, sees it as part of a "comic vision."<sup>5</sup> Robert Alter sees this same dehumanization as "wonderfully absurd" and says, "There is nothing sinister, however, about this."<sup>6</sup> These views are the effects of the traditional emphasis which has been put on Smollett's humor and vulgarity and which has led to condescension toward his work. But superficially comic though some of this imagery may be, it is fundamentally a part of Smollett's struggle with the problem of whether man should deem himself half god and half beast or all beast, a problem he approaches with conscious satirical purpose and profound moral intent.

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<sup>3</sup>Early Masters, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup>In The Living Novel (New York, 1947), pp. 32-37

<sup>5</sup>"On Smollett's Language: A Paragraph," English Institute Essays, 1958, ed. Harold C. Martin (New York, 1959), p. 42.

<sup>6</sup>"The Picaroon as Fortune's Plaything," from Essays on the Eighteenth-Century Novel, ed. Robert B. Spector (Bloomington, 1965), p. 144.

It would actually be surprising if Smollett, as an eighteenth-century man, did not share the general conviction that literature's primary concern was moral exhortation. The dehumanization in the novel is part of what Professor Fussell speaks of as "the Augustan humanist enterprise . . . enlisted in contemplating and articulating the depravity of man."<sup>7</sup> Smollett, particularly in the early novels, is engaged in exposing the full depths of human depravity, in laying bare man's instinctive malevolence, in unmasking his pretensions, and in revealing the predatory animal beneath them. There is in Smollett little Shaftsburian optimism, none of the gentleness of the non-humanist tradition, and no suggestion that man's flaws are merely skin deep. Smollett's world is horrible, and it is made so by the vicious nature of the animal that has domination over it. Smollett's purpose is to shock man into fighting that nature constantly.

In his own time the general moral intent of Smollett's novels was clearly recognized,<sup>8</sup> but by the beginning of the nineteenth century a kind of myopia, which plagued Smollett criticism into the twentieth century, set in among critics.<sup>9</sup> The form of the myopia has not been consistent,

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<sup>7</sup>Rhetorical World, p. 70

<sup>8</sup>Smollett's Reputation, p. 44.

<sup>9</sup>Smollett's Reputation, p. 73.



however; twentieth-century critics have not had a uniformly clear perspective on Smollett's purpose. Herbert Read dismisses the saevo indignatio of the artist as too often "a mere reaction to the peevish nature of his constitution"<sup>10</sup> and charges that his caricatures, unlike Swift's, "are too extravagant to affect the conscience of a public; yet that is the function of satire."<sup>11</sup> Edward Wagenknecht goes even further and insists that there is not a trace of the saevo indignatio in Smollett.<sup>12</sup> And the debate has gone on, most critics seeing Smollett as a humorist only and his satire as feeble and only a few attributing serious moral intent and accomplishment to him.

Although there may be room for debate over the attainment of his end, it is amazing that there should be any about the end itself. That Smollett explains most clearly in his two Prefaces, which constitute as clear a statement of the assumptions of the eighteenth-century novel as any that exist. Smollett's famous definition of the novel appears in the Preface to Fathom, which was probably written during a period of uncertainty and depression preceding his King's Bench trial, as an apology for his previous novels and for the forthcoming one:

A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different

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<sup>10</sup>Reason and Imagination (New York, 1943), p. 191.

<sup>11</sup>p. 201.

<sup>12</sup>Calvalcade of the English Novel (New York, 1943), p. 77.

groups, and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan, and general occurrence, to which every individual figure is subservient. But this plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability, or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at the last close the scene, by virtue of his own importance.

Although "diffused" and "personage . . . to unite the incidents" may muddy the idea, this is a clear statement, in eighteenth-century terms, of the aesthetic principle of artistic unity. The Traditional "But" carries the sense of "despite this;" the "uniform plan," Smollett means, is to be the major unifying principle. And, as "picture," "groups," (largely used of paintings at the time), and "exhibited" suggest, that "uniform plan" is an artist's vision of life, a painting of it, something like G. Wilson Knight's "expanded metaphor."<sup>13</sup> Although it could be argued that Smollett used the painting metaphor merely because he lacked a commonly accepted critical vocabulary, it seems clear that he envisioned a novel as a whole unified by idea or theme rather than just by the presence of a hero.

When in the Preface to Roderick Random Smollett speaks of his satire as "occasional," he undoubtedly means "when occasion arises" or "happening as occasion presents itself" (OED), which does not preclude its being the main purpose, rather than in incidental thing, because occasion presents itself on nearly every page of the novels. Despite the fact that Smollett's satirical intent has been

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<sup>13</sup>The Wheel of Fire (Oxford, 1930).

blithely dismissed as mere irritability or as a casual and unfulfilled aim, it seems obvious that he meant, as he says, his novels to "assume the sock." The dearth of domestic images, as well as the dearth of fireside domesticity, is related to his public purpose, which is to present man and his society as an organization with the ethics of the jungle. To assume that a writer intends to do what he says he intends to do is to assume that, melodrama, humor and sentimentality notwithstanding, Smollett's main aim is the satirical one of making the reader feel the "generous indignation which ought to animate the reader against the sordid and vicious disposition of the world."

The key to the exact nature of the sordidness and viciousness of the world's disposition lies in the three major groups of imagery. Looked at in context, they are not part of a comic vision but of a profoundly dark and satirical one. Far from being a mere comic device, this imagery is central and serious. Another indication of the dominant place it has in Smollett's imagination is its frequent inappropriate use. It is a kind of image that seems to come to his mind with such intuitive spontaneousness that it sometimes presents itself with an absurd kind of clumsiness. For example, "baboon" is with Smollett an almost habitual derogatory expression, and in describing the extent of a serious breach in a wall made by cannon, he says it is large enough, not for an elephant, but for a baboon to go through, which makes it not necessarily

large at all. The same tendency to evoke the inappropriate animal image is shown in the original fifth line of the "Ode to Independence:"

Where insolence his wrinkled snout uprears  
An editor, to preserve the general loftiness of tone, substituted "front" for "snout" later.<sup>14</sup> In one book a lover going to his bride is described as a lion going to his prey. But incongruous and absurd as some of the images are, they are, as will be shown, more than merely comic in intent.

The centrality of this imagery is suggested partly by its prevalence. Smollett's world is a menagerie. Children run about "like ragged colts,"<sup>15</sup> a man runs "as nimble as a buck" (HC 202), dancers trot and bounce "like deer, as if they moved upon strings" (HC 206), porters surround travellers "like so many hungry wolves,"<sup>16</sup> a wet man runs "like a drowned rat squeaking for assistance" (PP 139), a nun rushes on another "like a hawk upon a partridge" (PP 330), a man grins "like an enraged baboon" (PP 662), men slobber their companions "with a most bear-like affection" (FF, I, 181). Not only do the characters act like

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<sup>14</sup>See Luella F. Norwood, "The Authenticity of Smollett's 'Ode to Independence,'" Review of English Studies, XVII (1941), 62.

<sup>15</sup>The Expedition of Humphry Clinker (London, 1966), p. 198. Succeeding references are to this edition.

<sup>16</sup>The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle (London, 1964), p. 190. Succeeding references are to this edition.

animals, many of them look like them. They have the jowls of a baboon, eyes like those of pigs, or teeth like those of wolves or mastiffs. And they have the qualities of animals. They have arrogance like that of a "cock who never crows but upon his own dunghill" (HC 229), the mischievous qualities of monkeys, the strength of elephants, the suppleness of spaniels, etc. Smollett, like his own Morgan, "spoke by metaphor" to express my sentiments";<sup>17</sup> but unlike Morgan he uses this metaphor deliberately to express the vicious, brutal, animal, unethical, and the violent nature of man and the society he creates and is in turn created by.

The dominant animals in Smollett's world are the wild ones, the predators. The good tend to be, like Humphry, "sheep among wolves and tigers" (HC 178); or they are, like Lismahago who "ran about the room naked like a squirrel in a cage" (HC 350), helplessly comic. The world they live in is a violent and brutal one, and the brutality that has brought down so many strictures on Smollett's head has a thematic function. The canings, the kicks, the blows, the human tigers, wolves, and lions—all are there to portray the tooth and claw world making up a society held together by the need of predators for prey. Smollett's virtuous characters are usually failures, at least in the early novels, not simply because they are poor

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<sup>17</sup>The Adventures of Roderick Random (New York, 1964), p. 198. Succeeding references are to this edition.

imitations of stock characters, but because they are inadequate in coping with this kind of world. The brutal, the malodorous, the scatological, the violent—these dominating elements, like the profuse animal imagery, are there, as they are in Swift, to remind men of their animal natures and to suggest to them the omnipresence of animal behavior in their dealings with one another. This is central to all the novels. The words "hunt," "prey," "decoy," and "ensnare" are reiterated through the novels with an accumulative effect. Man is a prey to his own emotions and to economic and social forces. He suffers the "chagrin that preyed upon his heart" (PP 141); he falls "a prey to the unsuspecting integrity of his own heart" (PP 612); he nurses "the worm of grief that preyed upon his heart" (FF 152); his "guilt like an undying vulture preys upon my heart" (FF, II, 260). "He is a prey to famine" (RR 271), a "prey to misery and want" (RR 303) or to the "ravenous claws of usurping ambition" (RR 274). There are dozens and dozens of similar expressions throughout the novels.

But more significantly, Smollett's characters constantly prey on and hunt one another to satisfy their appetites. They see others as objects useful to satisfy their hunger for entertainment, for sex, for the enhancement of ego, and for material goods. Peregrine lays "a snare for his new confederates" (PP 115) to expose them, ridicule them, and provide entertainment for himself. In doing so, he acts consistently with most of Smollett's characters,

who ensnare each other into marriage, "decoy" others into traps of one kind or another, or "prey" on them, sometimes beginning to "hunt in couples" (FF, I, 69). This imagery gets emphasis both in its numerical quantity and in its frequent extension into well developed metaphor. With each repetition the world of the novels takes on more of the violence and cold rapaciousness of the bestial one of forest and jungle.

The food and eating imagery adds to the total effect of this picture. In the imagery, if people are not envisioned as animals, they are usually envisioned as food. As in Cruikshank's illustrations of the novel,<sup>18</sup> yeomans' daughters have "clumsy shanks, like so many shins of beef;<sup>19</sup> a man hangs "suspended like a flitch of bacon" (LG 105). Like cannibals, characters feast on one another. Strap sees his intended bride to the door and returns "licking his lips and asking if she was not a luscious creature" (PP 308); men fastened themselves upon her husband, and helped consume his substance" (PP 713); a widow, speaking of a justice's sending her son away, wants him to "disgorge my substance he hath devoured" (LG 144). Characters who want to make themselves pleasing to another appeal to the gourmet in that person; they sweeten her

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<sup>18</sup>Pritchett, "Shocking Surgeon," p. 32.

<sup>19</sup>The Adventures of Launcelot Greaves, Maynadier Edition (New York, 1902), p. 32. Succeeding references are to this edition.

behavior with a dash of affection" (PP 31) or "season his behaviour with a spice of gallantry" (FF, I, 141). The violence of the prey imagery is reflected also in the many hands that are "devoured with kisses" or people who are "swallowed up."

Sex and entertainment are the two appetites most consistently associated with eating. Pure animal lust or tender love, it makes no difference; the objects of both are seen in terms of food. Love is never a giving but always a gulping; its object is a thing to be used to satisfy appetites. The low Mrs. Hornbeck is an "untasted morsel" (PP 204) to Peregrine, and his new bride is "elegantly dished out" in a "delicious scene" (PP 779). And a loved one dead has her "delicate limbs consigned to dust . . . dished out a delicious banquet to the unsparing worm" (FF, II, 218). Rarely is the beloved woman a "goddess" in Smollett unless he uses such imagery ironically; she is something to be fought, preyed on, or most often, fed on.

Man in Smollett's fiction has an appetite for amusement or entertainment that must be satisfied also, and one preys on another for this purpose too. This is again evident in the food imagery. Trunnion in an agony of terror as the result of a prank is a "delicious meal" (PP 33) to Hatchway. Almost every battle of wits is a "meal" to the spectators. Jerry consistently speaks of Lismahago as "food for ridicule and satire" (HC 34) or a

"high flavoured dish" (HC 220). Food imagery is pervasive, and through it, along with all the other major imagery, emerges Smollett's view of man in society as animal, prey, or predator, seeking or becoming food.

Whenever a writer turns to imagery, he has a choice, a fact which has significance when there is a high consistency in the choices he makes. When Smollett chose an alternative, he chose from a group of strongly related images. Animal imagery, imagery of hunting and preying, imagery of food and eating--there is too much repetition, too much consonance here, too strong a relationship, for the choices to be haphazard. They are instead the choices, more or less conscious, of the creative mind of the artist. Running through all of the novels, they produce a unity of impression and vision and are vital to an understanding of thematic statements made by the novels. These choices are not united by the incongruity which is the essence of humor, but by the exaggeration of effect which is the essence of satire. Their purpose is to present an extreme picture of bestiality, to portray it as shockingly prevalent in society, and to indicate the degree to which a character either accommodates or combats the half beast in his nature. Swiftian, rather than purely comic in their effect, they are the keys to Smollett's satirical intent.

These images unlock a unity of form, function, and major theme running through the body of Smollett's fiction.

Each of the novels is about a hero who takes a particular stance toward his knowledge that man acts more often as an animal than as a human being. The basic distinction between the two kinds of behavior for Smollett lies in the human capacity for altruistic generosity. Generosity in the eighteenth-century was both a philosophical and an ethical issue, primarily because of the opposed views of Hobbes' totally selfish man and Shaftsbury's good and generous one. The issue was important in a period when the wealth was concentrated in the hands of a few people at the top, for whom the problem of responsibility for the poverty-stricken had dimensions unknown today. For Smollett, who did not want to change the basic economic or social system, men, who were by nature neither wholly good nor hopelessly bad, needed only to learn to control their bestial predacity and be kind and charitable. Kindness and generosity, for Smollett, were what distinguished men from beasts. "Kindness," Jerry says, ". . . is the essence of good-nature and humanity" (HC 237). A man can choose to suffer because of an ideal, an ethical principle, or a generous concern for the welfare of others; but an animal will do anything to satisfy the needs of the body. To act only to satisfy needs and to obey instinctive promptings which stem from self-love and are selfish is animal behavior in Smollett's novels. To act out of kindness, compassion, reason, and unselfish or social love, is human behavior. Each of the novels, as the following chapters will

**show**, is structured around a conflict of the two forms of **behavior**; and each of the heroes makes some kind of **adaptation** to a rapacious, selfish, violent, brutal, unreasoning, **bestial** world—the kind of world evoked by the imagery.

## CHAPTER II

RODERICK RANDOM

I'd be a dog, a monkey, or a bear,  
Or anything, but that vain animal,  
Who is so proud of being rational.

-John Wilmot, "A Satire on  
Mankind"

## CHAPTER II

### RODERICK RANDOM

Smollett's first novel, Roderick Random, is an incipient development novel, the action of which is made up of a young man's journey from innocence to a knowledge of the bestial nature of most men and of the fundamentally bestial nature of the principles on which society works. They are similar to the principles of Bernard Mandeville's "The Grumbling Hive," although, unlike Mandeville, Smollett reveals them with a sense of outrage rather than of acceptance. In his novel human society and institutions emerge as primarily loose, competitive organizations of prey and predators rather than cooperative institutions growing out of any natural social instinct in man. The truth of this, one of the central themes of the novel, is revealed through an examination of both image and action.

Chapters I through IV, dealing with Roderick's boyhood, make up a unit in the novel, treating his initiation into this truth about one human institution, his own family. There is less concern for the young within it than is generally found in family groups within the higher orders of the animal kingdom. Roderick finds himself, as the weakest and most powerless member of the family, the

one made prey and victim of the larger and stronger rather than the one to be cherished and protected. The imagery in this section underlines the essential bestiality of this predatory group.

At its base is the grandfather, whose main characteristic is the inhuman "coldness of civility which was peculiar to him" (30). He is coldly unforgiving when Roderick's father humbly admits his fault in marrying without permission and explains the necessity of his doing so. He is coldly unrelenting when Roderick's mother falls at his feet and humbly implores his forgiveness. He is coldly indifferent to her when she falls sick after bearing his grandchild, and he allows her to die from exposure to the weather. He is equally unconcerned about the child's welfare and sends him off to school without books or sufficient clothing. His willingness to send him at all stems from the schoolmaster's obligations to himself, which force the master to take Roderick without tuition, the lack of which makes Roderick a maltreated victim of the schoolmaster's resentment. To this also the grandfather is monumentally and inhumanly indifferent.

The emphasis Smollett puts on the grandfather's coldness is reinforced by the imagery. The coldbloodedness of his acts is analogous to the coldbloodedness of sea creatures like the porpoise and herring to which he is compared. But more vicious than either of these, the grandfather is "the old shark" surrounded by "young fry" (32), the

rapacious cousins who flatter the old man in hopes of getting his wealth when he dies. That his true nature not be missed Smollett offers this comparison a second time. After the grandfather's death, Lieutenant Dowling tells of a dream in which "I thought I stood upon the forecastle, and saw a parcel of carrion crows foul of a dead shark that floated alongside . . ." (33), and true to the dream the carrion crow cousins swarm around the body, ready to feed on the dead man's estate. Like fish, which lay their eggs and then leave them, the grandfather shows no concern for his young; and like the shark, which snaps up anything, dead or alive, he is indifferent to whom he destroys.

When his will is read, it is found that he has left his wealth to the grandson most like himself, the predatory, fox-hunting cousin. Smollett presents this disagreeable character as a "young Acteon" (28), a comparison giving added force to the point made through his acts. Like Acteon, whose mother was Cyrene, who hated housework and spent all her time hunting, and whose father was Aristaeus, who perfected the art of hunting, the cousin is by nature and by inheritance a predator. But more than this, the cousin is a vicious, inhuman predator who preys on other human beings:

This young Acteon, who inherited his grandfather's antipathy to everything in distress, never set eyes on me without uncoupling his beagles and hunting me into some cottage or other, whither I generally fled for shelter (28).

This passage introduces a hunt-prey-pack motif that runs

through the novel, and the fox-hunting cousin prefigures the world as Roderick will come to know it. He has the predatory animal's instinct to prey on what is weak and in distress rather than the more human one to sympathize and aid.

The same principle motivates the other cousins who make up the pack. Subservient to the stronger grandfather and then to the foxhunter, they instinctively attack the weaker. When Lieutenant Dowling exhorts the grandfather to leave something to Roderick, like a wolf pack they "set up their throats all together against my protector" (31). Though sometimes compared to young fry around the old shark and to carrion crows, both of which also prey, they are most consistently presented as a pack of savage dogs or wolves. Like dogs, they are willing to put their lips to the "froth and slaver" (33) on the lips of the dying man, on whom they expect to prey. The same image is suggested when the fox-hunting cousin says of them when they learn that they have been left no legacy, ". . . here's an old succubus; but somebody's soul howls for it . . ." (35). Smollett shows no other behavior in them except that of the predatory pack as they turn viciously on the weaker Roderick in a fight over the grandfather's wealth. They, along with the grandfather and the fox-hunting cousin, represent the institution of the family as it is consistently portrayed in Roderick Random, a group with relationships not of love but of advantage to the most predatory.

Into this group comes the outsider, Lieutenant Bowling, and with his entrance Smollett introduces a conflict between antithetical motivating principles: the distinctly human and the bestial. The contrast between the two principles is first presented when the fox-hunting cousin set his dogs on Lieutenant Dowling as he approaches the house. Dowling beats them off and is incensed because "your dogs have boarded me without provocation" (29). The underlying assumption is that a human being does not attack without sufficient cause, and he has no expectation of an attack made out of such purely instinctive bestial viciousness as the cousin's. The cousin, however, has no human values. The dogs, which mean pleasure, power, and prey, are valued more than any of the principles of human community; "I would not have parted with them" he says, "to save your whole generation" (30).

The two principles are in conflict again when Dowling confronts the grandfather and exhorts him to do something for his own grandchild, Roderick. Dowling's arguments are based on the human values of conscience, religion, and unselfish love for the weak and vulnerable:

"... if you have any conscience at all, do something for this poor boy, who has been used at a very unchristian rate. Unchristian, do I call it? I am sure the Moors in Barbary have more humanity than to leave their little ones in want" (31).

But to these values the old shark is indifferent, and he leaves Roderick to the non-existent mercy of the fox-hunting cousin by making no provision for Roderick in

his will.

The two principles come into conflict a third time when Bowling consoles the dying grandfather in terms of religion. Thinking that the old man has repented and left something to Roderick, Dowling says, "What, man! don't despair . . . . There's a righteous judge above, ain't there?" (33). The old man is too far gone to respond; but the parson, who supposedly represents the highest of human principles, responds according to the same greedy values that the family has. He feels his "province invaded" (33) and is angry. And the episode of the grandfather's death ends with the fox-hunter thinking of "hunting a black badger (so he termed the clergyman)" (35), an image which reinforces the vision of this small world of Roderick's youth as a pack of predators with bestial, rather than human, natures. This vision animates the whole book as well as the opening chapters.

Roderick too in the course of the novel becomes somewhat conditioned by the society of which he is a part. As a boy, he seeks love. He keeps coming to the grandfather's side, seeking love and comfort. He writes letters to him. But his attempts at more gentle and human relationships are punished by brutality. His grandfather neglects him; he is cruelly beaten at school; and his letters bring the infliction of the torturous board on his hand. Gradually he adapts his behavior to conform to that of the world he has met. Beaten at school until he

turns ferocious himself, he organizes his own pack of thirty boys to prey on other groups of boys and on the master. By the time Dowling arrives, Roderick and his pack have become the terror of the whole village, on which they prey also.

Dowling's humane treatment turns the boy again to generous and high human values. When Dowling suggests that he go to sea, Roderick unselfishly says nothing of his own wishes "lest I disoblige the only friend I had in the world" (36). Although Roderick never completely loses his humane and generous impulses, the rest of the novel portrays the boy learning again and again the same lessons about man's greedy, animal behavior and his predatory instincts; and to a lesser extent than will his successors *Peregrine Pickle* and *Ferdinand Fathom*, Roderick gradually adapts to this world.

In the chapters dealing with Roderick's experiences in the university town, on the road to London, and in London itself, animal and prey imagery appears frequently enough to suggest the kind of force it had in Smollett's imagination. Even where this imagery does not appear, however, Smollett's unpleasant thesis about human nature and society reveals itself over and over again through the action. Roderick's adventures into the larger world teach him that the bestiality of his family pervades all the elements of the society with which he comes into contact.

In the university town the cousins offer their friendship to Roderick, but only because they want to use his satirical talents to get revenge on their enemies. When Potion evicts Roderick, Crab takes him in, but only to feed his own ego by making his rival, Potion, look bad and to exploit Roderick's misfortune by replacing his apprentice as cheaply as possible. Crab uses Roderick to escape responsibility for the maid's condition, and Roderick finally comes to using Crab too to escape this society, which Smollett portrays with a singular absence of any of the more generous and more human motivations and behavior.

Beneath the surface of human society lies an ubiquitous bestial reality. In the course of Roderick's experiences on the road Smollett uses both imagery and action to reinforce this lesson. Some of the animals Roderick meets are only comic and ineffectual. The blustering captain, Weazel, one of the many characters whose animal nature is signified by their names, is compared to a baboon, a spider, and a lap-dog that has befouled himself and is comic in his desire to "eat his blood, body, and guts" (81). Isaac, the "old goat," is ineffectual in dealing with the female hunter, Jenny, who "laid this snare for me" (74). In their comicality and their ineffectuality these characters foreshadow the predatory characters of Smollett's last novel, Humphry Clinker, in which Smollett's rage at the predatory instinct in man has been replaced by an attitude of contemptuous ridicule or amused tolerance.

But in this early novel that rage is unabated, and the satirist lines the road with characters who are for the most part viciously predatory. The robber and the clergyman are at antithetical ends of the spectrum of respectability, yet their values are the same. Roderick recognizes them as members of the species inhabiting his home territory: "I did not at all wonder to find a cheat in canonicals, this being an animal frequent in my own country" (60).

Whether in high position or low, the species, Roderick finds, is the same. Malevolent by nature, it attacks instinctively. The crowds on the London streets either insult Roderick and Strap or give them wrong directions. A coachman deliberately spatters them with mud. A stranger asks Roderick "how long I had been caught... for my tail was not yet cut" (85). The members of the naval board too are instinctively hostile, one of them being a Mr. Snarler, "who seemed to have very little of the animal risible in his constitution" (109). Almost none of the other people Roderick meets act as if they had much of the purely human in their characters either. Like other heroes of the eighteenth-century travel novels, Roderick is learning the nature of man and the world, and the lessons he has learned earlier are reinforced here. Men "decoy" strangers into their "haunts" where an accomplice awaits "the prey he had run down" (95), and Roderick becomes a victim of the card shark, the first of a long line of sly predators of the type in the novels, all of

whom prefigure Sir Stentor Stile, the fox hunter in Ferdinand Fathom, the most fully developed of them all. Lavement, to whom Roderick becomes apprenticed, is compared to a baboon with four yellow fangs. Arthur Sherbo has pointed out that the fangs are a rather traditional detail used to convey "some idea of the quintessential appearance or makeup of one's characters."<sup>1</sup> Lavement's fangs signify his preying on the sick by cheating on their medicines. By frequent animal imagery, and by a juxtaposition of family life and public life, Smollett shows the ubiquity of the lack of the animal risible in man's nature, the ravenous S\_\_t\_\_y\_\_ being as vicious a thief as Rifle, although the former uses legal means. When his meeting with Father Balthazar teaches him that predators inhabit the church too, he knows that the condition is universal.

Looking at Roderick's adventures as an education in the way of the world provides insight into a problem that has bothered critics when they looked at Roderick as hero. He is actually only the first of five heroes who take varying stances toward the world as it is presented in the novels. The behavior of the first three heroes will become increasingly more logically consistent with Smollett's vision, their accommodation to it, as will be shown, making the target of Smollett's satire increasingly more clear. The first of the three is not meant to be a

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<sup>1</sup>Studies in the Eighteenth-Century Novel (Lansing, 1969), p. 182.

hero in the usual sense. Roderick's merit does not struggle overly long. Although to a lesser extent than will Peregrine and Ferdinand, Roderick adapts to the world as he finds it. He becomes a non-hero whose honesty and honor are questionable and who becomes a predator himself.

Smollet stresses Roderick's accommodating tendency. While in the university town he still expects men to behave with humanity. He despises Potion's "mean selfish disposition" and thinks he "ought to be expelled from every social community" (45), because Roderick has not yet learned how well Potion fits into the human community as Smollett portrays it. Roderick feels at this point as if he himself were a different species, somehow "not within the scheme or protection of Providence" (46). Responses of this sort disappear early in the novel, however, as Roderick becomes increasingly more knowledgeable in the ways of depravity, increasingly more wary, and increasingly more apt to use others himself. By the time he goes to the Lavements he has progressed enough to pretend ignorance so that he "might possibly discover in discourse that which would . . . yield me . . . advantages" (120). When Dowling goes back to England, expecting aid from friends, the younger but more experienced Roderick

. . . was heartily sorry to find a worthy man so destitute of friends when he had such need of them, and looked upon my own situation as less miserable than his because I was better acquainted with the selfishness and roguery of mankind, consequently less liable to disappointment and imposition" (263).

When his meeting with the Capuchin monk completes his disillusionment, Roderick wishes himself "a bear, that I might retreat to the woods and deserts, far from the inhospitable haunts of men" (271).

Roderick's cynicism underlies his ready acceptance of Strap's suggestion that he become a predator himself, a fortune hunter in the fashionable world. But his cynicism, his disillusionment, and his decision to adapt to the world as he finds it do not equip him to succeed; Roderick is really quite inept as a predator. In his first attempt he is gulled into picking up a prostitute. Melinda Goosetrap, cheats at cards with so little art that only a novice could be imposed on, but she is no goose and gets eighteen guineas out of him and then drops him. Miss Snapper, though she is not a predator herself, proves to be no more gullible than his other prey, like her namesake the turtle retreating into her shell. And Roderick's attempt to use Strutwell to get ahead again ends with Roderick as prey himself, as "it was a common thing for him to amuse strangers whom his jackels ran down . . . and then leave them a prey to want and infamy" (342). Finally, Roderick's attempt to cheat his tailor results in Roderick's incarceration in gaol, from which Lieutenant Dowling has to rescue him and restore him to fortune.

Dowling's appearances at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the novel provides structure, constituting a frame within which the bestiary stands out by

contrast. His entries into Roderick's life mark those points when Roderick has been most brutally abused and is at the nadir of his fortunes. Each time Dowling presents alternative values to those of the world as Roderick has experienced it, and Roderick responds with impulses and acts of generosity himself, as he does when he refrains from telling so generous a man that he does not want to go to sea. After Roderick's abortive attempt at becoming a predator, it is Dowling's humane generosity that rescues Roderick from prison and gives him the means of gaining a fortune. Thus it is not adapting to the ways of the world that saves Roderick, but the concern for others displayed by Dowling.

Dowling's function as a representative of one of man's higher aspirations raises the question of why Strap, who also represents the value of generosity, should be so severely portrayed as a ridiculous clown who is always blubbering or indulging in ludicrous contortions. One answer is that Strap's function, somewhat like Greaves' in a later novel, is to remind the reader of the classical value of moderation in all things. In the novels to follow Smollett will deal with the foolishness of excessive goodness and of naive and unwary goodness in a world such as this. A major distinction between Strap and Dowling is that Dowling is no fool and is not so totally selfless as to allow himself to be used. Dowling is sometimes naive, as he is when he assumes that Potion will continue to

provide for Roderick out of friendship; but Dowling never loses his dignity and never allows any contemptuous or degrading treatment of himself, as Strap does. Strap may be good, but he is also a fool who never learns. At the end he is as unwary and lacking in prudence as he was at the beginning. As a reward for his goodness Smollett finally assigns him a reformed whore as a wife, a dispensation no eighteenth-century author would give to a character he respects or is offering as a standard against which the other characters are to be measured and judged.

There are no such standards in this novel, although Dowling and Mrs. Sagely, the third generous person Roderick meets, come as close to that as Smollett will come until his last novel when he has worked out some of the problems concerning the worst in man's nature, the society that results from it, and the best way to live in such a society.

The answers Smollett gives to the question of whether man is by nature bestial or is taught to be so by society are sometimes left ambiguous in his fiction, but in this first novel society is clearly a conditioning agent. This is illustrated through both Dowling and Roderick. When Dowling comes to the grandfather's house, the lieutenant is ignorant "of the ways of men in general, to which his education on board had kept him an utter stranger" (29); and his benevolent heart, Smollett makes clear, is untainted by the greedy bestiality of the common run of men precisely because he has not lived among them: "I always ascribed

[illegible]

his benevolence to the dictates of a heart as yet undebauched by a commerce with mankind" (40). But when he is frustrated and defeated in his generous aims by the grandfather, Dowling reacts by becoming much like this brutal family himself. Leaving the house after the reading of the will, Dowling strides roughly ahead of Roderick, pulling the boy along, speaking to him in a surly tone, and calling him a lazy dog. Although on one level this is merely an expression of his anger, on another this epithet, the only one of its nature he ever uses of Roderick, suggests a momentary blurring of his vision during which Roderick becomes one more animal in a world full of them.

Immediately after his outburst Dowling joins the pack of boys in inflicting a savage revenge on the schoolmaster, a revenge so undignified as to strip the schoolmaster of his dignity both as man and as functionary. Although Dowling justifies his act as a necessary measure to teach the master the meaning of pain, the usher's refusal to join them points out the wrongness of the act. It is really a brutal and bestial one which makes him of the same species as the master. This is suggested by the parallel imagery. Just as Dowling has "a neck like that of a bull" (29), the schoolmaster "roared like a mad bull" (39) when whipped. Both have acted according to their animal nature, and not as reasonable men.

However, Smollett, like other humanists of his day believed that man is partially redeemable. Among his naval

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characters, for example, there is a much larger proportion of good men than is usually found in his world. Perhaps of more significance is that, unlike so many of the good characters, Honest Jack Ratlin, Thomson, and the sailor who shows pity for Miss Williams are not comic characters and have nothing ridiculous about them. Again they are people living in some sense outside society, as is Mrs. Sagely, who is "primitive, innocent, sensible, and humane" (242), and who is ostracized as a witch. The French soldiers who share their food with Roderick are also, to an extent, a group living separate and almost forgotten by the society that hired them. But there is no myth based on the assumption of rural man's natural goodness involved here, as shown by the inhuman peasants who refuse him shelter and care when Roderick has been beaten almost insensible, although certainly men living apart from the masses of men are not so likely to be wholly corrupt.

Another outsider, Narcissa's aunt, also is "too much of a philosopher to be swayed by the customs of the world" (243). She is "of a visionary turn of mind, abstracted as it were from the world" (243) and devotes her life to poetry and learning. Her abstraction is so great that she changes underclothes in front of Roderick in utter obliviousness of his sex and the embarrassment her behavior causes him. But her being so lost in higher contemplation and pursuits and so totally divorced from the physical-animal world is a form of madness. Smollett introduces here a theme he will take

up and develop extensively in Launcelot Greaves, the madness and impossibility of trying to live as if one had no animal-physical nature to cope with and accommodate to the higher impulses. When the aunt cannot shut out the outer world and the sounds of her nephew's hunt, she goes mad and imagines herself an animal too. She believes herself a hare beset by hounds and begs a few greens for breakfast, and she sometimes imagines herself a beast, when it becomes dangerous to get near her. Roderick finds her "sitting squat on her hams on the floor in the manner of puss when she listens to the outcries of her pursuers," and she mistakes Roderick for "a beagle thirsting after her life" (249). Repressed and given no outlet, the animal nature breaks forth violently on occasion and erupts into madness, a madness that is simply an exaggeration of the madness that infects humanity everywhere in Smollett's world. Narcissa's aunt can be calmed by the humanizing balm of music, but there is no music that will calm the great majority of the characters who roam the pages of the fiction.

Smollett's fundamental satirical purpose is to expose his audience to this truth about the real nature of man, particularly man in urban society. As he will in later books, Smollett is attacking sentimentalism and the age's optimistic outlook, both of which he believed dangerous misconceptions that would lead to no reform either of men or manners. The picaresque form of the novel is very workable for this purpose since it allows the exposure of

predatory values everywhere and suggests a world where predatory self-seeking is the norm. The satiric usefulness of the picaresque form has, of course, often been noted, but the usefulness of imagery for the same purpose has received little attention. Fundamentally, however, it is just as important for his purpose as any other element of the work.

The theory underlying Smollett's use of imagery is suggested in the Preface:

The reader gratifies his curiosity in pursuing the adventures of a person in whose favour he is prepossessed; he espouses his cause, he sympathizes with him in distress; his indignation is heated against the authors of his calamity; the humane passions are inflamed; the contrast between dejected virtue and insulting vice appears with greater aggravation; and every impression having a double force on the imagination, the memory retains the circumstance, and the heart improves by the example. The attention is not tired with a bare catalogue of characters, but agreeably diverted with all the variety of invention  
 . . . (xv)

The reader is to be prepossessed in Roderick's favor by seeing his human needs and impulses and to be heated with indignation at the bestiality that continually thwarts and destroys them. What is to be noticed here is the important part that imagination is to play in the attainment of these ends. The attention usually given to Smollett as observer and to the realism in his work often throws shadows over the force of the artist's imagination as it reveals itself in the imagery and invades the reader's imagination. But to Smollett the imagination was as important a vehicle for reaching the satirist's goals as the intellect, important

because "the imagination naturally magnifies every object that falls under its cognizance, especially those that concern the passions of fear and admiration . . ." (PP 559). Imagery, then, because of its visual qualities, is the quickest means of reaching that instrument of magnification and provoking the response of fear or repugnance that the satirist must provoke if he is to make certain forms of behavior or attitudes repellent to his audience. Animal imagery makes metaphoric statements about the insensitive brutality, selfish acquisitiveness, unrestrained appetite, and general self-love that overwhelm so much of the social love on which the foundations of civilized society rest—statements that effect the satirist's purpose by direct assaults on the reader's imagination and senses.

Although he is most often spoken of as a caricaturist, Smollett's imagery is more often grotesquery than caricature, primarily because of this intention to assault the reader. George Kahrl in "Smollett as Caricaturist" says that "Smollett habitually made a sharp and generally consistent distinction between satire and caricature, between those characters he rejected and those characters he accepted with tolerant laughter, sympathy, and an understanding of human imperfections" and that Smollett often made caricature the medium of satire.<sup>2</sup> But James L. Clifford is more nearly right when he says in his introduction

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<sup>2</sup>In Tobias Smollett: Bicentennial Essays Presented to Lewis Knapp (Oxford, 1971), p. 182.

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to the Oxford edition of Peregrine Pickle that artistic distortion may be a better term to use for the technique than caricature.<sup>3</sup> What Smollett uses primarily is the artistic distortion of the grotesque. The essential difference is that pointed out by Robert Hopkins in a quotation from Lee Byron Jennings: the distortion of the grotesque is "a distortion that penetrates to the bases of our perception of reality," not just an exaggerating of parts of the whole as in caricature, but "a recombining of the elements of experienced reality to form something alien to it."<sup>4</sup> Rather than producing caricatures too exaggerated to affect the conscience of the public, Smollett is deliberately trying to warp the reader's perception out of its customary tracks. Many of the characters Roderick meets are presented as grotesque portraitures combining alien elements from the human and animal world, portraits designed to shock the audience into recognition of its kinship with the lower kingdom.

Two examples will serve to illustrate this technique of the satirist:

But how was I surprised when I beheld the formidable captain in the shape of a little thin creature, about the age of forty, with a long withered visage very much resembling that of a baboon, through the upper part of which two little grey eyes peeped . . . . he was about five foot and three inches high, sixteen inches of which went to his face and long scraggy

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<sup>3</sup>Oxford, 1964, p. xxviii.

<sup>4</sup>"The Function of the Grotesque in Humphry Clinker," Huntington Library Quarterly, 32 (1969), p. 166.

neck; his thighs were about six inches in length, his legs resembling spindles or drumsticks, two feet and an half, and his body, which put me in mind of extension without substance, engrossed the remainder; so that, on the whole, he appeared like a spider or grasshopper erect. . . (71)

The apothecary, who was a little old withered man, with a large forehead about an inch high, a nose turned up at the end, large cheek-bones that helped to form a pit for his little grey eyes, a great bag of loose skin hanging down on each side in wrinkles like the alforjas of a baboon, and a mouth so accustomed to that contraction which produces grinning that he could not pronounce a syllable without discovering the remains of his teeth, which consisted of four yellow fangs, not improperly, by anatomists, called canine. . . . (120)

The exaggeration of the captain's withered thinness and the extraordinary length of his legs are mere caricature, exaggerations only ludicrous so that they produce laughter. But when the dimensions are examined, the exaggerations become so extreme as to border on the grotesque, which always has a monstrous element that represses some of the laughter because it produces anxiety. The captain is 63 inches high, sixteen of them being his head, six his thigh, eighteen inches the rest of the leg, and seventeen of the total his trunk. Like the one-inch forehead of the apothecary, the dimensions are so extreme and extravagant that they become alien and disturbing, something still recognizable as human but so abnormal as to produce a sense of shock and disquiet.

Typically Smollett then pushes the portrait beyond the recognizably human into the animal world, letting the context underline the essential animal trait. Here the

captain becomes a baboon at the top and a spider or grasshopper at the bottom, while the apothecary's human mouth opens to reveal four distinctly canine fangs. The reader is now pushed beyond something still recognizable as his everyday world into something so monstrous that the vague unease becomes anxiety. One function of the grotesque is to make the reader see the world from a new, strange, and revealing perspective. Smollett consistently concentrates on these grotesque deformities in the people Roderick meets to suggest the ugliness of their vices and the disgusting parallels between their behavior and that of the lowest animals, and because the reader cannot laugh off all the tension which results, he is left with the unease and disquiet that aid the purposes of satire by making him aware that everything is not all right and something must be done.

Smollett's philosophical position is not always obvious because of his habit of offering very few explicit comments. But the imagery in this novel makes his view of man's nature and behavior, with all the disturbing parallels with bestial nature, most explicit, and the stories of Roderick, Melopoyne, and Miss Williams all make the point that one must understand the bestial nature of man or be continual prey to it. Roderick's adventures and those of Miss Williams, however, both demonstrate the idea that adapting wholly to that nature is no guarantee of a successful life. The next two novels will make this point

even more strongly as Peregrine and Fathom are progressively more predatory than Roderick, who fails as a fortune hunter because he is "too honest" and sets "up for a fortune hunter before [he has] conquered the sense of shame!"

(313). Innocence and goodness are no protection, but surrender to one's own bestial instincts brings no security or happiness either. The question of how one should live in the human jungle is one Smollett works out in the succeeding novels, which go further into the complexities of man's nature and the resulting complexities of any answers that might be given.

### CHAPTER III

#### PEREGRINE PICKLE

The next in Satire felt a nobler  
    rage . . .  
His soul is kindled and he kindles  
    mine:  
Scornful of Vice, and fearless of  
    Offense,  
He flows a torrent of impetuous  
    Sense.

Walter Harte, "An Essay  
on Satire"

### CHAPTER III

#### PEREGRINE PICKLE

In 1751, three years after his first novel, Smollett published his second, The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, some fifty percent longer than the first, a stuffed giant of a novel filled with some of the most juvenile of all Smollett's "practical satire," a grab bag of comic adventures, minor episodes, contemporary gossip, melodrama, and sentimentality, a novel which has defied attempts to find some underlying central vision. Smollett's fertility of invention, often commented upon, has sometimes been praised and sometimes deplored. In his own time it and the scandalous histories of MacKercher and the Annesley case and of Lady Vane's amorous adventures were enough to insure the success of the novel; but a more demanding twentieth century, though lavishing praise on its comic episodes, has asked most insistently what the novel is really about.

Among the answers offered were W. Earl Britton's argument that it is a novel about the necessity of learning prudence<sup>1</sup> and Robert W. Elmer's discussion of it as a novel

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<sup>1</sup>The Educative Purpose of Smollett's Fiction, University of Michigan Ph.D. Dissertation, 1945.

about conflicting tendencies and the gradual subduing of the least fortunate of them,<sup>2</sup> but both these interpretations claim more profound changes in *Peregrine* than anything in the text justifies. Rufus Putney in "*The Plan of Peregrine Pickle*"<sup>3</sup> finds it a novel about pride with the love story at its core, a Procrustian interpretation which lops off large segments of the novel and makes of the violence and horseplay, a central element in it, a kind of haphazard excretion that obscures the satiric purpose. Robert Giddings and Milton Goldberg also see moral development in the novel, in one the triumph of loyalty and friendship over the false values of pride and money and in the other the triumph of judgment over imagination.<sup>4</sup> But these readings also tend to claim too much improvement in *Peregrine*, leave out too much of the novel, or leave unanswered the puzzling, and to recent criticism, the most crucial question of why Smollett presents as hero so rancorous, brutal, and sometimes revolting an individual as *Peregrine*. A strong indication of Smollett's purpose in doing this emerges from a study of the man as predator theme in the novel.

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<sup>2</sup>Melodrama, Comedy, and Satire in the Early Novels of Smollett, Columbia University Ph.D. Dissertation, 1965.

<sup>3</sup>P.M.L.A. 80 (1965), 1051-1065.

<sup>4</sup>Milton Goldberg, Smollett and the Scottish School, Albuquerque, 1959, and Robert Giddings, The Tradition of Smollett, London, 1967.

The second novel is similar to the first in many ways. There is a similarity in structure in that the early part of the book deals with the hero's family life; it then moves out with a series of adventures in the larger world, upward with Peregrine's ventures into the fashionable world and downward with the prison experience; and finally there is the return to the birthplace and the inheritance and marriage. The imagery is a little less profuse than in the first book; but again the largest portion of it is animal, hunting, food, and preying imagery, revealing again the satirist's intent to present to the world the basest elements of its own nature for correction. The many similarities have led critics to see the novel as only a rewritten Roderick Random with a hero of even more modest merit than the first and a work showing little development in Smollett's powers.

In the last decade, however, starting with Ronald Paulson's "Satire in the Early Novels of Smollett"<sup>5</sup> and Tuvia Bloch's "Smollett's Quest for Form,"<sup>6</sup> critics have begun to study the differences between the two novels, an approach which proves fruitful also within the dimensions of this study. It is the differences that lead to an answer

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<sup>5</sup>Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LIX (1960), 381-402.

<sup>6</sup>Modern Philology, LXV (1967), pp. 103-113. See also David L. Evans, "Peregrine Pickle: The Complete Satirist," Studies in the Novel, III (1971), 258-274, and John Warner, "Smollett's Development as a Novelist," Novel (1972), 148-161.

to the hero question. Roderick Random is a satire on mankind with the focus on the predatory nature of the world; Peregrine Pickle is an experiment in satire focusing on the predatory nature of the satirist hero. The thinner density of the animal imagery moves some of the emphasis from the world as jungle to Peregrine himself, whose behavior is frequently presented in images of hunting, preying, and eating. Peregrine emerges more prominently too because he is a more rounded character than Roderick. Point of view also contributes; the earlier "I" looked out on the world and described it for the reader, but here Smollett as narrator stands with the reader watching Peregrine. The earlier hero is for much of the novel more naive and an easier victim than Peregrine, and this brings out and displays the bestial in those he meets. Peregrine, however, is cruel and knowing, not an easy prey, but instead a less venal Fathom.

Following the direction suggested by the imagery and viewing Peregrine as the almost fully predatory man is one step toward a solution to the puzzling problem of why Smollett creates such a hero. Typical of the numerous statements of this problem are Ernest Baker's "Peregrine is a cruder and more insufferable Roderick, though Smollett rarely betrays any suspicion that he is celebrating the deeds and misdeeds of an arrant young blackguard"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>History of the Novel, Vol. IV (New York, 1936), p. 209.

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and Allan McKillop's "Smollett makes a serious attempt to give his central figure due importance in this long story, but has difficulty in adjusting humor and satire to Peregrine's personality."<sup>8</sup> These problems disappear, however, when Peregrine is regarded as an evolutionary, or possibly retrogressive, step along the way to the fully predatory man, Ferdinand Fathom, or as a hero illustrating one stance that may be taken in Smollett's world, playing its game on its own terms, or attempting to survive by being as predatory as the rest.

Unlike Roderick, who has to learn the nature of man, Peregrine adapts naturally to the world he is born into. His begetting is not accomplished by a man in the transports of human love, but by a man who was never known to betray the faintest symptoms of transport except once over a delicate loin of veal. The child he begets, (unlike Roderick, who seeks human warmth and tenderness) knows from birth that little except predatory self-seeking is to be expected from the beings around him:

. . . it is affirmed, that one day, when an old woman who attended in the nursery had by stealth conveyed a bottle of cordial waters to her mouth, he pulled his nurse by the sleeve, and by a slight glance detecting the theft, tipt her the wink with a particular slyness of countenance, as if he had said with a sneer, 'Ay, ay, that is what you must all come to.' But these instances of reflection in a babe nine months old are so incredible, that I look upon them as ex post facto observations, founded upon imaginary recollection, when he was in a more advanced age, and his peculiarities of temper became much more remarkable. (52)

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<sup>8</sup>Early Masters, p. 163.

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Despite the tongue-in-cheek denial, Smollett is suggesting that the infant has a perception and philosophy acted out from his babyhood, that the sons of man prey on one another without regard for the vaunted higher, human principles. Never having known parental tenderness, as Smollett says later, "his breast was absolutely a stranger to that boasted instinct of affection, by which the charities are supposed to exist" (765). For the young Peregrine other human beings exist to satisfy his appetite for amusement. As a baby he pretends that pins are sticking him and then ridicules the adult's concern. His "childish satire" is as brutal as any of the behavior of the brutish people Roderick meets in his travels. Peregrine empties snuff into Truncheon's drink, burns his tobacco pouches, treads on his painful corn, and graduates to driving needles into the heads of chickens. Smollett never portrays Peregrine like the young Roderick seeking closeness or love from another human being; the episodes from his childhood concentrate always on the young predator, preying on others with unmitigated cruelty for his own amusement. Born with an instinctive knowledge of the world he must live in and an instinctive correlative pattern of behavior, he is, as the name "Peregrine" suggests, a hunting hawk who preys on the rest of the world for the satisfaction of his ego and emotive appetites, primarily those of sex and excitement, one tamed finally by Emily, who vows, ". . . if I ever catch the fugitive again, he shall sing in his cage for life" (773).

Another indication of the fact that Smollett is presenting Peregrine as an evolutionary step toward the completely predatory hero lies in his failure to dramatize Peregrine's few benevolent impulses. The impulse to seek and follow human values is much stronger in Roderick, and his humane and generous impulses are dramatized rather fully in the story of his care of Miss Williams, his forgiveness and aid to Lavement's daughter, and other incidents. Peregrine's charity, however, is dramatized only in the paragraph relating his visit to the widow with twins, a passage serving more to castigate the meanness of the fashionable who have contributed so little to her relief than to illustrate Peregrine's humane motives, which in any case extend only to the giving of money which is never the object of any of Peregrine's appetites. The same thing is true of the paragraph Smollett devotes to telling of his charities, kept secret "because he was ashamed of being detected in such an awkward unfashionable practise" (611), a motif Smollett will take up again in Humphry Clinker.

Proportion also suggests the intended emphasis. Smollett devotes chapters to the narration of Cadwallader's and Peregrine's repulsive and vicious efforts to expose others and one sentence to the fact that the profits are "to be distributed to poor families in distress" (557). The fact is so buried under the mountain of detail about their hunting of others' weaknesses to satisfy their own appetites that it does nothing to mitigate or justify this

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conduct. Peregrine's humane impulses are confined to something like two paragraphs and a sentence in a novel of nearly 800 pages, and thus they are hardly made noticeable; they are kept as secret from the reader as from the fashionable world Peregrine inhabits. What is dramatized in the novel, so fully and profusely as to become often tiresome is Peregrine's predatory behavior. Thus, the failure to dramatize Peregrine's goodness does not seem a flaw in the novel, as Rufus Putney in "The Plan of Peregrine Pickle"<sup>9</sup> suggests, but a satirist's device for keeping the focus on those elements of character he wishes to expose.

These same elements of character become apparent when Smollett's treatment of love in this novel is compared with that in the first. In Roderick Random love was primarily human and ennobling. Although he preys on women when he is reduced to desperation, Roderick abandons all interest in predatory activities when Narcissa appears on the scene. And his love for her had been of the more idealistically romantic, conventional kind, no hint of lust in it, a purer passion which inspires him to high reaches of poetry. With Peregrine, on the other hand, love has no such ennobling effect. His love is at first a "sweet intoxication" (99) like the sensual effects of alcohol, but Emilia's lack of fortune alarms his pride immediately, for possession of her will do nothing to feed his ego.

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<sup>9</sup>P.M.L.A., LX (1945), 1051-1065.



His love is primarily lust, a fact Emilia is aware of when in the midst of his professions of love, she "carefully avoided the confession of a mutual flame; because she discerned, in the midst of all his tenderness, a levity of pride which she durst not venture to trust with such a declaration" (99). Later, when he hears that Emilia has been courted by men of fortune, Peregrine's "ambition was flattered, and his passion inflamed with this intelligence; he swore within himself that he would not quit the spot until he should have obtained an undisputed victory over all his rivals" (123). Smollett portrays this lover as the appetitive man "who sacrifices every consideration to the desire of his ruling appetite" (360).

His predatoriness is suggested by the imagery. It seems significant that in the other novels Smollett often uses conventional war imagery for the game of love, but in this one it is most typically described with the hunting-prey-food metaphor. Sophie's father looks on Peregrine as "one of those forward fortune-hunters who go about the country seeking whom they might devour" (124). The father is wrong about Peregrine's wanting money, but he is right about his predilection for the hunt. Emilia is "food for the gratification of his vanity," and "he would not run the risk of declaring himself, until her heart should be so far entangled within his snares" (401). When he catches up with the girl he thinks is Emilia after a long chase he is certain of having "housed his prey" (148).



Edward C. Mack, in discussing the ways in which Emilia is made a sex object, comes to the conclusion that Smollett was paying lip service to the sentimental ideal of the pure heroine and was unconsciously making a mockery of it.<sup>10</sup> In view of the whole context, however, it seems more likely that the emphasis on Emilia as sex object is deliberate. Smollett, the satirist, uses imagery to suggest the animal appetites underlying the conventional, literary, romantic conceptions of love. For Peregrine, all love, whether for a passing innamorata or for Emilia, is much the same, a fact suggested by the repetition of the same kind of imagery whatever the object of the chase. Mrs. Hornbeck is mere food on which he must prey; the accommodating young nun too is a "banquet," a "charitable meal" (340); and this imagery is paralleled when Peregrine goes to the "delicious scene," where his new bride is "elegantly dished out" (779). Smollett's description of Crabtree's visage "metamorphosed into the face of a mountain-goat" who "licked his lips instinctively, snuffed the air, and squinted with a most horrible obliquy of vision" (777), and Peregrine's obvious interest in her "snowy hemispheres" (774), comic though these passages may be in intent, are also weapons in the satirist's arsenal; that arsenal in the eighteenth-century was filled with weapons of ridicule and satiric chastisement and correction. The

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<sup>10</sup>"Pamela's Stepdaughters, the Heroines of Smollett and Fielding," College English VIII (1947), 293-301.



weapons were also meant to control the ruling passion, which was considered an ailment to be cured or driven into submission to a balance of the other passions. The target of this imagery, then, is peregrine's ruling appetite, the predatory lust of Peregrine and of man in general.

Peregrine's lust knows no limits; he descends to the level of Fathom in his vicious machinations against Emilia, inviting her to a masquerade, plying her with cordials, and taking her to a bagnio. Fathom is no lower at this sort of game, only smarter, and Roderick would not have thought of it. Peregrine behaves in this predatory fashion through most of the novel: the theme of the predatory man unites the episodes in the great middle part of the book, illustrating peregrine's predatory appetites.

In this light the space devoted to the whole Hornbeck episode is justifiable. Peregrine, his eye on Mrs. Hornbeck, refuses to let the host of their inn give them food, but offers a dinner as a lure to ensnare Mrs. Hornbeck. He drops laudanum into the man's drink, seduces his wife, and later takes her off and hides her from her husband. Then when Hornbeck objects to the arbitrary appropriation of his wife, Peregrine, conscious that Hornbeck is the injured party and not himself, rationalizes that revenge on the innocent is a chastisement of the man's weak spirit. Smollett presents a hero who exercises no restraint when his appetite is aroused, his only principle being to prey on whatever is available. Acknowledging no

moral principle higher than his own immediate lust, he goes through life hunting stray girls, wives, all the women under thirty at Bath, nuns, anyone he can get.

Smollett makes it clear that Peregrine goes through Europe like a hawk, swooping down on whatever takes his fancy without regard for human law or convention. When Peregrine misunderstands the intentions of the French-woman who urinates in front of him and attempts to ravish her, the husband flies upon the "ravisher with such fury, that he was fain to quit his prey"; and Peregrine, infuriated at the balking of his desires and indifferent to the husband's rights, punishes him without mercy for his "impudent intrusion" (205). Law, the bonds of matrimony, human rights, justice--to all of these Peregrine is indifferent. Hunting, preying, and food imagery is fairly frequent in this section, and Smollett makes the animal crudity of this behavior more pointed by including not only Peregrine, but also his victims, like Hornbeck, who, after being ducked in the canal, "ran about like a drowned rat, squeaking for assistance and revenge" (319). Smollett seems to alternate between being contemptuous of and being shocked at the crude parallels between human and animal behavior in both society's predators and their victims and he often points up these parallels with so marked a clarity that it seems strange that so little notice has been taken of them.

It is true also that little notice has been taken of the one theme that unites all the episodes involving

Pallet and the physician which have been seen mostly as loose excrescences of personal satire, interpolated almost by whim, amusing, but contributing nothing to the main story. As illustrations of Peregrine's other insatiable appetite, that for excitement, the "practical satire," so much objected to as not only immature and tedious but also as a structural deformity, is actually central and consonant with Smollett's basic satiric purpose. Peregrine's decision to feed his vanity and appetite for excitement at the expense of the physician and Pallet comes without provocation and is made in cold indifference to any human dignity and feeling they may have. Comic caricatures full of pretense and ignorance they may be, but Peregrine's satire goes far beyond the purpose of exposure and punishes beyond their offense. His practical satire ranges from relatively harmless things like spoiling Pallet's dinner by making him think the meat is cat, to really cruel things like promoting a duel that could end in death, and making him think that he is about to be castrated. Peregrine reduces Pallet to the point of running "from one apartment to another, like a goose in the agonies of egg-laying, with intention of disburdening this important load" (322). But a goose is an innocuous creature in comparison with the lump of animal horror and stupidity that Peregrine often becomes when he is reducing someone to the agonies of terror or beating someone into insensibility.

The physician's theory about "the modes in which the animal spirits operate upon the ideas and power of imagination" (302) could serve as a statement of the modus operandi in the major part of the novel. Smollett says of his hero, ". . . he never had interest enough with the ministry of his passions to bring any one of them to bear" (217). This is the essence of Peregrine's personality: a lack of reins on any of his physical or emotional appetites, with an attendant dominance of the predatory instinct channelled into what to him are acceptable outlets, sex, brutal entertainment, and revenge.

That such a man should set himself up as chastiser of mankind seems a strange and ironic anomaly, and it is this irony that lies at the base of the current critical discussion of the problems inherent in the disjunction between Peregrine the internal satirist in the novel and Peregrine the character whose moral development the reader supposedly is to follow. This discussion began with Ronald Paulson's "Satire in the Early Novels of Smollett;"<sup>11</sup> Paulson says that Peregrine is the satirist of formal verse satire, and his "practical satire" is merely the scourging of that classical satire made concrete. The cracked skulls, the excremental, and the gratuitously cruel, says Paulson, are the natural result of the fusion between the picaresque and the formal satire, but the problem is that Peregrine's

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<sup>11</sup>Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LIX (1960), pp. 381-402.

satire becomes increasingly more a personal weapon itself, a folly which must be cured in the latter part of the of the novel. The weakness in the work, according to Paulson's analysis, is the disjunction between the episodes that reveal the sins of society and the story of Peregrine's pride and detachment from humanity. John M. Warner clarifies the problem still further when he says, "In the first place, he [the reader] is required to recognize the validity of Peregrine the satirist and of the satiric impulse that pervades the novel as a whole. Thus, however cruel or inhuman Peregrine's reformation or 'castigation' of society, the reader is asked to accept it as true and just."<sup>12</sup> He goes on to say that Peregrine's weaknesses are not rendered satirically but sympathetically and melodramatically.

There are difficulties here, however. Paulson's theory leaves much of the "practical satire" unexplainable. To say that Peregrine's "jokes" are concrete embodiments of the classical satirist's scourging is to imply that they are punishment for some kind of moral turpitude. Yet it is certainly difficult to see what moral turpitude is exposed when Trunnion cries out in agony as his sore corn is trampled on. And what moral turpitude exists in the Frenchwoman's husband who defends his wife from rape? Warner says that after the first part of the novel Smollett

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<sup>12</sup>"Smollett's Development as a Novelist," Novel: A Forum on Fiction (Winter, 1972), p. 154.

is careful about having the victim's trial before the punishment is inflicted, yet no moral turpitude on the part of all the average citizens of Bath is mentioned when Godfrey and Peregrine shut up all the dogs; instead Smollett describes the severity of some of the resultant wounds, thus stressing the cruelty of the joke. Paulson is obviously right when he says that the chastisement becomes a personal weapon, but his claim that Peregrine learns the folly of Pride and inhumane detachment is debatable, as is Warner's assertion that Peregrine's weaknesses are not rendered satirically.

There can be little question about the fact that the novel does satirize society's manners and customs—the educational system, the Grand Tour, the fashionable world, as well as other things. It is true also, as Paulson says, that the follies of mankind are usually exposed in the course of Peregrine's jokes and revenges. But there is strong evidence to suggest that it is not society that is the primary target in the second novel as it is in the first, and that Peregrine, as an embodiment of the predatory or appetitive man, is the primary target of the satire. Although Peregrine probably was created as an internal satirist, as the Roman "Peregrine Praetor" might suggest, Peregrine the hunting hawk, who is born knowing what Roderick has learned at the end of the first novel and yet who is not venal and as completely predatory as Fathom, takes precedence over the praetor. The satiric episodes

do not take precedence over the study of Peregrine's moral progress, as Paulson and Warner suggest; they illustrate his lack of it. Peregrine himself is Smollett's first experiment with a hero who appeals to "the impulse of fear"<sup>13</sup> and is meant to deter the reader from giving rein to his own predatory instincts through his abhorrence of the hero's conduct. When Peregrine is viewed this way, as the hunt-prey-food imagery suggests he should be, and viewed in relation to the heroes who proceed and follow him, the wide disparity claimed between Peregrine the satirist and Peregrine the character is reduced.

The first point to be made here is that there is not sufficient justification in the novel for the claim that Peregrine learns the folly of pride and detachment from mankind. If Peregrine is redeemed, it is not through knowledge gained by suffering and effort toward moral betterment, but through an accidental inheritance, an inheritance not gained because of his father's wish to reward or compensate him, but because of his father's desire to preserve his own life. One passage often quoted to illustrate Peregrine's supposed moral progress comes when his partnership with Crabtree is waning: ". . . our young gentleman began to be disgusted, at certain intervals, with the character of this old man, whom he now thought a morose cynic, not so much incensed against the follies and vices of

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<sup>13</sup>Preface to Ferdinand Count Fathom, p. 3.

mankind, as delighted with the distress of his fellow creatures" (623). Critics, however, seem to have failed to read the next sentence, "Thus he put the most unfavorable construction on the principles of his friend, because he found himself justly fallen under the lash of his animadversion" (623-4). The petty cause of Peregrine's reflection is clearly cited, and there is no improvement in Peregrine's behavior in the following chapters. Close examination of the last few pages of the novel reveals a Peregrine who has learned to take better care of his money, but little else. He is the same proud, contemptuous, appetitive predator he is at the beginning.

Peregrine's incarceration and his sufferings in prison do not induce him to give up any of his pride, that pride which prevents men from seeing their own baseness and legislates against reform. Although he is moved by Gauntlet's affection for him, he is no more so than he is moved in the beginning by his manliness, and he refuses to let Gauntlet return any of the earlier charity, saying that "he had broken all connection with mankind" and would sooner commit suicide than take charity and be exposed to the "intolerable pity of a rascally world" (752). Several pages are devoted to illustrating the "pride of an headstrong humorist" (762), who in an ironic turnabout situation becomes the prey of an Emilia who "gradually decoyed him" and tightens "the chains with which she held him enslaved" (761). Peregrine's pride, one of the cardinal

neoclassic sins, is emphasized strongly throughout the novel, suggesting a casual relationship between the satirist and the predatory man that reduces any seeming disjunction between Peregrine's two roles. The satirist in the very course of his exposure of human follies and evils takes a superior moral position to those he exposes. His assumed superiority germinates into a pride that can blind him to his own weakness and evil nature, blind him to the use he makes of others to feed his own ego or thirst for amusement, and finally blind him to his own vicious predacity in pursuit of satire. This is the part pride plays in Peregrine's character. Like the hawk that soars above smaller creatures to hunt them, Peregrine is more brutal than his prey. His pride in his own strength and superiority, however, keeps him oblivious of a fact Smollett makes obvious to the reader through image and theme. Peregrine, although bound in the chains of matrimony at the end, has lost none of his pride.

Peregrine not only refuses to give up any of his inflexible pride, he refuses to become reconciled to mankind and loses none of his detachment from it. He refuses to bend to Emilia because "he had long set the world at defiance" (760). He will accept deliverance only "without being obliged to any person on earth" (765), and his first thought on hearing of his inheritance is that "he had it now in his power to retort the contempt of the world" (766). There is no suggestion here that Peregrine

is humbled by learning of his common culpability with the rest of mankind, or that he becomes reconciled to it through recognition of his own human or animal weaknesses. He still soars above it, separate, defiant, unreconciled.

There is, moreover, strong indication that he is still the old Peregrine with a predatory eye fixed on the satisfaction of the same two old appetites. If he is not out indulging in more "practical satire" in the last few pages, it is because he "industriously employed almost every hour of his time in regulating his domestic affairs" (771), his intense industry resulting from his haste to get to Emilia. When Smollett sets him on the road to her, he stops to describe Peregrine's impolite ridicule of his host's ignorantly altered paintings of his ancestors and to describe Peregrine's enjoyment of the Frenchman's confusion over all the commotion about the chalk score on his back, both incidents suggesting that Peregrine will go on satisfying his appetite for amusement and excitement. The novel ends with emphasis on his interest in Emilia's "snowy hemispheres, that rose like a vision of paradise to his view" (774), his reluctance to quit "his delicious armful" (774), his "maddening with desire," his assault on her with entreaties that they be married immediately, his "agony of desire" (775), and the difficulty of having to wait until evening to get her to bed. Tame though this may be to twentieth-century readers and comic though it may be in intent, notice should be taken here of Smollett's

emphasis on Peregrine's singleminded attention to the satisfaction of his old appetite for the "elegantly dished out" (779) sexual meal. In comparison with Fielding's almost chaste treatment of the same sort of bedding in Joseph Andrews, Smollett's is extremely sensual. Peregrine's behavior here does not differ from that in the earlier Hornbeck or nun episodes. It seems safe to conclude, then, that Smollett was not writing a novel of moral progression and regeneration.

What Smollett was writing was a novel satirizing the man who, in attempting to punish base animal nature, becomes more bestial himself. The satire sometimes misses, because it is tone that makes satire work, and Smollett's satiric tone in dealing with Peregrine is muted rather than strong. But the criticism is there. Peregrine's superiority to those he punishes is not a moral one, but an animal one of strength and cunning in preying on others. The punishment is not, as John Warner insists, to be accepted as true and just. There are strong indications that Smollett meant its excessiveness and brutality to revolt the reader's imagination and to warn him away from becoming the predatory man himself instead of the charitable, benevolent generous, though wary man the last novel will present for emulation.

Peregrine's conscious decision to become a chastiser of mankind comes late in the novel when he meets Cadwallader Crabtree, who tells him, "I have learned that

the characters of mankind are everywhere the same; that common sense and honesty bear an infinitely small proportion to folly and vice; and that life at best is a paltry province" (386). That this malcontent is not offered as a moral standard in the novel and is not Smollett's mouth-piece is now a critical commonplace, so that comment on his nihilism and the shrinkage of his stature in the novel may be passed over for brief mention of the imagery Smollett uses to suggest the predatory nature of his enterprises. He is not a benevolent, social man correcting mankind in order to better him, but a predatory man who preys on the weaknesses of others for no regenerative purpose at all. This is suggested in the language of his statement of his life's purpose.

I now appear in the world, not as a member of any community, or what is called a social creature; but meerly as a spectator, who entertains himself with the grimaces of a jack-pudding, and banquets his spleen in beholding his enemies at loggerheads (387).

Others' weaknesses are to him "delicious secrets" (388), something to feed on, and his similarity to the predators that roam the fields and jungles is suggested again when Peregrine asks to borrow money and Crabtree replies, ". . . why didn't nature clap a pair of long ears and a tail upon me, that I might be a real ass, and champ thistles on some common, independent of my fellow creatures? Would I were a worm, that I might creep into the earth, and thatch my habitation with a simple straw; or rather a wasp or a viper, that I might make the rascally world feel my

resentment" (628-9). The destructive nature of his satire is suggested symbolically when he tells of a time out of his past in prison when he "wreaked the fury of my indignation upon my innocent spiders, and in a twinkling destroyed the whole race" (385). In Smollett animal imagery, suggesting the parallels between animal and human behavior, is not applied loosely: his good characters almost never receive this treatment, his bad characters almost inevitably do. As an indication of Smollett's own feelings about his fictive creations, the imagery can be trusted, as the action proves it can be here with Crabtree. Peregrine has teamed up with another predator, and for a time they hunt as a pair.

There are strong indications too that Peregrine's satire is to a large extent personal and thus not to be accepted in all instances as true and just. Much of it is purely negative in intent, stemming from a "rooted contempt for the world" (383), as Crabtree quickly sees when they meet. That Peregrine himself is deserving of exposure, ridicule, contempt, and chastisement is sometimes suggested by the irony inherent in the punishments he metes out. There is, for example, irony in Peregrine's punishment of the count who takes the lady to the milliner's clandestine establishment. Peregrine calls him "an infamous adventurer" (550), yet the lady is a very willing participant in the assignation, as Emilia was not in his own attempt at the same thing shortly before this episode.

The ironic parallel is pointed up when Peregrine, after using cordials in an attempt to excite Emilia and weaken her resistance, punishes two gallants who use "most perfidious means to intoxicate the passions of their mistresses, by mixing drugs with their wine, which inflamed their constitutions to such a degree, that they fell an easy sacrifice to the appetites of their conductors" (557). The episodes in which he and Crabtree punish people for sexual adventures, the very activity Peregrine has been busiest at for two or three hundred pages, follow the attempt on Emilia with the interruption only of the Vane memoirs, and it would seem that Smollett could not have been unaware of the irony in so close a juxtaposition. There are similar ironies in other incidents, as, for example, when Peregrine declares himself a professed enemy to all gamesters as "cormorants" (582) and foes of mankind. His punishment of them consists of his losing money to them every night, moralizing on the folly of it the next morning, then playing again the next night. If the vice of the gamesters makes them fit targets of satire, Peregrine's own folly makes him equally so, because there is an implied moral principle involved, the folly and vice of gambling, and Peregrine's violation of that principle does not accomplish its supposedly moral ends. It is a further feeding of his appetite for excitement, not just a punishment of other predators.

Along with the irony of Peregrine's chastisements, their excessive cruelty also suggests the satiric purpose in Peregrine's portrayal. That Smollett is aware of the cruel excess is apparent in a number of passages:

By these means the whole variety of character undisguised, passed as it were in review before the confederates, who, by divers ingenious contrivances, punished the most flagrant offenders with as much severity as the nature of their plan would allow (568).

Had the executive powers of the legislature been vested in him, he would have doubtless devised strange species of punishment for all offenders against humanity and decorum; but, restricted as he was, he employed his invention in subjecting them to the ridicule and contempt of their fellow-subjects (576).

He not only acted the reformer, or rather the castigator, in the fashionable world, but also exercised his talents among the inferior class of people, who chanced to incur his displeasure (577).

With "as much severity" as they could, "restricted" from inventing "strange species of punishments" on people who "chance" to incur his "displeasure," Peregrine and Crabtree emerge much worse than mere chastisers meting out fitting, humane, and just punishments. Modern criticism has become increasingly more aware of the fact that the rancorousness in Smollett's works is not in the man but the persona,<sup>14</sup> and it seems reasonable to assume that Smollett was frowning on the element of sadism and personal vindictiveness in his hero's conduct. Smollett frankly reports that Peregrine and Crabtree punish not only chairmen who charge too much,

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<sup>14</sup>See, for example, John F. Sena, "Smollett's Persona and the Melancholic Traveler," Eighteenth Century Studies, I (1968), pp. 353-369.

but also the landlady who evicts Peregrine's friend for quite unacceptable behavior. Smollett frequently illustrates Peregrine's nasty desire for excessive vengeance, as in Chapter XXVII where he gets into a fight with a country squire who has annoyed him, finds himself perfectly capable of knocking the cudgel out of the squire's hand, but doesn't because he wants to beat him all over until he is tired of the exercise. Illustrative too is the severity of the beating he gives Pallet for quite unintentionally interrupting the satisfaction of Peregrine's sexual appetite at an inn.

The punishments are so severe that the reader's sympathy is often with the victims, and this fact provides another clue to Smollett's intent. Philip J. Klukoff in his study of Smollett's critical principles in his criticism in the Critical Review says that the reviewers invariably associated structure with sympathetic rapport.<sup>15</sup> Because sympathy excites approbation or disapprobation of human behavior, it was for Smollett a source of judgment and the foundation for a theory of both aesthetics and morals. Since Smollett himself, as will be shown, often openly disapproves of his hero's conduct, it seems reasonable to assume that the sympathy the reader often feels for the victims is not the result of Smollett's confused

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<sup>15</sup>"Smollett and the Critical Review: Criticism of the Novel, 1756-1763," Studies in Scottish Literature, IV (1966), 96.



conception of what he was about, but a deliberate satiric technique. Sometimes it is mitigated by comic treatment, as when he says Hornbeck suffered the "tortures of the damned" (220), a description too strong for the comic, and then takes away the reality of the suffering for the reader by the description of him raving and foaming at the mouth, which tends to have a cartoonlike effect. But more often there is nothing to lessen the shock of the brutal punishment, a fact noted consistently by most of Smollett's critics.

But it does not take inference and insight to see Smollett's disapproval of his hero. This he makes explicit in numerous passages in the novel. Peregrine, he says, is guilty of the cardinal neoclassical sins: ". . . vanity and pride were the ruling foibles of our adventurer" (397), and his predacious conduct is often clearly labeled as base and bestial: ". . . so effectually had his guilty passion absorb'd his principles of honour, conscience, humanity, and regard for the commodore's last words, that he was base enough to rejoice at the absence of his friend Godfrey, who . . . could not dive into his purpose, or take measures for frustrating his vicious design" (397), "To these remonstrances, Peregrine replied, in the stile of a hotheaded young man, conscious of his own unjustifiable behaviour . . ." (319). A rather lengthy list of such passages could be compiled, and thus it seems highly unlikely that Smollett was unaware that his hero is a scoundrel. Peregrine,

the predatory man, the man ruled by self-love and his own appetites, is, then, as much a target of Smollett's satiric thrust as the society in which he lives. Smollett's later tendency to satirize the satirist within the novel has been noted by David L. Evans,<sup>16</sup> and study of the man-as-predator theme in Peregrine Pickle reveals that same intent in this second novel. Philip Klukoff's work on Smollett's criticism also supports this view. Klukoff says that Smollett's reviews convey a "critical context into which the periodical placed the novel as an organic genre through which the principle of universal benevolence urged men to sympathize with the feelings of others regardless of self-interest and taught the reader simple ethical principles without setting up any intellectual barrier to thwart the right kind of imaginative response to the total effect of the novel."<sup>17</sup> Certainly sympathizing with Peregrine would not teach the principle of universal benevolence, that generosity to others regardless of self-interest that Smollett will define as the distinguishing characteristic between man and beasts, the human principle with which the predators in the novels are always in conflict, either internally or externally.

Formal verse satire, from which Peregrine as knave-satirist evolves, always has either illustrated or implied

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<sup>16</sup>"Humphry Clinker: Smollett's Tempered Augustinianism," Criticism, IX (1967), pp. 257-74

<sup>17</sup>"Smollett and the Review," p. 90.

a moral standard by which the satirist-knave and the society he moves in may be contrasted and judged. One of the weaknesses of Peregrine Pickle is that the conflict between human and animal values is not fully dramatized, a failure Smollett, as an artist, tries unsuccessfully to rectify in the next novel, where he embodies the two systems of values in different characters and tries to let the contrast dramatize the conflict.

In Peregrine Pickle Smollett is already turning to the use of more range, variety, and contrast than he did in the first novel. Besides the usual menagerie of minor characters, he offers two characters who represent the most virulent and vicious bestiality in human character, Mrs. Pickle and Gam. Mrs. Pickle's love of Gam increases as his deformity increases, suggesting the deformity in her own nature. She can love only something as malformed, unnatural, and twisted in body as she is in soul. The scene where she flies on Julia and Peregrine and attacks them viciously is a scene of incredible, snarling, animal ferocity, a point made when Peregrine picks Gam up and throws him out of the window "among a parcel of hogs that fed under it" (171). When Peregrine takes Julia away, "the mother being thus deprived of her prey, sprung upon Gauntlet like a lioness robbed of her whelps" (173). Gam is universally despised and odious to the poor people for killing their dogs and breaking their enclosures. His function as pure bestial symbol is suggested when Peregrine

plans to catch him in a net, scourge him, and suspend him in a snare between two trees as the animal he is. The parallel is made clear when a neighbor clothes a large baboon in a dress resembling the hunting-equipage of Gam, ties it on the back of a horse, and sends it after the hounds on a hunt. None of the company notices that it is not Gam, and later Smollett describes "the identical Gam" (585) riding after it. He is never portrayed as acting in any but a purely vicious manner. Gam, then, stands as the naked, undisguised, and undiluted bestiality that lies, more checked and hidden, at the base of his brother Peregrine's predaciousness.

Less vicious than Gam but just as selfish is Grizzle Trunnion, who values people only for the use she can make of them. To her Gamaliel's wife's value is only functional; she considers her in no other light than as a vehicle destined to bear her brother's child. Hatchway and others too are valued only to the extent that she can make use of them. When Jack Hatchway says Perry "is the very moral of you" (64), his malapropism makes him speak truer than he knows. She is a comic variation of Peregrine in that both take the same moral stance toward the world.

Godfrey serves as a foil for Peregrine, having Peregrine's Pride without his excessive, selfish vanity. Although he becomes, under Peregrine's leadership, a predator who preys on all the women over thirty at Bath and terrorizes all the citizens, he comes at the end to

stand for the generous concern for others that redeems him and all of Smollett's more worthy characters.

Pipes and Hatchway also embody more balanced representations of human nature. Hatchway, who propounds a facile philosophy based on the idea that everything happens for the best, plays a leading role in Peregrine's childish forays on human dignity, while Pipes takes over as master of revels at Peregrine's school and stays with him as loyal henchman throughout his ventures. There may be significance in the fact that all animal imagery applied to Pipes comes at the beginning of the novel when he spends his time helping Peregrine in his brutal jokes and machinations against female virtue. Later, though, during Peregrine's imprisonment when he and Hatchway prove their loyalty and show that their love for Peregrine is far greater than their concern for money or their own comfort, the animal imagery disappears. They become representatives of that benevolence in which Smollett sees hope for human society and the possibility of redemption for man.

In Peregrine himself the human values are little dramatized and greatly subordinated to his predacious qualities, but they are of thematic significance. There is in Peregrine a streak of generosity, for Smollett the essence of humanity which keeps Peregrine redeemable. There is also in Peregrine some respect for aesthetic and intellectual values, although he often practices self-deception in priding himself on adhering to them. For

instance, at school he does not, as the other boys do, value himself on smoking the greatest number of pipes or drinking the largest quantity of ale, though he is doing both of these things. These he thinks are "qualifications of too gross a nature to captivate his refined ambition" (113-4). He prides himself on his talent for raillery, his genius and taste, his personal accomplishments, and his success at intrigue. But his intellectual accomplishments are "carnal recreation" too, for he actually uses his wits for vicious purposes, to satisfy the appetites of the body.

Peregrine does, however, adhere to one highly ethical value through most of the novel. Never noted or given any significance by critics, Peregrine's respect for the economic rights of others is emphasized by frequent demonstration. For example, he refuses to take Jolter's job even in anger. Humiliation and physical chastisement are all right in revenge, but not economic ruin. He understands Godfrey's pride in the face of his poverty and for once is not incensed at being beaten by someone. Again economic misfortune softens Peregrine. This same quality is revealed when he becomes incensed at the injustice and arbitrary power of the French officers who refuse to pay the innkeeper. There is no venality in Peregrine's make-up; that predatory aspect is to be left to Ferdinand Fathom, the fully predatory man.

Through most of the novel Peregrine is in control of his world. Repellant though his behavior is to the reader, he is dominant, he wins. He is well fitted to prey on others for sex and brutal entertainment. But when Peregrine moves into the fashionable world where there are more mature, experienced, and venal predators, he is an innocent. When he moves into race track betting "he was artfully decoyed . . . marked as fair game by all the knowing ones there" (606-7). After the disastrous race horse deals, Peregrine is duped by a lord who gets £10,000 through a bad mortgage. Thereupon the lord gets Peregrine to spend his fortune trying to get himself elected and then sells Peregrine's chance in exchange for other seats. When he begins to be desperate for money, Peregrine tries a shady scheme and is rooked by his partner, who absconds with all the ill-gotten gains. When Peregrine goes to the lord to object to his treatment and make demands, the lord has Peregrine jailed. Peregrine's fall comes when he moves out of the sphere of love conquest and the satisfaction of youthful appetites for sex and excitement and into the sphere of money, commerce, and politics, where he becomes prey instead of predator. He is punished by becoming the prey of smarter, more experienced predators with appetites for money and power. What Peregrine learns, then, is not to subdue his pride or to become less isolated from mankind, but simply to beware of predators stronger and more powerful than himself.

There is some upholding of human values here in that it is when Peregrine abandons one value, his respect for other's economic welfare, that he is defeated. But he still fails to become aware of his own real flaws, his pride, his predaciousness, his bestiality. Fathom will be a significant development, because he is a man aware of his own animal nature, and because of that awareness he is able to decide consciously to abandon predatory behavior. Only through an awareness that Peregrine fails to achieve can man prevent his animal appetites from dominating him. For Smollett, man's only hope is to be found in hard-headed awareness of his dominant animal nature and of the society he creates, and in rigid control of his own impulses. Peregrine's punishment comes from his failure to control his appetites, and his final reward, because it comes only through the chance intervention of fate, does not suggest any justification of his behavior before or after his fall.

But control of appetites alone is not enough; Smollett believed in the necessity of active benevolence just as Henry Fielding did. This fact becomes clear in the course of the development of Smollett's ideas in his five novels, but his final statement on the matter is somewhat anticipated in his portrayal of Commodore Trunnion in this one. It has often been noted that the Trunnion of the early scenes is different from the Trunnion of the later scenes, but little has been made of this change. Albrecht Strauss has described the animal imagery with which

Trunnion is presented in terms of his domestication, but without seeing the imagery's relevance to the thematic structure of the whole body of Smollett's fiction.<sup>18</sup>

The early Trunnion is comic, but not the lovably comic figure of the later scenes or the man of benevolence, stature, and dignity of the last scene. The early Trunnion is an "old Hannibal Tough," "a grim commander" (52). He has a violent temper and lives in his garrison barricaded from the rest of mankind. A large scar across his nose gives him a hideous aspect and suggests a mutilation of his inner nature, just as his being blind in one eye suggests that his vision is limited. He is a "ferocious chief" (7), a wild creature with a voice like "the crying of quails" and then "the croaking of bull frogs" (7). When annoyed his eye "glistened like that of a rattlesnake" (8).

As Strauss has pointed out, his domestication is described through animal imagery. At Gamaliel's wedding reception, where Trunnion meets the future Mrs. Trunnion, he is an image of the wooden lion that used to stand at his gate. When he goes to have the hairs plucked from his chin, he is conducted there "like a victim to the altar, by the exulting priests; or rather growling like a reluctant bear, when he is led to the stake amidst the

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<sup>18</sup>"On Smollett's Language: A Paragraph in Ferdinand Count Fathom," English Institute Essays, 1958, pp. 40-42.

shouts and cries of butchers and their dogs" (25). On the morning after his marriage he storms "with incredible vociferation, like a lion roaring in the toil, pouring forth innumerable oaths and execrations" (45), but in a short time he is "led about the house like a blind bear growling for mercy" (46), and soon he learns to retire within himself "like a tortoise when attacked" (47). His subjection to his wife is "like that of a bear, checkered with fits of surliness and rage, whereas Pickle bore the yoke like an ox, without repining" (111).

Trunnion is naturally a wild, not a domestic animal, and his marriage is to him an unnatural union against which his nature rebels. The unnaturalness of it is suggested when in the proposal scene he sits in agony "as if he dreaded the dissolution of nature" (35). His approach to the church is so indirect that he never gets there, and it is fitting that his horse is a hunter, which heeds the call of the hunt and takes Trunnion with him on a wild chase, after which Trunnion forgets where he was going when he started. Suggesting too the unnaturalness of the marriage is the fact that the hammock breaks and the bride and groom spend the rest of the night separated, and as a final comment, the bride finally grows big, labors, and produces nothing but wind. The marriage does nothing to bring out the human goodness and generosity in Trunnion's heart.

What does change him from a grotesque presented as satiric target to the lovable caricature that he becomes

in the course of the novel is his taking in an unloved child and caring for him, a child not his own. Trunnion becomes more and more a character who wins the reader's sympathy because of his generosity, his kindness, and his devotion to Peregrine, who does not really deserve it. The animal imagery disappears. In the growth of his character through the growth of concern for others and of care for the larger human family, he anticipates Mathew Bramble, with whom Smollett will make his final statement on this theme. This is the fundamental theme with which Smollett works through all of his novels, that the predatory nature of man can be subdued only through the growth of sympathy and generosity toward others.

Again in this novel as in the first there is the suggestion that society encourages the worst in man. Grizzle and the Pickles, for instance, brought up in society, are incapable of even genuine parental love, except for Mrs. Pickle's love for "a monster that never existed in nature" (107). Motherhood is a tool they use to get what they want, Mrs. Pickle to get ascendancy over Grizzle and freedom from her presence and Grizzle to get the coach and furniture she wants. It is the outsiders who tend to be capable of love: Trunnion who has lived at sea since he was a boy, Pipes and Hatchway who have also lived at sea, and Emilia's mother, who has been somewhat isolated because of her poverty. In the prison community of outsiders there is more brotherhood than there was in the society from

which Peregrine is removed. The other inmates immediately offer help to Peregrine and try to relieve one another's distresses. If society conditions man, then man is partially redeemable and should be exhorted to become better, not just castigated. This belief of Smollett's is revealed in his History when he says that he cannot admire Swift "whose muse seems to have been mere misanthropy; he was a cynick rather than a poet."<sup>19</sup>

Smollett himself is a poet, striving to exhort his audience to better behavior through the satiric treatment of society and more particularly of the predatory man, whose self-love is the result of his being ruled by his appetites, just as the animals envisioned in the imagery are ruled by theirs. The difficulty in this second novel is that the conflict between human and animal principles is not dramatic enough. Peregrine suffers no clearly portrayed inner conflict, though at times he enters into contests of will with those representing higher human principles. It is the lack of dramatic conflict that leads Smollett's audience to be repelled by Peregrine and to fail to perceive the point of this portrayal of brutality. This is a problem Smollett tries to resolve in his third novel.

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<sup>19</sup>Continuation of the History of England, Vol. III. London, P. Cooke, 1789, p. 246.

## CHAPTER IV

### FERDINAND FATHOM

Birds feed on birds, beasts on  
other prey;  
But savage man alone does man  
betray.

John Wilmot, "A Satire  
on Mankind"

## CHAPTER IV

### FERDINAND FATHOM

Ferdinand Fathom was written in 1752 and published about February, 1753, just after Smollett's King's-Bench trial. Its sale was not wide, probably because it lacks the gusto and humor of the earlier novels. It lacks none of the earlier moral fervor, however; and although its critical reception was not high at its publication and remains rather low today, the novel is extremely interesting to a student of Smollett's development as a novelist. Like its predecessor a farrago of many elements, this novel introduces horror tales, Gothic scenes, the fantastic tale of the romance, and a fairy-tale atmosphere. But the hand of the satirist of mankind remains clearly evident in the midst of these incongruous elements, and it is as an experiment with another approach to the treatment of the predator-hero and his victims that the work is of present interest.

Always sensitive to the attacks of his critics, Smollett attached to the novel a Prefatory Address outlining his plan and procedure. In the Preface Smollett takes the position of the group of critics who defended "low" scenes in literature on the principle that they "displayed

nature as it is" and that "such pictures served a moral purpose by warning away the unwary from the snares and pitfalls of vice."<sup>1</sup> Adopting a technique from the theater, Smollett plans to make his principal character a thoroughgoing villain on the theory that it

will teach us to relish the disgrace and discomfiture of vice . . . because it leaves a deep impression of terror upon the minds of those who are not confirmed in the pursuit of morality and virtue, and, while the balance wavers, enables the right scale to preponderate . . . . The impulse of fear, which is the most violent and interesting of all the passions, remains longer than any other upon the memory; and for one that is allured to virtue, by the contemplation of that peace and happiness it bestows, a hundred are deterred from the practice of vice, by that infamy and punishment to which it is liable, from the laws and regulations of mankind.

Let me not, therefore, be condemned for having chosen my principal character from the purlieus of treachery and fraud, when I declare my purpose is to set him up as a beacon for the benefit of the unexperienced and unwary, who, from the perusal of these memoirs, may learn to avoid the manifold snares with which they are continually surrounded in the paths of life; while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity may be terrified from plunging into that irreparable gulf, by surveying the deplorable fate of Ferdinand Count Fathom. (FF, I, 3-4)

Couched in milder language and containing less opprobrium, this passage might also describe the plan of Peregrine Pickle. In his third novel Smollett tries to prevent any misunderstanding of his purpose by presenting a hero who represents the lowest kind of behavior rooted in man's Predacious nature, a predator-hero devoted solely to the

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<sup>1</sup>William Park, "Change in the Criticism of the Novel after 1760," Philological Quarterly, XLVI (1967), 34.

satisfaction of his lowest appetites, a bestial figure most fully determined to act in logical consistency with his view of a society based on predatory principles. Ferdinand Fathom is the most overtly moralistic of all the novels. It has the most authorial intrusions and the densest texture of analytic, moralistic comment on the hero so that there can be no misunderstanding about what he represents and what the purpose is in presenting him, so radical a departure from Smollett's previous technique that in itself it suggests that such an effort to clarify purpose must have grown out of previous failures. The novel also contains the most clearly articulated statement of the man-as-predator theme and poses the most dramatic antithesis between man's animal nature and his divine one, between his most selfishly bestial and most benevolent acts, between his most animal instincts and his most human principles. It is also a book that warns that although man may be half god, he is also half beast, and that he must constantly be on guard against the beast, both in others and within himself. It is an eighteenth-century Heart of Darkness and the culmination of Smollett's effort to educate the reader to wisdom about the bestial heart within mankind.

Smollett's earlier heroes had at least something of the normal human family conditioning in their backgrounds, but Ferdinand is from birth coldly trained to become a predatory animal. His mother is a camp follower

who mates with anyone; thus she is not sure who Ferdinand's father was, and Ferdinand like Peregrine is excluded from any genuine Paternal tenderness, although he is treated with kindness by many of the men in camp. His mother is a scavenger and murderess, who in times of peace prays unceasingly that Europe may be speedily involved in a general war so that she may go on killing and stripping bodies. One of her chief motives in going to the frontier after Ferdinand is born is to initiate him into the rudiments of an education, the camp with all its opportunities for plunder being in her opinion the consummate school of life. Ferdinand, therefore, is educated in the school of jungle ferocity and slaughter, not in an academic one like the rest of Smollett's heroes; as a result he is the most cold-blooded, fully predatory protagonist in all of Smollett's fiction, the most overt representative of the basest element in man's nature; and, since he meets many of his own kind in the course of his travels, not a unique being, but a satirist's device for exposing to supposedly civilized society the prevalence of the predacious being within its membership.

One of the three earliest heroes Ferdinand Fathom, as his name suggests, probes most deeply, even if the most narrowly, into the human heart, a point Smollett stresses on several occasions in the novel, i.e., "He seldom or never erred in his observations on the human heart" (I, 46), or "He had studied mankind with incredible diligence . . ."

(I, 224). The emphasis Smollett puts on this aspect of Fathom's behavior is important, because this novel, which bifurcates, separates, and examines the best and the worst in man's nature, is about the human heart and the necessity of knowing its most bestial depths. He who recognizes the predatory animal beneath the smiling human façade is safest, and Fathom represents the sly, predatory man who sees the animal weakness in the heart of others and lures it into traps. Where Peregrine had seen the predatory baseness of other men, been blind to his own, been repulsed by others, and had tried to punish that baseness, Fathom accepts it and becomes a mercenary, venal, deliberate, conscious user of this insight, preying both on those whose own lust and greed lead them into his snares and those whose ignorance of the bestial in man's heart makes them vulnerable.

Fathom's description of what he sees in the human heart and his pronouncement of his philosophy of men and manners come early in the novel and make Smollett's most articulate statement of the man-as-predator theme:

He had formerly imagined, but was now fully persuaded, that the sons of men preyed upon one another, and such was the end and condition of their being. (I, 66-7)

This much of the passage is often quoted, but the relationship of the rest of the passage to the animal-food-prey imagery pervading the novels has not been noticed:

Among the principal figures of life, he observed few or no characters that did not bear a strong analogy to the savage tyrants of the wood. One

resembled a tiger in fury and rapaciousness; a second prowled about like an hungry wolf, seeking whom he might devour; a third acted the part of a jackel, in beating the bush for game to his voracious employer; and the fourth imitated the wily fox, in practising a thousand crafty ambuscades for the destruction of the ignorant and unwary. This last was the department of life for which he found himself best qualified by nature and inclination. (I,67).

In view of this explicit statement the critic's assumption that this imagery has a purely comic purpose seems unlikely. The line between satire and pure humor is often a thin one, but pure comedy has little purpose other than entertainment while satire is usually critical and corrective. In this third novel as in the earlier ones the imagery has the profound satirical intent of exposing Smollett's dark perception of man's bestiality and resultant precarious condition, just as did the eighteenth-century caricaturist's drawings of the lumps of animal horror and stupidity. Not only unsanitary conditions of life, but also an economic and social structure that limited the means through which men could achieve economic security resulted in a period in which men, sometimes through necessity and sometimes through inclination, lived off one another. Gulls and gulling were common, and the streets and byways contained a multiplicity of traps for the unwary. Predators were not only common, they were also multifarious in type; and Fathom's view of the parallels between their mode of life and that of the various beasts of the veldt, forest, and jungle is a lucid perception of life as it is presented in all of the early novels.

Fathom is a fully mature product of this world. Being "calculated by nature to dupe even the most cautious, and gratify his appetites, by levying contributions on all mankind" (I, 30), he knows that he does not have the courage or strength to be a lion or bear and determines to become the sly fox as that character developed in the animable fable [a crafty trickster]. In several passages Smollett stresses the fact the his predacious behavior is not like Peregrine's a blind, youthful obedience to the unconscious dictates of his appetites, but a coolly mature, conscious choice. For example, seeing that the sons of man prey on one another, Fathom "determined to fascinate the judgment, rather than the eyes of his fellow creatures, by a continual exercise of that gift of deceiving, with which he knew himself imbued to an unrivalled degree; and to acquire unbounded influence with those who might be subservient to his interest, by an assiduous application to their prevailing passions" (I, 67). Fathom never practices self-deception about his motives, never rationalizes away their baseness, and never fails to act with cold deliberation. His existentialist decision is consonant with his early training and logically consistent with the world view presented in the early novels. It is a choice coldly and honestly calculated as a method of meeting this world on its own terms and getting the most out of it.

It is his gift for deceiving that enables him to get as much as he does. Fathom's successes as a preying

animal are predicated by his very ability to hide his animal nature under a facade of the noblest of human behavior, which lures the unwary into a false sense of security. His main talent is a cunning, deceptive one for appearing sincere, genteel, noble, generous, honest, kind, obliging—all that is best in human character. This protective cover makes him more dangerous than the bears, tigers, and wolves of the world, and those he meets fall prey easily because they put up no defensive mechanisms. They accept the apparent sincerity and altruism of his professed values, and he uses that acceptance for his base purposes. He seduces Theresa's maid and gets her to steal from Theresa for him at the same time that he builds a reputation for absolute honesty. He maliciously and falsely destroys the Count's trust in his son while he appears absolutely trustworthy himself. He steals from Reynaldo and convinces him that he is protecting him loyally. He gulls and manipulates Reynaldo over and over again, destroying him while he appears to be helping him. He gets out of battle by a counterfeit illness at the same time that he earns a reputation for courage and daring. One woman after another falls prey to his guile and insinuation only to find herself seduced, abandoned, and defrauded. Much of the first half of the novel is one long, darkly ironic success story illustrating how adroitness and skill at hiding the predacious motivation can snare the unwary.

Not all the characters can be numbered among the unwary, however; and Fathom's failures illustrate one of the major themes of the novel. This theme is the precariousness of life in the tooth-and-claw competitive society, because in any group where one lives by feeding on another and thus destroying his welfare someone always has to lose. And there will always be a stronger or smarter predator to lose to. Fathom's defeats illustrate this principle.

In his first venture the principle works in his favor. At sixteen, Fathom has an almost instinctive knowledge of the wisest hunting tactics. His prey is the count's daughter with whom he "acted at a wary distance" (I, 38), knowing that if he pounces too soon he will lose what advantages he has gained. He tries slyness and the symptoms of love—with no effect on her. He feigns illness—with no effects on her but those of friendship. But in the course of his stalking of Theresa the maid falls in love with him and tries on him all the arts which "ensnare the heart of man" (I, 38). Her love, however, produces in Fathom nothing but thought about how he can use it for his own advantage, and soon she finds herself snared instead and used the way a hunter uses his hound, to chase down and bring the prey to bay for him. This episode introduces a motif in the work, that of the predators whose own predacious efforts make them prey to a smarter predator.

This is what soon happens to Fathom and he becomes himself the prey. In Vienna he meets a proficient gambler,

and they become confederates, beginning "to hunt in couples" (I, 69). They prey artfully, like the foxes they are. Ratchcali wins money from Reynaldo, and Fathom sends a note threatening the Tyrolese with a duel, a feigned measure to reinforce Reynaldo's trust in Fathom's integrity and loyalty. Reynaldo then "fell a prey to an artful gamester" (I, 71), who utilizes Fathom's advice to hunt Reynaldo "in the proper seasons" (I, 71), those times when he is weakest and most vulnerable. Hunting in couple, Ratchcali and Fathom manage to live very well. But Ratchcali is a much cleverer fox than Fathom. Later, when they accidentally walk into the French camp, Fathom is nonplussed and almost gives them away, but while Fathom is trying to recollect himself, his partner with admirable presence of mind coolly tells the French that they have come to offer their services. When Fathom decides to make off with their spoils, Ratchcali's greater cunning allows him to make use of Fathom's attempt by anticipating it and substituting rusty nails, thus giving Ratchcali time and complete freedom to make off with the jewels and cash.

This episode constitutes one of the first of the instances where Fathom becomes prey to foxes who have the advantage of him in age, experience, or cunning. Ratchcali shares Fathom's belief that the natural order of men is the same as that of animals, one preying on another to live and that allowed to be the end of his being. His philosophical view of man is expressed when he and Fathom later land in

England and Ratchcali says, "One would imagine that nature had created the inhabitants for the support and enjoyment of adventurers like you and me" (I, 251), in a kind of perversion of the God-gave-man-dominion-over-the-earth idea. When they make their plans in England, Ratchcali is the one who wants to prey on the great "because the game is much deeper" (I, 254). His hunting skill allows him to use the greed of the predacious and powerful for his own gain, just as he uses Fathom's, and his experience makes it possible to anticipate Fathom's moves. Thus, when Fathom loses credit with the fashionable, is convicted of adultery, and is fined £1500, Rathcali, like an animal that turns on the weakened member of the pack, joins another predator to get possession of all Fathom's belongings and once again absconds with them.

The major illustration of the theme that the predatory life is a precarious one because there is always a smarter predator to use one's own predacious appetite to lure one into a trap is the Sir Stentor Stile episode, the central thematic function of which has gone unnoted. Stile himself lurks in the background as two other members of the pack, an Englishman and an Abbé, entice Fathom into a game. They begin trying to outfox one another, the Englishman pretending to be a humorist cautious to protect his pockets, and Fathom pretending distant civility which has no sinister views on his fortune. Fathom wins the first games played and they seem to despair of making him their prey.

They begin dropping hints about his joining them, but Fathom is by nature a lone hunter, and the three wily foxes simply circle each other, all too wily to become the prey.

The impasse is broken when Smollett brings in his greatest creation in the line of fox hunters, the constant analogical emblem of the predacious instinct running through all the novels. Stile's name is indicative of his flair or style in the hunt. He appears dressed as an English jockey with spaniel, hunting boots, and whip, entering with the loud halloo of the foxhunter. There is irony here in that he is dressed for exactly what he is; and when some mistake him for "some savage monster," Stile asks, "What, do they take me for a beast of prey?" (I, 175). That is what he is, but with another twist of irony the apparent openness of this cunning fox dupes the company into taking him for a stupid hunter of animals rather than the cunning hunter of men he actually is.

Fathom's greed leads him straight into the trap, and he is "inwardly transported with joy at sight of this curiosity. He considered him a genuine, rich country booby, of the right English growth, fresh as imported . . . . He foresaw, indeed, that the other knight would endeavor to reserve him for his own game" (I, 178), but Fathom is confident of his own abilities. Stile encourages that belief by playing a clumsy, tamed bear, beginning "to slabber his companions with a most bear-like affection" (I, 178). Stile is using Fathom's own techniques against

him, but with a grand style that completely takes Fathom in. It takes a fox to catch a fox, and Fathom is caught, losing everything he has to this pack. Fathom later hears that Stile and Giles "hunted in couple among a French pack . . . in order to make prey of incautious strangers" (I, 188) and knows that it is his own predacious behavior that has made him prey instead.

Smollett may have been aware that his failure to clarify his purpose in portraying Peregrine's predatory behavior toward women obscured the satiric intent of the second novel because in this one not only does he use authorial intrusion fairly frequently to make his disapproval of the same kind of conduct on Fathom's part explicit, he also is careful to show Fathom punished for the worst of these exploits. And Smollett goes further than merely punishing his villain-hero. He gives his weakness and his punishment a teleological origin, thus making the moral purpose of his work as explicit as possible:

We have already recorded divers instances of his conduct to prove that there was an intemperance in his blood, which often interfered with his caution; and although he had found means to render this heat sometimes subservient to his interest, yet, in all probability, Heaven mingled the ingredient in his constitution, on purpose to counteract his consummate craft, defeat the villany of his intention, and at last expose him to the justice of the law, and the contempt of his fellow-creatures. (II, 36)

This comment, coming after the report of Fathom's base designs on Monimia, is only one of many in which Smollett

with a kind of relentless determination pursues his purpose in exposing the lowness of predatory man, in judging it with severity, and in suggesting its antithesis to the kind of behavior the fully human being, with his divine half too, is capable of striving for. The predatory man is clearly presented as a contemptible creature and a weak and vulnerable one in this third treatment of the theme.

Fathom's sexual appetite is the weakness that helps to bring him to his final defeat and most degrading position. Although his experience with Sir Stentor Stile teaches him to be wary of gamblers and stay out of games, he never learns to be wary of women, and both times when he finds himself confined to prison, it is his sensuality which brings him there. Smollett ends Book I with the hunt-prey motif, in the Trapwell episode in which Fathom's sexual appetites make him the prey rather than the predator. Here again Smollett uses what Arthur Sherbo speaks of as a "primitive" suggestive device, the descriptive character name.<sup>2</sup> The episode consists of a series of ironic twists as Mr. Trapwell, who has been decoyed into marriage by the cunning of Mrs. Trapwell, gets her to decoy Fathom into a trap by making her think Fathom the only intended victim. Then he makes prey of both of them, ensnaring her by getting grounds for divorce and ensnaring Fathom for £1500. When Ratchcali runs off with

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<sup>2</sup>Studies, p. 182.

Fathom's belongings, he finds himself hopelessly imprisoned. In Book II his sensuality again leads him to prison after he seduces a clergyman's wife, who repents and confesses to her husband. The husband sues Fathom and ruins his practice. Fathom then marries a woman for her fortune, only to find himself legally barred from it, falsely convicted of bigamy through the wife's confederacy with a woman he had formerly seduced, lived with, and then deserted. Fathom's sexual appetite, along with that for material possessions, brings him finally to the utmost degradation, and the unwary reader learns with Fathom that giving in to the predacious being within rather than keeping it severely leashed and guarded will only lead to one's being easily led into the snares of a stronger or smarter predator. It is not the way to live in a predatory society, and the point Smollett failed to make clearly in Peregrine Pickle is made with a single-minded intensity in a multitude of episodes in this novel.

The parallels Smollett draws between man's human nature and the generosity that constitutes social love and between his animal nature and the predaciousness that constitutes self-love are given thematic treatment in this novel also. Several episodes illustrate the idea that vanity, like greed and lust, not only debases the one who allows it to dictate his behavior but also encourages the predatory behavior of others by providing easy prey. Wilhelmina, just as her mother, is susceptible to Fathom's

machinations because of her hungry ego. He seduces her by flattery, and she is easily caught because she thinks "it reasonable he should be rewarded for the justice he had done to her qualifications" (I. 78). The "delicious commerce" with him feeds an ego so hungry that it gulps down his encomiums and fails utterly to penetrate his real motives. Her mother also, Smollett makes clear, is easy prey because of the same appetite: "We have already observed how cunningly he catered for the gratification of her ruling appetite, and have exhibited proofs of his ability in gaining upon the human heart; the reader will not therefore be surprised at the rapidity of his conquest over the affections of a lady whose complexion was perfectly amorous, and whose vanity laid her open to all the attempts of adulation" (I, 90). Elenor's degradation is another illustration of this theme. Her "ideas of vanity and ambition" make her susceptible, and Fathom "marked her chastity for prey to his voluptuous passion" (I, 242).

Thus, in this highly moralistic novel Smollett catalogues all the weaknesses that make men and women easy prey to the appetitive man and lead to the "disgrace and discomfiture of vice" by showing "that infamy and punishment to which it is liable," the purpose he states explicitly in the Preface. Those vices that stem from man's animal nature are illustrated, castigated, and punished; They are the same vices that he meant to expose in his earlier novels. One of the reasons that there is so

little comedy in this novel is apparently that Smollett did not intend to have his audience mistake his serious moral purpose this time. His view of man and his condition was partly an anti-Shaftesburian, dark, pessimistic one, and in one of the more explicit generalizations appearing in his work he makes this clear:

Success raised upon such a foundation would, by a disciple of Plato, and some modern moralists, be ascribed to the innate virtue of the human heart, which naturally espouses the cause that needs protection . . . . But I, whose notions of human excellence are not quite so sublime, am apt to believe it is owing to that spirit of self-conceit and contradiction, which is, at least, as universal, if not as natural, as the moral sense so warmly contended for by those philosophers.  
(ii, 144-5)

Repeatedly in his work Smollett treats the themes suggested by the imagery: that society needs reform because it is based on primarily predatory principles, that predaciousness is almost universal, and that man must be ever on guard against his bestial nature. At the core of the human heart is the half-beast, and its existence must not be denied or ignored.

Innocence and credulity in Ferdinand Fathom are not only dangerous; they border on the criminal, destroying the good and even encouraging bestiality. Those who cannot penetrate man's nature deeply enough to see the beast within are culpable too, and their weakness is exposed thoroughly. The old count cannot penetrate Reynaldo's lack of exterior cultivation to see the virtue in his heart, and he cannot penetrate Fathom's agreeable

exterior to see the beast within. He is easily duped into believing his son a cheat and a thief. He suspects Reynaldo of stealing the jewels for an innamorata, and without confirming his suspicions or even asking Reynaldo about it, he sends his son off to Vienna with Fathom as his preceptor and model, thus exposing him to the danger of Fathom's designs. Later, the count leaves Reynaldo out of his will, thus exposing the mother, daughter, and son to the villainy of Count Trebasi.

Reynaldo's every action also illustrates the necessity of experience and knowledge of the bestial human heart. He is an easy prey himself, but his stupidity in allowing Fathom to separate himself from Monimia and his leaving her prey to the bestial appetites of Fathom make his inability to fathom the human heart more than just a flaw; it is reprehensible. Like a table-pounding preacher Smollett again and again—with the count, with Reynaldo, with Celinda, and Elenor and others—drives home his sermon on the theme that "the task is not difficult to lead the unpracticed heart astray" (I, 50). Knowledge of the beast within is a protective armor, and Shaftsburian innocence a destructive force. Smollett insists on the necessity of replacing blind belief in man's goodness with a sophisticated knowledge of the dark side of his nature, emphasizing the value of experience, of recognizing man for the predatory animal he is, of knowing that he is more apt to act according to his animal instincts than to



his human ethics and principles.

The good characters who evade the claws of the predator and bring about the happy endings are those with the ability to penetrate beneath the surface—Joshua, Madame Clement, and the doctor who attends Monimia. Quite incongruously, Joshua has black and bushy eyebrows so heavy in growth that they are impenetrable thickets, but whether Smollett intended the irony or not, he endows this outsider with eyes that see clearer than most. Joshua is cautious enough to guard against fraud by checking on Reynaldo, but he sees that "you have not the air of an imposter" (II, 83), lends him money, and gives him recommendations to friends, all on the strength of a clerk's recognition and Reynaldo's personal bond. Joshua knows when to trust and acts with the same generosity to Don Diego. Madame Clement too knows truth and sincerity when she sees it in Monimia, but does not believe Fathom's pretense of being the injured husband even before she is warned by the physician. Cautioned by him, she carefully deliberates on the particulars of Fathom's and Monimia's account. She represents compassion, generosity, and sophisticated judgment. Through her actions, Joshua's, and the physician's, Monimia is saved from becoming prey to Fathom, and whatever of the good life is achieved by Reynaldo and Monimia at the end is attributable to their efforts and Reynaldo's quite fortuitous discoveries.

The good life and the evil life, human behavior and animal behavior, are more sharply counterpoised and dramatized than in the earlier novels as Smollett reworks the same themes but experiments with form. Human nature and animal nature are antithetically contrasted in Reynaldo and Fathom; they are the two halves of human nature, separated and embodied in opposing characters. Reynaldo, who never comes to life in the book, is a stiff representative of the most human virtues. The one animal image applied to him, during the early years of his awkward exterior, is that of the unpredatory mule; his "extorted bows resembled the pawings of a mule" (I, 29). But his awkwardness is "like the rough coat of a diamond, polished away" (I, 125), and near the end of the book, as Robert Spector has pointed out,<sup>2</sup> he becomes a Christ-like figure or an angel. His Monimia is a "heavenly Visitant," "a superior being . . . descended from the realms of bliss" (II, 250). Her "aspect . . . seemed to shine with something supernatural" (II, 99), and she is a "sacred shrine of honour, beauty, and unblemished truth" (II, 98). And although Reynaldo is made human enough to be impatient on his wedding night and to go "like a lion rushing on its prey" (II, 296), Smollett's typical imagery for lust is softened and changed by turning the scene into an altar with "holy rites." Joshua's face, at the sight of her, is distorted only by a "stare of admiration" (II, 264); he is not

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<sup>2</sup>Tobias Smollett, (New York, Twayne, 1968), p. 95.

metamorphosed into a goat as Crabtree is at the sight of Emilia; and the morning after the wedding night Joshua's jokes die on his lips at the sight of Monimia's sweetness and dignity. The wedded pair become abstract personifications of celestial principles of goodness and human virtues and divinity.

Fathom, on the other hand, is a personification of the principle of evil. He is first a predator who acts "in violation of all laws—human and divine" (I, 48). His behavior, as in all of Smollett's predators, represents self-love, the selfish principle which defeats and destroys generosity or the principle of social love. Fathom's motivation is "a most insidious principle of self-love, that grew up with him from the cradle, and left no room in his heart for the least particle of social virtue" (I, 30). Self-love then becomes the principle of evil as Smollett uses several devices to departicularize Fathom and turn him into an abstract principle. Partly this is done by the mock heroic treatment of Fathom at the beginning; Smollett presents him as a legend who is sucking brandy impregnated with gunpowder through the touch-hole of a pistol—and at thirteen months old. The departicularizing effect is reinforced by his having no particular father and no particular country. His mother is not sure who his father is, and the men of the camp, not knowing either, all take a fatherly proprietorship in the child. Where Fathom was conceived is not made clear, but he first sees the light

in Holland and is not fully born until they are in Belgium. Besides deparтикуlarizing him, Smollett makes him an incarnation of the evil principle. Wilhelmina sees him as "the devil himself" (I, 87), "a sable apparition which she mistook for Satan in propria persona" (I, 88). Fathom is again described as "a devil incarnate" (I, 270) by a Swiss, and Reynaldo finally comes to see him as "a venomous serpent" (II, 245), an appellation he uses twice.

In making Reynaldo and Fathom personifications of the good and evil principles Smollett is trying to rectify one of his failures in Peregrine Pickle, where the lack of any internal standard by which to judge Peregrine resulted in the novel's partial failure to achieve the purpose for which Smollett designed it. This time good and evil, bestial and divinely human, are clearly presented and contrasted. The satiric purpose in this contrast, although it is submerged, is present. This fact is suggested at the beginning by Smollett's ironic epithet for Fathom, "the mirror of modern chivalry" (I. 6). Instead of traveling through the world to help others and right wrongs, the modern knight-errant, Smollett suggests, follows his animalistic nature in preying on others; and Fathom is only a slightly distorted mirror image of modern man.

The modern world too is satirized in typical Smollett fashion. T. O. Treadwell divides the two worlds of the novel into the world of satire growing out of the novel of nature and the world of romance growing out of the novel

of manners,<sup>3</sup> and it might be added that Smollett seems to be using the combination of novel forms in an attempt to solve some of the problems inherent in the form of Peregrine Pickle. In addition to presenting antithetical heroes, Smollett presents antithetical worlds so that "the contrast between dejected virtue and insulting vice appears with greater aggravation"<sup>4</sup>. Except for Emilia, the victims of Peregrine's appetites are low enough so that the reader fails to feel a sense of outrage sometimes; thus Smollett's satirical purpose tends to get lost. Pipes, Hatchway, Godfrey, Trunnion, all of whom are in some way superior to Peregrine, are not enough differentiated so that the contrast makes a clear comment on Peregrine. In the third novel, Smollett juxtaposes a world of humanity and a world of bestiality so that his lashing satire on the world he saw around him might not miss its target.

The reasoning animal that inhabits this world is shown consistently behaving in a fashion parallel with the instinctive, bestial behavior of the lower kingdom. Smollett returns to a technique he used consistently in Roderick Random, that of stopping, even with the most minor character, to point out parallels in appearance,

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<sup>3</sup>"The Two Worlds of Ferdinand Fathom" in Tobias Smollett: Bicentennial Essays Presented to Lewis Knapp (Oxford, 1971), pp. 131-153.

<sup>4</sup>Preface to Roderick Random, p. xv.

manner, attitude, or behavior of people and their animal counterparts. One of Ferdinand's landladies is "a certain old gentlewoman of such rapacious disposition, that, like a jackdaw, she never beheld any metalline substance, without an inclination, and even an effort to secrete it for her own use and contemplation" (II, 159). Even shadowy characters who play no part in the plot at all are apt to be betrayed either in animal or food imagery, as the occupants in a coach where Fathom is squeezed between a corpulent Quaker and a fat Wapping landlady. "The swine's fat," Fathom is told, "will be all on one side," and "monsieur would be soon better acquainted with a buttock of English beef" or himself "spitted without larding" (I, 225). Smollett's miniature animal paintings are reinforced by larger drawings of whole groups of society. The medical profession is described, for instance, as a pack made up of a waiting-woman, a nurse, an apothecary, a physician, a surgeon, and even an undertaker, all preying on the patient to get as much as possible out of him and hunting in packs because they can get bigger game that way. Smollett's sketch of the English character is followed by a catalogue of the various predators who prey in various disguises (I, 253-4). The cumulative effect of these passages is a sense of lurking danger, a distorted, unfamiliar jungle atmosphere where predators like Fathom lurk behind every smiling face, where civilization is only a facade, where humanity is only a surface housing of the beast. In

this novel too the satirist's hand is at work distorting the human image and exposing its close relationship to the beasts that are thought man's inferiors.

The fact that Smollett is trying to make his satirical purpose clearer than it had been in the earlier novels is suggested not only by his use of a completely predacious anti-hero, but also by his not depending on animal-food-and-prey imagery alone. In the dense texture of comment and authorial intrusion Smollett speaks more directly than he has in any of the previous works. The comments range from brief remarks about things like the "spirit of play having overspread the land, like a pestilence" (II, 110-1) to extensive generalizations about human nature, all of them supporting the view that Smollett's imagery is a reflection of his dark and almost pessimistic conception of man:

Nothing is more liable to misconstruction than an act of uncommon generosity; one half of the world mistake the motive, from want of ideas to conceive an instance of beneficence that soars so high above the level of their own sentiments; and the rest suspect it of something sinister or selfish, from the suggestions of their own sordid and vicious inclinations. (I, 33-4)

Swiftian in intent, these comments support the plot itself. Predatory acts provide the moving power of it. For example, when Ferdinand is confined in prison with no hope of getting out, Melville comes to the prison because he has been preyed upon by a set of sharpers who pick up information about families to use for purposes of extortion. Once there, he extricates Rathorn from his predicament and the story goes on. The fact that the action advances and the

scene generally changes through the medium of a predatory act suggests what the comments make explicit: the predaciousness is the animating principle of human society, the pervasive force providing power in most men.

But it need not be that way, and Smollett presents another kind of world to suggest that fact. When Smollett leaves Fathom in prison and turns to the story of what happens to Reynaldo on his return home, a different kind of vision is present. At the inn where Reynaldo stops, strangers see signs of affliction in his face, and instead of immediately marking him out as prey they feel sympathy. The Irish officer Reynaldo meets there does not turn out to be a predacious adventurer, as strangers are apt to be in Fathom's world; instead he turns out to be a man of sympathy and loyalty, who offers Reynaldo aid. For Reynaldo there are no rapacious secretaries to be bribed and no noblemen indifferent to any cause from which they can not gain personally. The prince and the queen "would not suffer the weakest of her subjects to be oppressed" (II, 183), and friends are easily interested in his behalf. Although the laws of Hungary allow subterfuges that make progress on his case slow, the outcome seems assured from the beginning in this sane, orderly, humane world. Rapacious tyrants like Count Trebasi are not approved of here, and Reynaldo is told that "nothing is wanted but your presence to begin the prosecution, and give a sanction to the measures of your friends, which

will in a little time restore your family to the fruition of its rights and fortune" (II, 181). This is another world motivated by human principles: love of justice, loyalty, gratitude, sympathy, compassion, and, above all, generosity.

But it is a faraway world, as T. O. Treadwell points out in his discussion of English xenophobia in the novel,<sup>5</sup> suggesting by its foreignness the distance English society is from any emulation of it. It is probably inaccurate to call it English xenophobia since the other novels offer good characters who are outsiders, but still very English, but the insider-outsider theme of the earlier books appears clearly. The generous and wise people in England are either outsiders like the Jew or foreigners like Madame Clement. The hand of the didactic satirist is present too in the description of the prison society, another outsider group. But off from the world where man, preys on man, they are more human. The jailor allows Sir Mungo Barebones credit because he is a scholar, not because he will ever pay. Two of them fight a duel, but it is an innocuous one where they smoke assafoetida, where no one gets hurt, and where they are peacefully and harmlessly reconciled. Though many of the characters are humorous caricatures, none are animal grotesques, and each has some element of human dignity that compels respect rather than revulsion. The prison episodes have a human touch, charm,

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<sup>5</sup>"Two Worlds," p. 140

and humor that anticipates the Smollett of the last novel, but more important than that, they, along with the Hungarian world and the kind foreigners, suggest a standard that men have fallen far short of, a world commenting on the predacious world that is the target of Smollett's satire by the very nature of the contrast.

But although there is contrast, there is little real conflict; and that is only one of the many flaws in Smollett's formula for this third attempt to convey to an audience his dark vision of society and to shock them into fighting for control of the beast within. One of the problems of this book designed to make its audience feel terror at evil is that evil is sometimes made to look rather attractive. When Fathom goes about preying on fashionable society, for instance, his bravado and daring and the magnificent aplomb with which he carries it off mitigates the frightening effect of his setbacks. The excitement of his conquests and of his escapes in the episodes with the jeweller's family force admiration of his nimble-wittedness, particularly since the cleverness of Fathom and the stupidity of Wilhelmina tend to make a reader admire one and despise the other. In the episodes where Fathom separates Reynaldo and Monimia, the admiration for Fathom is not there, but the stupidity of the pair hardly invites admiration for them either.

There is in Fathom a kind of integrity to his view of life that sometimes compels admiration too. He has a

natural acceptance of the principles of predacious conduct, even when he himself is the victim. When he discovers Ratchcali's substitution of the nails for the jewels, he does not rage at Ratchcali, feeling a kind of genuine admiration for Ratchcali's superiority, and later they meet as friends with no recriminations. After Stiles cheats Fathom of everything he has, Smollett says that "instead of beating his head against the wall, tearing his hair, or betraying other frantic symptoms of despair, he resolved to accommodate himself to his fate, and profit by the lesson he had so dearly bought" (I, 86). Here too his ability to take the loss philosophically as consistent with life's principles compels admiration. The reader often feels less offended and horrified at Fathom's behavior than he does at Peregrine's vicious jokes and revenges. And Fathom can even laugh at himself when he later hears Stentor and Giles describe the encounter to others. Fathom holds no grudges, even against the old woman in the woods who tries to take his life. He lets her go, "dissuaded . . . from bearing witness against a set of people whose principles did not much differ from his own" (I, 152). Fathom is honest about himself, as Peregrine is not. Fathom acts according to his principles, naturally and uncomplainingly, and he seems sometimes to have a fascination for Smollett. Fathom has far more life and vitality than the good characters, as if Smollett could unconsciously believe in Fathom as he could not in the good

protagonists, as if Smollett unconsciously felt that preying in a predatory world is somehow more natural than being without selfish desires. If the novel is meant to warn the reader away from evil and from acting according to his basest animal nature, it sometimes fails by making good seem insipid and stupidity and predaciousness attractive and natural.

As a final statement of the moral culpability of the predator, the portrait of Fathom fails. Just as in Shakespeare's Richard III, although the villainy of villainy is portrayed, so also is its attraction. Had Smollett wanted to deal in psychological depth with the complexities of human character, the inconsistency would have point. But Ferdinand Fathom is a preachy, overtly moralizing book, which pulls out the emotional stops at the end, and not only fails to convey life, but fails also in the unlikeliness of the moral absoluteness it pretends to teach. The artificiality of Fathom's repentance, so often commented on by critics, makes the reformation scene so bad that it is painful. Smollett seems to realize this and stops to say that Fathom is not cured beyond relapse because duplicity is so habitual with him that he would have deceived his own father if that could have extricated him from the evils that had fallen upon him. But this makes the tears and the agonies of remorse that follow even more unbelievable. Predatory beasts that suddenly turn into remorseful angels and biting satire which

suddenly turns into a melodramatic, artificial Sunday-school tract are not successful formulas, and Smollett abandons these devices with this novel.

He also abandons another unsuccessful experiment, the combination of satire and romance used to portray the contrast between a world where rapacious instinct prevails and a world where high human principle prevails. Smollett, with his dark vision and satirical tongue, does well at the first and fails miserably at the second. Traditionally, satirists have satirized romance because it does not tell the truth about life, and the ideal picture of life in the last part of this novel falls dully and mechanically from this satirist's pen. The wheels of the novel creak loudly as Smollett prepares to make everything come out all right, as it must in romance. The plot in the last part works by serendipity and fortuitous circumstance. A nun taking the veil when Reynaldo goes to get his sister happens to be Wilhelmina, so he learns by chance of Fathom's early villainy. He happens then to meet Ratchcali, who fills in more of the facts, and as if these coincidences are not enough, he then happens on Don Diego just in time to rescue him from robbers and hear more of Fathom's perfidy. And wheels creak even more loudly as Madame Clement withholds the news that Monimia is living, so that she can arrange an "interesting," melodramatic reunion in the church at midnight, and then as Reynaldo withholds the same news from the suffering Don Diego, so that there may be a

second big discovery scene. The reader feels with Monimia that "Indeed, this is too much" (II, 251) as the plot becomes a congeries of discoveries, obvious devices, sentimental platitudes, supernatural mummary, and Gothic machinery unrelated to psychological reality to the point where no suspension of disbelief can reasonably be demanded.

The last part of the book introduces an unreal fairy-tale world where Reynaldo rides around the ogre-tyrant's castle and the princess-countess in the tower drops her handkerchief to her knight-errant below; where paper villains are easily punctured, the black easily erased to reveal the white underneath, and the urge to return to "ferocity" (II, 206) like Trebasi's easily banished forever. But the forms of fairy-tale romance and satire contradict one another. Romance is postulated on the comforting assurance that poetic justice will prevail, that good will be rewarded and evil punished, and that everything will turn out all right in the end. It encourages its audience to rest assured that nothing need really be done about evils. It comes from the "inoffensive pen" that "for ever drops the mild manna of soul-sweetening praise" (I, 10). Satire, on the other hand, is postulated on the discomfoting warning that poetic justice will not prevail, that evil is more often rewarded than not, and that everything not only is not all right but also is not likely to be all right. It comes from an offensive pen that exposes and exhorts its audience to change and to

strive to be better. One form countermands the purpose of the other, and the two do not work well in this novel.

The romance element may be mock-heroic as T. O. Treadwell argues. But it is equally likely that Smollett was using the form seriously for the purpose of letting it function within the novel as the ideal standard by which the satirical targets are to be judged. Certainly it seems likely that the devices suggesting Reynaldo as the knight in shining armor—the all-night vigil in the church, the castle with the lady imprisoned in the tower, the dropped handkerchief, the joust with the ogre-tyrant, the divine purity of Monimia—are meant to suggest the direct contrast between the ideals of the older chivalric order of romance and those of "the mirror of modern chivalry," Fathom. That it is meant to do so is doubly suggested by the fact that in his next novel Smollett takes the same material and in a new experiment uses it with an ironic intent that makes it cohere with the satiric purpose of the fourth novel.

This impulse to experiment is one of the characteristics of Smollett that shows how serious an artist he was despite the limitations of time that forced him to write in feverish haste. The failures of the popular writer or hack writer are usually prognostications of what will come in succeeding work. The failures of an artist are interesting because they are usually evidence of a serious search for form and are often prognostications of the

artistic successes to come. The latter is true of Smollett. In his next novel he will take the same themes that he has worked with in the first three novels and come a little closer to working with the combination of forms that will bring the full achievement of his serious satirical purpose.

## CHAPTER V

### LAUNCELOT GREAVES

Go, go, go, said the bird; human  
kind  
Cannot bear very much reality.

-T. S. Eliot, "Burnt  
Norton"

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## CHAPTER V

### LAUNCELOT GREAVES

Smollett's fourth novel, started while he was serving a sentence for the libel of Admiral Knowles, came out in serial form in the British Magazine during 1760-1761. It is in many ways a transitional novel, combining many of the old elements with some to be found fully developed only in the last novel that was not to come for ten years yet. For students of Smollett, the novel is interesting mainly in that it shows considerable development in technique despite the flaws that have made it one of the least read and least appreciated of all Smollett's works. It shows that Smollett is improving at plot construction. Covering only a few weeks in the hero's life, the novel relates a series of adventures tied together by a love story. It achieves a unity of plot and action partly by the use of the love story to tie the action and partly by the abandonment of the picaresque form. Smollett is also learning to use dialogue to move the plot forward, and this shortest of all his novelistic efforts, from the beginning tableau in the style of Scarron to the final denouement, shows the artist experimenting with available forms in order to convey

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his satiric vision as dramatically and effectively as possible.

The satiric purpose in Greaves has not always been understood. Robert Giddings says that what would weaken any claim to its being a satisfactory satiric novel is the fact that the satire is incidental and not organic.<sup>1</sup> He seems to feel that Smollett's use of the comic epic form of romance precludes a fundamental, organic satiric purpose in the novel as a whole. But several considerations about the nature of satire make this assumption unworkable. In the first place, satire emerges from all degrees of emotion and intellect. It can be highly personal, emotional, angry and vitriolic inventive; it can be highly impersonal, coolly intellectual, detached, ironical and amused criticism; it can be anything in between. The best satire often reaches a quite impersonal level, thus seeming to stem from universally held moral standards. To reach this impersonal level, the satirist often resorts to the distancing effect of the fantastical or absurd or burlesque. Hence, satire is often close to comedy, where the audience is asked only to laugh, not to condemn. But wherever the element of burlesque or satire is fundamental, a criticism is implied, no matter how subtly. However comic or impersonal or absurd the work is, its fundamental purpose will be

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<sup>1</sup>The Tradition of Smollett (London, 1967), p. 138.



the salient feature of satire, a critical stance. Greaves takes this stance, not only in the more overtly polemical and satirical passages, but also in its basic form.

Ronald Paulson is nearer to seeing this truth when he says that Smollett is using madness, the device of the Elizabethan dramatists who wanted license to rail, but that the difference between Don Quixote and Greaves is that the latter is attacking real wrongs.<sup>2</sup> But Greaves' madness is more than just a license to rail; it is a means of illustrating a criticism both of society and of the overly moralistic man who tries too simplemindeedly to correct it. The stance Greaves takes toward the bestial world is ridiculous and often ineffectual. Robert Spector is closer to the truth than Paulson when he says that one of Greaves' primary functions is to allow Smollett to question what truly constitutes sanity in a corrupt world.<sup>3</sup> But Spector sees Smollett's purpose too narrowly:

While Cervantes is a philosophical novelist, concerned with illusion and reality in some larger sense, despite his use of the tools of satire, Smollett is primarily a satirist who is bound by the problems of his own day, seeking measures to correct the particular ills of society, and limited in his vision of the human

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<sup>2</sup>"Satire in Early Novels," p. 400.

<sup>3</sup>Tobias Smollett, p. 111.

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experience. . .nothing indicates that he is even seeking to achieve it (universality of the philosophical view).<sup>4</sup>

When the relationship between the copious animal, hunting, preying, and food imagery and Smollett's concern with the predatory nature of man is understood, the supposed limitations of vision disappear. In this novel, as in the earlier ones, he turns again to the problems inherent in man's fundamental, bestial nature and in his institutions, problems inherent in the conflict between his appetitive self-love and his human capacity for generous social love, and to problems inherent in his borderline divinity and the resulting idealistic, altruistic impulse. The vision in this novel is again fundamentally serious and satiric, and the novel's new elements are experiments in determining the most effective way to present his characteristic themes.

Smollett's fundamental criticism of man and his society is one element that remains unchanged. Having treated the foxes in his third novel, Smollett now turns back to the world of the lions and bears, a world with much of the violence of the two early novels. The opening scene is a preview of the kind of snarling animal violence that pervades the work. Tom Clarke is

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<sup>4</sup>Tobias Smollett, p. 112.



engaged merely in telling a story, yet there are periodic outbursts of rage and violence: Dolly at one point almost strangles Captain Crowe. Chance encounters in the novel produce violence, as when Greaves and Crabshaw meet some fox hunters on their first excursion. Within seconds Crabshaw is being beaten about the head with whips and using the club end of his own whip to lay about him with great fury, aided by Gilbert, who is biting and kicking. A few minutes later one of the huntsman has a broken leg, the best horse has been lamed, and half a score of hounds have been killed. Any meeting of men in the novel, even one based on a code of honorable conduct which supposedly precludes such snarling animal ferocity, may end with the pack fighting. In the joust between Sycamore and Greaves, Crowe, Dawdle, and Crabshaw act as if concepts of honor and magnanimity had never been invented. Dawdle uses an underhanded trick to frighten Greaves' horse, and when Crowe is thrown, Dawdle beats him as he lies on the ground. Crabshaw beats Sycamore's servant and then plunders his pockets when he is down. Their blood lust up, they all end by exchanging blows without regard to party.

That the salient parallels between human and animal behavior not be missed by his audience,

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Smollett uses animal imagery in this novel with almost as much frequency as he used it in the first two and with the same satirical intent. Not all the animals are savage; some of the inhabitants of this wild kingdom are only helpless prey. When Greaves begins making his presence felt in Gobble's bailiwick, "a crew of naked wretches crowded around him, and, like a congregation of rooks, opened their throats all at once, in accusation of Justice Gobble" (140). Even the sentimental, good-hearted Tom Clarke admits that "I can bite as well as babble; and that, if I am so minded, I can run upon the foot after my game. . . ." (28). As in the early novels Smollett presents the worst of the characters in terms of the larger predatory animals; but even where the parallels with the predators of jungle, forest, and field are not so obvious, Smollett uses imagery to evoke his vision of the animal always just underneath the fine human trappings. He says of the yeomans' daughters, for example, "their clumsy shanks, like so many shins of beef, were cased in silk hose and embroidered slippers" (52). The satirical scene is usually a crowded one, and Smollett's is crowded with "the terrestrial animals of this kingdom" (225), the common people who are human in appearance and animal in their behavior. Through

imagery, Smollett concentrates the audience's attention on this deflating view of man, demonstrating repeatedly how weak and ineffectual are man's attempts to rise above the half-beast within.

The violent, animal world evoked by the action and imagery is here stressed again because Smollett's concentration on the difficulty of man's effort to quell the beast within is an important preliminary to understanding the satirical functions of the fourth hero, Launcelot Greaves. He is a good man who decides to go out as a knight-errant to redress the world's grievances, chastizing man for his errors and failures. Smollett was obviously well aware of the objections that might be made to using the Don Quixote scheme in a modern work, since he has Ferret remark that it is "too stale and extravagant. . .insipid and absurd" (18). And it might be noted that Smollett puts in Greaves' mouth no defense against these particular charges. His only reply is that he is not mad in the same way Quixote was, because the wrongs he sees are real, a truth demonstrated in the course of the book. But the idea that the quixotic stance is extravagant, insipid, and absurd is allowed to stand. It seems probable that the romanticism and idealism constituting that stance are allowed to go undefended for a purpose. The purpose is to satirize the romantic view of man inherent

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in the idea of the man feeling, the man whose sympathies are so highly developed that he will stop at nothing to help his fellow man, whose generosity is unbounded, and whose nobility exceeds that of ordinary mortals.

It is the man of feeling that Tom Clarke describes in his long account of Greaves' background. It is a tale of a man who dispenses money and goods to the afflicted as if there were no possible bottom in the purse, because "he could not rest if he thought there was an aching heart in the whole parish" (36). He spends all his time with the poor and needy so that he may devote himself entirely to the exercise of compassion and sympathy. The excessiveness of his sensibility makes up the content of Clarke's story, and the idea of the man of feeling is emphasized in comments like Greaves' father's "God be praised for having given you such a feeling heart" (35). Greaves is something more than Rielsing's benevolent man who exercises caution and discretion as well as compassion. Greaves is trying to be more than just the good man; he is trying to be the impossibly good man embodied in the man of feeling concept, which was rising in popularity and would culminate in MacKenzie's The Man of Feeling in just ten years. The absurdity of that concept and its madness, Smollett charges in this novel, is that it demands of

man a godlike and altruistic idealism above the capacity of his half-beast nature. Greaves tries to be a god; he tries to act only in accord with the highest ideals; he tries to be perfect. Being human, he cannot.

But Greaves fails to recognize the limitation, and this failure makes him the target of a mild and gentle satirical attack, mild and gentle because, although such pretentiousness as Greaves' may be ridiculous, it is better in Smollett's opinion to try to live above one's animal nature entirely than to live according to it or even beneath it. Greaves not only tries to live above his animal nature, he also tries to live above his human one. He tries to live in a bestial world as if he himself had a nature almost wholly divine, infallible, incapable of corruption, free from the lowering passions, omniscient, altruistic. Being human, he cannot quite meet any of these standards; and his pretensions to the elevated demands he makes upon himself make him a figure of fun, a man trying to live as if he were wholly divine and not half god and half beast, a man somewhat mad in his delusions, a hero who takes a new and quite untenable stance toward the bestial world, and to act as if one had no animal nature is to be a little mad. Smollett portrays Greaves as a man trying to be a god.

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It is not, of course, unusual for eighteenth-century writers to compare their heroes to gods; and unless the plethoric multiplicity of this kind of imagery is noted, the point of it is lost. Although there is probably no significance in Greaves' being thirty, the age at which Christ began his ministry, or in other faint parallels, there is obvious significance in the number of references made to both his and Aurelia's divinity. Greaves is the first of Smollett's characters to make any reference at all to the divinity in man's nature, that part of him that verges on the upper, ethereal half of the Great Chain of Being. When Ferret accuses him of affectation in his scheme of imitating Don Quixote, Greaves in the course of his denial of any lunacy, declares, "He that counterfeits madness, unless he dissembles, like the elder Brutus, for some virtuous purpose, not only debases his own soul, but acts as a traitor to Heaven, by denying the divinity that is within him" (19). Common and frequent as references to man's divine nature usually are in eighteenth-century literature, this is the first statement of the idea in all of Smollett's works. Allusions to Greaves' divinity are sprinkled freely throughout the novel. The doctor, for example, who examines the boy in Greek and Latin predicts that he "would turn out either a mirror of wisdom, or a monument of

folly; for his genius and disposition were altogether preternatural" (30). Mrs. Darnel insists that "it was Heaven that sent you as an angel to our assistance" (51), and Crowe too reveres Greaves "as being of an order superior to the ordinary race of mankind" (341). It seems significant that Greaves is the first bridegroom who makes no attempt to devour his bride. Instead Smollett says only that "Hymen lighted up his brightest torch at Virtue's lamp, and every star shed its nappiest influence on their heaven-directed union" (340). The nature of that union is again suggested when Mrs. Kawdle reiterates the divinity-in-man motif in her comment on the pair: ". . . as Aurelia esteemed the knight her guardian angel, and he adored her as a semi-deity, nature seems to have intended them for each other; for such sublime ideas exalted them both above the sphere of ordinary mortals" (325).

The number of allusions to the divinity of Aurelia too goes far beyond the number that may be expected in an eighteenth-century novel. The divinity motif appears with every appearance of Aurelia, most of the imagery so pronounced as to call attention to itself and to suggest that it is more than the conventional sort of overpraise of the heroine. And it is not only Greaves who believes that "the perfections of my Aurelia are altogether supernatural" (173), so that he becomes

her "votary" (200) who reverences her king "as the devout anchorite more unreasonably pays to those sainted reliques that constitute the object of his adoration" (200). Tom Clarke too believes that "if e'er one of you was to meet this young lady alone, in the midst of a heath or a common, or any unfrequented place, he would down on his knees, and think he kneeled before some supernatural being" (42-3). Even a landlady instantly sees that the masked and cloaked figure "is something more than a human creature. . . a vision from heaven, a cheribim of beauty. . . a heavenly creature" (182). Nowhere in Smollett's other novels, even with Reynaldo, is there such a profusion of references to divinity in man. Although he does on rare occasion describe the other heroines as being rather divine creatures, nowhere does he distribute these high encomiums with the same prodigality that he does in this novel, both in reference to the hero and to the heroine. His effort to apotheosize the hero's mate as well as the hero makes it seem reasonable to conclude, then, that the divinity-in-man motif is a deliberately built-in thematic device meant to suggest the godlike role that Greaves is trying to assume.

The device is obviously related to Greaves' other unique trait, his Quixotic idealism. If Fathom is a mirror image of modern chivalry, Greaves is, or tries to be, an idealized and romanticized portrait of the older tradition. His ideals are high. He wishes to act according to the ideals of the knight-errant of literature: "to honour and assert the efforts of virtue; to combat vice in all her forms, redress injuries, chastise oppression, protect the helpless and forlorn, relieve the indigent, exert my best endeavors in the cause of innocence and beauty, and dedicate my talents, such as they are, to the service of my country" (18). The demands he makes upon himself in order to accomplish these intentions are equally high: "A knight-errant ought to understand the sciences, to be master of ethics or morality, to be well versed in theology, a complete casuist, and minutely acquainted with the laws of his country. He should. . . be. . . chaste, religious, temperate, polite, and conversable; and have all his passions under the rein, except love, whose empire he should submissively acknowledge" (99). It is the higher half of man's nature divorced from the animal half that makes him capable of professing and attempting to reach such high, abstract, and demanding ideals as these; and Greaves' idealism seems a correlative

of the divinity in his nature.

The elevation of his fine sensibilities is almost parodied later, in the story of the fine lady who was thrown into mortal agony by the sight of a breast of veal and could not behold an entire joint of meat without horror. Like her, Greaves is a man attempting to live wholly as a higher being, one without the promptings of the animal within to cope with, but the impossibility of this is suggested at the beginning of the book when he defends himself against Ferret's charge of affectation. Greaves insists that "I reason without prejudice, can endure contradiction, and, as the company perceives, even bear impertinent censure without passion or resentment. . ." (19). But immediately, when Ferret points out that he may be seized as a vagrant, Greaves leaps up in anger, laying his hand on his sword in a threat of violence, ignores the common sense reason that underlies Ferret's suggestion of this possibility, insists that Ferret has insulted him with an opprobrious epithet, and can hardly restrain himself from trampling him into the dust. This is hardly the reaction of the calm, dispassionate man Greaves has just claimed to be. He is made ridiculous. His behavior is so extreme that all



the company is frightened, and Ferret is temporarily deprived of his faculties, all of which Greaves, who is not really psychotic, sees and tries to amend. He tells Ferret that he has nothing to fear because "the sudden gust of passion is now blown over" and "I will now reason calmly on the observation you have made" (20). Greaves, like a Gulliver gone a little mad trying to imitate the Houyhnhnms, is trying to act wholly according to reason and his ideal nature, but he is constantly betrayed by his emotions, a fact Smollett exposes with persistent, satiric clarity.

This incident begins a pattern of ironic disparity between Greaves' professed intentions and the instinctive and uncontrolled behavior that often betrays them. This knight, who is "to have all his passions under the rein," is no reasonable, temperate, dispassionate dove of peace. When he thinks of Ferret, he says that if he met him, his indignation "would probably impel me to some act of violence" (24), and his words are pronounced with a frenzied wildness of look, which Ferret punctures by reminding him that "love was the soul of chivalry" (25). The frenzy in this incident, with its implied censure of Ferret, does not merely stem from Smollett's annoyance at Dr. John Shebbeare, his enemy with whom he carried on a vitriolic literary feud, as has so often been assumed; it is a part

of a thematic scheme, which repeatedly demonstrates Greaves' inability to repress the unreasoning beast within. "I ride in peace," he tells Ferret, and Ferret points to the basic inconsistency in act and professed intention: "But if you swagger, armed and in disguise, assault me on the highway, or put me in bodily fear for the sake of a jest, the law will punish you in earnest" (21). "But my intention," Greaves cries, "is carefully to avoid all those occasions of offense." "Then," Ferret says reasonably, "you may go unarmed, like other sober people."

But Greaves for most of the novel does not go unarmed like sober people because there are large measures of violence and anger in his character. He punishes Crabshaw for being frightened and then for crying out at the pain of the punishment. Crabshaw later shows him logically that a man in fear is neither guilty or vice nor vicious "since nobody would be afraid if he could help it" (105), an argument that admits the limitations of man's ability to rise above the instinctual behavior of animals, a limitation Greaves refuses to admit. On another occasion Greaves becomes so violent that he vows that if an innkeeper does not answer his questions fast enough he will kill **not** only him but also "exterminate the whole family from the face of the

earth" (211). Greaves acts according to his animal nature when he is hurt, angered or frustrated, as he does when he hears Aurelia's voice in the asylum and runs around distracted "foaming like a lion in the coil" (314-5). Had Smollett been familiar with Freudian theory and terminology, he might have described his hero as a man trying to obey the angelic super-ego and repress the bestial id, which keeps breaking through in expressions of violence and anger. A part of Greaves' madness, then, is simply the result of this unnatural disjunction between the two halves of his nature, a disjunction that the sentimental view of man holds both possible and realistic.

But idealism and sentimentalism divorced from common sense and an awareness of the limitations of man's nature is madness. The divorce makes Greaves blind to his own defects, especially the violence in his own nature, until, as Clarke says, "in a little time his generosity seemed to overleap the bounds of discretion, and even in some cases might be thought tending to a breach of the king's peace" (62). Greaves is made the ridiculous target of Smollett's satire because he goes to extremes. And Clarke apparently speaks for Smollett when he says that "he made the guineas fly in such a manner, as looked more like madness than generosity" (32). To be wholly noble, wholly altruistic, wholly

concerned for others is in Smollett's world madness. Generosity and love for others are fine things in Smollett's view, but to act as if one also had no needs of one's own is simple madness. And Greaves regains his sanity only after he learns that Aurelia still loves him and he resolves to look after his own interests in getting her back. It is then that he lays off the armor, loses his interest in chivalry, "bridles" his impatience, and proceeds to restore happiness to his own life.

"Bridles " suggests the eighteenth-century concept of the reins restraining Plato's horses and thus suggests the truth that Smollett was confronting the sentimentalists with--that altruism and sympathy must be moderated by reason and common sense, and it is only when Greaves regains these that he becomes a standard to be emulated.

In this novel, however, Smollett is not dealing in the simple moral blacks and whites of Ferdinand Fathom. There is a great deal of sad seriousness in his comic treatment of Greaves' madness, for Greaves, despite his absurdity, says much that is of a high order of sanity, truth, reason, justice, and common sense. Ironically, when he does he is apt to be thought a madman and attacked, as he is by the mob at the election. Altruism and high ethical standards are simply not understood in this world, and the common reactions to

the best and sanest that is in Greaves serve as satirical exposes of the society that professes to value behavior based on these high ideals. There is often a question as to which is insane, the madman or the public that deals with him. One good example of this motif comes in the asylum where Greaves questions the doctor and gets nothing but nonsensical circuities in reply to his simple question about the nature of his disorder. Greaves thinks it "very hard that one man should not dare to ask the most ordinary question without being reputed mad, while another should talk nonsense by the hour, and yet be esteemed an oracle" (309). The rational animal, as suggested by the animal imagery that runs through the crowded scenes of Smollett's novels, is as often as not on an ethical and intellectual par with the irrational animals supposedly created his inferiors. The comic treatment of the romantic hero works in this novel, as it does not in Fathom, as an ironic comment on the moral complexities of man's dual nature and on the man who would live according to his higher nature in a world that generally understands only its lower.

The moral complexities appear also in the range of foil characters grouped around Greaves, for in these too the simple moral blacks and whites of Fathom are missing. The rogue's gallery of the earlier novels tends to be replaced by characters who are

gaining in moral complexity and weight, thematic counterpoints for Greaves. Tom Clarke, for example, is also something of the man of feeling, a man so replete with human kindness that he cries when he hears an affecting story. But there are limits to Clarke's impulses to help humanity, and he confines himself to acting with most industry when his client is the widow or orphan, helping where he can, but never going to the mad extremes that Greaves does. Clarke, who is considerably more earthy than Greaves and a Polonius at discourse, is presented with a tolerance for his follies and foibles that makes him likeable, though not dignified enough to be completely admirable. There is little animal imagery applied to him; and since the amount of that imagery applied to a character is so often a clear indication of where he stands in the scale of being with Smollett, Clarke is more in accord with the human values Smollett upholds than any of the other characters.

Crowe, to whom much more animal imagery is applied, is a step down in the scale, as his name suggests. An active, whimsical, impatient, and impetuous man "as little acquainted with the world as a suckling child" (2), Crowe too becomes a knight-errant, but not with the serious purpose that underlies Greaves' foible. Crowe merely wants a frolic. Like Greaves,

Crowe is not amenable to reason and argument, but his madness constitutes a variation on the theme since it stems from a mere desire for excitement rather than from ideals. It seems fitting that he first appears smoking his pipe and looking "more ferocious and terrible than the fire-breathing chimera of the ancients" (82), since his viciousness is mythical, there being nothing either vicious or real about his animal ferocity. Although his "poor crippled joints; two fingers on the starboard, and three on the larboard hand" (6), as deformities usually do in Smollett, indicate a moral deformity in the man, he is not the tiger or bear he thinks Dawdle has called him (247), he is only "a northern crow,--a sea crow; not a crow of prey; but a crow to be preyed upon;--a crow to be plucked. . . ." (300); and he finds himself the victim of others' ferocity more often than not. His desire for knight-errantry, stemming as it does from a sheer urge for a frolic, serves merely as a release of pure animal energy. As such, then, the lack of reason in it, which parallels that in Greaves' behavior, exaggerates and emphasizes the irrational element in the master's chivalry.

Sir Giles Sycamore and his jaunt into knight-errantry is usually noticed only as an amusing invention on Smollett's part, but Sycamore too serves as a thematic

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered.

2. The second step is to gather relevant information and data to address the problem.

3. The third step is to analyze the information and data to identify patterns and trends.

4. The fourth step is to develop a solution or answer based on the analysis.

5. The fifth step is to implement the solution and evaluate its effectiveness.

6. The sixth step is to communicate the results of the analysis and solution.

7. The seventh step is to monitor and evaluate the results of the solution over time.

8. The eighth step is to make adjustments to the solution as needed.

9. The ninth step is to document the process and results of the analysis and solution.

10. The tenth step is to share the results of the analysis and solution with others.

11. The eleventh step is to reflect on the process and results of the analysis and solution.

12. The twelfth step is to learn from the experience and apply it to future problems.

13. The thirteenth step is to continue to monitor and evaluate the results of the solution.

14. The fourteenth step is to make adjustments to the solution as needed.

15. The fifteenth step is to document the process and results of the analysis and solution.

16. The sixteenth step is to share the results of the analysis and solution with others.

17. The seventeenth step is to reflect on the process and results of the analysis and solution.

18. The eighteenth step is to learn from the experience and apply it to future problems.

19. The nineteenth step is to continue to monitor and evaluate the results of the solution.

20. The twentieth step is to make adjustments to the solution as needed.

21. The twenty-first step is to document the process and results of the analysis and solution.

22. The twenty-second step is to share the results of the analysis and solution with others.

23. The twenty-third step is to reflect on the process and results of the analysis and solution.

24. The twenty-fourth step is to learn from the experience and apply it to future problems.

counterpoint to Greaves. Sycamore like Crowe is compared to a mythical beast--the griffin with its wings of an eagle and body of a lion--as an indication of something false or essentially illusionary in his character also. Like the griffin, the knight partakes of two characters. Aurelia perceives, to begin with, that he is "a strange combination of rapacity and confusion. . . of absurdity and good sense" (186). The irresolution in his character is apparent in his being "surrounded and preyed upon by certain vermin called Bad Captains and Buffoons" (186-7) who rifle his pockets, ridicule him, and traduce his character. He sees their knavery and detests them, yet keeps them around because he does not have enough resolution to rid himself of them. He never has enough strength of character to become anything fully and purposefully.

His fault, never noted by critics, is a kind of generosity that grows out of weakness rather than strength. A good example of the essential flabbiness of his character comes when he and Dawdle get into an argument about whether Sycamore ever has any ideas of his own. The argument goes on until Sycamore offers a twenty guinea wager, at which Dawdle reproves him for using the power of money when Dawdle himself has none. Sycamore immediately feels guilty, even though he knows that Dawdle simply wastes and squanders his own money

away, and he gives Dawdle a bank-note. Dawdle comments on his generosity, and Sycamore says it has always been his foible that he cannot refuse even a scoundrel. Dawdle replies that he is good-natured to a fault, a fact that the gift of the bank-note has just illustrated. Sycamore is a prey to these hangers-on, but only because he foolishly offers himself up to them. His "generosity" offers a comment on Greaves' generosity: a generous concern for others should be accompanied by common sense. Sycamore's generosity is only weakness, a weakness that eventually leads him into baseness, as Dawdle talks him into having Greaves kidnapped and confined in the asylum. Like Greaves, Sycamore has "a great deal of the childish romantic in his disposition" (240), although it expresses itself in a different form from Greaves' ridiculous idealism. Both characters illustrate the idea that generosity must be submissive to the reins of a common sense ever alert to the animal within oneself or others, if it is to be a force for good in the world.

At the lower end of the scale is Crabshaw and his beloved Gilbert, both of them serving as the missing, complementary half of Greaves' nature, the animal element. Smollett makes the point that no one can understand why Greaves chooses a perverse and abusive,

universally hated man like Crabshaw to be his squire and constant companion. But Crabshaw, who is presented in terms of animal imagery more often than any of the other characters, represents the brute nature that Greaves is trying to deny. Crabshaw has black, bushy hair that grows to within an inch of his nose, the small glimmering eyes of a Hampshire porker, "two long white sharp-pointed fangs, such as the reader may have observed in the chaps of a wolf, or a full-grown mastiff" (14), a facade with more animal characteristics than the usual bestial grotesques that adorn Smollett's work. He is further compared to a bear, a ewe, a chicken, a flitch of bacon, an elephant, and a greyhound. Smollett tends to use the same kind of imagery for the same kinds of brutal characters throughout the novels; and Crabshaw, like the others of his ilk, represents all animal nature and is so much an animal himself that he growls and quarrels with the horses in the stable.

His love for Gilbert is another technique for suggesting his symbolic function. Gilbert is the most stubborn and vicious horse in the stable, but that only makes Crabshaw love him the more. He kisses Gilbert, hangs on his neck with tears in his eyes at Gilbert's return, calls him Darling, and is more overwhelmed when Ferret as conjurer tells him of Gilbert's fated death



than he is over his own prospective unpleasant end. The love, of course, is based on an affinity so close that love of Gilbert is love of himself. Both of them are symbols of the self-love and bestiality that give rise to evil. Gilbert "seems to have been an unsocial animal, for it does not appear that he ever contracted any degree of intimacy, even with Bronzomarte" (111), and his master is equally unsocial. Self-love, bestiality, and evil are almost synonyms in Smollett's work; and, to indicate this Satanic imagery is applied also profusely to both Crabshaw and Gilbert. Crabshaw in the fight with the soldiers lays about him "like a devil incarnate" (77), Gilbert kicks and plunges "as if the devil was in (his) body" (110), Crabshaw's nurse "sat stewing in this apartment like a damned soul in some infernal bagnio" (218); the list could be extended considerably. The constant punishment, then, inflicted on both Crabshaw and Gilbert by Greaves and everyone else is, symbolically, punishment of the predatory beast within man that makes him behave with self-love and inflict evil on the world. This is suggested too by the alteration of the Don Quixote scheme to allow the punishment to fall on the squire rather than on the knight, who, although his idealism may be extreme and unrealistic, is fighting real evils, not imaginary ones.

the real evils are inherent in man's bestial nature, and it is that which Greaves not only tries to repress completely, but also to punish with the same Juvenalian lashing of the early, savage satire.

Smollett rounds out this roster of thematic counterpoints with Ferret, who also follows the lead of his lowest nature, not out of instinct and an incapacity to act in any other way, as with Crabshaw, but out of a deliberate intellectual stance. The crabbed, perverse, and anti-social Ferret, although he may be a caricature of Smollett's enemy Shebbeare and grow out of Smollett's familiarity with Henry IV, as L. M. Ellison has shown,<sup>5</sup> serves a useful thematic purpose in the scheme of this study. Ferret represents the completely hobbesian view of man's predatory nature and the acceptance of it as natural and irreparable. "I look on mankind to be in a state of nature," he says, "a truth which Hobbes has stumbled upon by accident. I think every man has a right to avail himself of his talents, even at the expense of his fellow-creatures; just as we see fish, and other animals of the creation, devouring one another" (225). Ferret's statement reflects the fundamental vision of man as a bestial creature that pervades Smollett's work, but there is

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<sup>5</sup>"Elizabethan Drama and the works of Smollett," P.M.L.A., 1929, 842-862.

in Smollett no acceptance of this vision as either right, natural, or unalterable. To Smollett it is something to fight, not accept and use to justify the lowest and most selfish behavior for which instinct may provide the impulse. To Smollett it is not a natural condition, but an unnatural, degenerative one growing out of a moral sickness that has led to this degradation.

Although there is some truth in Ferret's philosophical view, as there is a kind of bitter, cynical truth in much that he says, the acceptance of it as a license for predacious behavior makes him contemptible in Smollett's eyes. Ferret's views are entirely negative, inhibitory of any reform, debasing in their influence. He is the other end of the spectrum from Greaves' impossibly idealistic altruism, as Smollett makes clear: "I know," Ferret says, "how far to depend upon generosity, and what is called benevolence--words to amuse the weakminded. . ." (336). Ferret acts wholly according to self-love, as Greaves attempts to act wholly according to social love, and their confrontation is, in a sense, a reflection of the Christ-Satan one as Ferret is the "ungrateful viper, that gnawed the bosom which warmed it into life" (24). The wholly negative quality of his approach to life is made clear at the end when he cannot be content with the goodness and happiness of

the country life and goes back to the metropolis "where he knew there would be always food sufficient for his spleen" (246). The polarity of his position balances out the scale of being in the novel and illustrates the kind of stance toward Smollett's world that would defeat all efforts at betterment.

Betterment, in Smollett's view, can come only by the exercise of generosity or social love tempered by common sense, by active benevolism, and a paternalistic concern for the poor. Greaves' benevolence is not merely emotional, intellectual, or professional; it expresses itself in action that makes changes. "He was, in the literal sense of the word, a careful overseer of the poor; inquiring into the distresses of the people. He repaired their huts, clothed their backs, filled their bellies, and supplied them with necessaries for exercising their industry and different occupations" (25). In spite of the ridiculous lengths to which he goes, Greaves' efforts are laudable and he effects real changes, as when he relieves the victims of Gobble's oppression and gets justice and compensation for them. Cured of his folly, he returns to the country where tempering generosity with reason results in felicity for the whole countryside.

Generous love of others and service in their behalf afford the only protection man has in Smollett's bestial world. Greaves himself is really helpless in the madhouse and gains his freedom only through the efforts of Clark and Crowe, whose affection motivates the kind of effort it takes to free him from so difficult a predicament, as he has freed others. Protection comes only through mutual dependency and the bonds of affection and concern. After Greaves rescues Aurelia, he denies that she has any obligation, with an assertion that points to man's essential duty: "you greatly overrate my services, which have been rather the duties of common humanity" (326). Smollett stands with Henry Fielding on the necessity of active benevolence and good works; his vision is only more academic and less optimistic than Fielding's. With his animal-prey-food imagery Smollett, as in the other novels, is trying to shock man into behaving with active benevolence rather than jolly him into it, warning his audience against both the bright absurd fallacies of the sentimentalist and the dark equally absurd fallacies of the Hobbesian. One asks too much and the other asks too little.

The satirist ridicules and exposes in order to correct and reform, and Smollett, like most satirists of his day, believed men generally redeemable. This truth becomes clear if the difference between Greaves' childhood and that of the other heroes is noted.

Roderick is born with an impulse toward social love, and from the time he is beaten into sullen insensibility at school to his adventures on the continent he is discouraged from developing his generosity by the treatment he is almost universally accorded. Peregrine, conceived by a phlegmatic monstrosity incapable of feeling, is born knowing of man's predacity but never comes to see his own. Fathom is most deliberately taught to prey on other men. Greaves, however, is the first hero to have a normal experience of parental love. Mrs. Oakley says that Greaves' parents were always virtuous, humane, and benevolent. His father is an affectionate man who sheds tears at hearing of the plight of a starving widow and her children, and encourages his son's generosity and "feeling heart." He embraces his son "with great tenderness" (35) for being concerned for the poor. Greaves learns to give love because he receives it. Like the children in Greaves' domains who are properly cared for and loved and become thus "frisking lambs" (36), not predators, Greaves has social love because he has had parental love. Men are not, then, by nature designed to be wholly animal and selfish. They are born with the potential for altruism, humanitarianism, generosity, and social love. It is society and its institutions which dehumanize them, which prevent the growth of their human potential, which stifle



the generous or good impulse and encourage the predatory one. Smollett's view of man is dark, but it is not wholly pessimistic.

what society can make of man is clearly illustrated by the Clewlines, who are used to portray the thin line between the human being and the brute beast, the civilized being and the animal which lies just beneath the surface. When they enter the prison they are genteel people who command respect from the other inhabitants. Mrs. Clewline is mortified by the public arrest, and only the extremity of their situation drives her to kneel in the street to her barbaric father, who has had her husband jailed for debt. She maintains her dignity and strength through most of their degrading prison experience, but after their indigence results in the loss of their son, distraction and despair turn to gross brutality and degradation. It takes eighteen months to turn a lady of fashion and an officer of honor and gallantry into brutal, savage, wild animals, stripped to the waist and fighting each other for coins, their dehumanization complete. Smollett blames society and its predacious members and its institutions for their descent to bestial savagery. A consistent theme in his work is that man will be human only when he is treated humanely.

In this novel Smollett enlarges on this theme by making connections between man's predatory nature and his institutions in a larger and more fundamental way than he does in any of the earlier novels. This is partly a novel of social protest, and instead of focusing wholly on the hero's adventures, Smollett stops for set pictures of contemporary social ills. In law, for instance, it is not the institution itself that Smollett condemns but the individuals who administer it. Like the clerk of the assize who sells the pardons left with him rather than using them to exercise clemency and justice, the law is only so good as the man who administers it. Justice Gobble, as his name suggests, represents the predatory individual who transforms society's protective institutions into predacious oppressors of the people. Gobble preys on one man who did not vote the way he wanted, drives him to drink, ruins his business, and finally imprisons him. Gobble ruins a publican who will not give him a gelding he had bred for his own use, while he protects poachers so long as they furnish him with free game. The cannibalism of his behavior is illuminated in the eating imagery of Mrs. Oakley's plea for the return of her son, destroyed by Gobble, "Let him disgorge my substance which he hath devoured; let him restore to my widowed arms the child. . ." (144). The entire episode with Gobble and his victims is

designed to illustrate the idea that the law of the jungle in which the strong eat the weak prevails where the predacious man prevails in the courts.

Smollett makes the same point about political institutions. Government can become a monster predator preying on its citizens, as Ferret suggests when he speaks of a "standing army at home, that eat up their fellow-subjects" (22). In an election set piece Smollett portrays the predaciousness that distorts the nature of political institutions from their original purpose. Quickset and the fox hunters, those perennial symbols of the predatory man for Smollett, pervert the forces of government. Where Quickset is guilty of brute stupidity, Vanderpelt is a venal predator who wants to buy the people in one market and sell them in another, and Greaves, seeing what animals they are, tells the crowd not to elect "an illiterate savage. . . who has scarce ever travelled beyond the excursion of a fox-chase, whose conversation never rambles farther than his stable, his kennel, and the barnyard" (121).

Smollett's distrust of broad political suffrage and fear of mob rule was based on his view of the ever present threat of the brute just beneath the human surface, particularly in the lower classes. In this scene Greaves gives a speech appealing to reason, common sense, and principle, or to what is most

rational in man, and the mob looks on him as a "monster" and throws stones at him. Man being the only animal who knows of the future, Greaves reminds them of their responsibilities to posterity, but his plea falls on ears as deaf to all such admonishments as a brute's. Reminding them of the divine element in their nature, he speaks of their "sacred trust" (122), and they merely snarl. Greaves finally calls them a "pack" of venal scoundrels, and cries out to them in vain, "I spoke to you as men" (125). He has spoken to men and met only snarling animal bestiality; the whole episode underlines the unpleasant truths about man's behavior that Smollett consistently exposes. Government becomes a monster only because brutish people allow the brutish predator to make them his prey.

Society's institutions for the care of the mentally ill also can become mere traps for the use of the more predacious members of society. The asylum in which Greaves is confined is a mere cage containing "fathers kidnapped by their children, wives confined by their husbands, gentlemen of fortune sequestered by their relations, and innocent persons immured by the malice of their adversaries" (121). The asylum as Smollett presents it is one more human institution perverted by the predacious behavior of the men who control it. The institutions of society, created in order to

provide safety and care for its members, merely add to the precariousness of life in Smollett's jungle world. "How little reason," says Greaves, "have we to boast of the blessings enjoyed by the British subject, if he holds them on such a precarious tenure. . ." (212).

Man must be ever aware of the beast beneath the surface; he must be ever on the alert for its appearance; he must ever keep it under control, not only in the individual but in the very institutions of society. Smollett's satirical purpose in this novel is to expose that beast, to uncover him wherever he appears, and to expose the ridiculous folly of the sentimentalist who would put blinders over the eyes of men and lie to them about the innocuous goodness of their natures. In that, Smollett believes, lies only danger, further degradation, and ultimate chaos. Smollett as satirist strips the dangerously deceptive facade away from every element in the world of Greaves in a new experiment with the man-as-predator theme.

But although Smollett deals with the old themes there is a new note of humorous, tolerant, balanced maturity in this novel that anticipates by ten years the mellowed Smollett of the last novel. Justice Gobble is balanced by Mr. Elmy, who administers law in his bailiwick with reason, knowledge, justice, and humanity.

The apothecary who makes as much as he can from Crabshaw's unfortunate accident and the publican who believes that this is right because "every man must eat, tho at another's expense" (216) are balanced by the physician who refuses to use his office as a means of preying on his fellow men and will prescribe only the absolute minimum of medicine and attention necessary to cure the patient. A full measure of generous and good characters alleviates the painfully dark picture painted in the early novels. The balance is reinforced by a lessening of the shock and anger that burns through the pages of the early novels also. Man's foibles and his animal behavior, though they are fully exposed, are treated with a new kind of tolerance and humorous distance, anticipating the modifications and qualifications of the man-as-predator theme as it makes its final appearance in Humphry Clinker.

## CHAPTER VI

### HUMPHRY CLINKER

Created half to rise and half to  
fall:  
Great lord of all things, yet a  
prey to all;  
Sole judge of truth, in endless  
error hurled:  
The glory, jest, and riddle of  
the world.

-Alexander Pope, "An  
Essay on Man"

## CHAPTER VI

### HUMPHRY CLINKER

Smollett's last novel, written near the end of his life, was probably started in Bath and London and concluded at Il Giardino, his villa near Leghorn in Italy. While grieving over the loss of his only daughter and suffering what proved to be his last illness, Smollett wrote what was to be considered his masterpiece, Humphry Clinker, using both some of the old elements from the early novels and some new ones that make this novel different from all the others. Most of the differences are in form, however, not in theme. In spite of the adoption of the epistolary form, the concentration on a small group of characters, and the strengthening of the plot element, this last novel returns to the journey motif of the earlier novels, using it as a vehicle for social satire. This novel, like the others, exposes the predatory nature of man and reveals the animal beneath the elegantly appareled exterior. But Smollett solves the problem of using an internal satirist successfully by using observers whose points of view either justify the satirist's indignation or provide a more objective report of the object of it. As Ronald Paulson<sup>1</sup> pointed out Bramble is the

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<sup>1</sup>"Satire in the Early Novels of Smollett", Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LIX, (1960), 381-402.

ultimate answer to Smollett's search for an internal satirist through a mechanism analyzed by Byron Gassman<sup>2</sup>, that is, by letting Jery's objective reporting bear out Bramble's criticisms of society and make them credible. Bramble, like Greaves, derives from the eighteenth-century man of feeling, but he is a splenetic one far more believable and realistic than Greaves, so that his benevolence serves as a standard in the novel rather than as a further object of mild satire. The problem of providing a positive pole in the novel, a standard by which the objects of the satire may be judged, is also solved in other ways. For one thing, the animal nature of man is dealt with more realistically and more tolerantly. Secondly, the novel demonstrates the positive force of kindness, generosity, and concern for others as it works in familial relationships, friendships, hospitality, and finally in society as a whole. It is a novel which argues, as Jery says, that "kindness is the essence of good-nature and humanity" (237).

The world of Humphry Clinker is still to an extent a menagerie, many of its denizens being the predators that roamed menacingly through the pages of the early novels. There are Dutton and Hibernian who loses the heiress to him, the usual predatory servants like

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<sup>2</sup>"The Economy of Humphry Clinker", Tobias Smollett: Bicentennial Essays Presented to Lewis M. Knapp, New York: Oxford, 1971, pp. 155-168.



Bernard's "legion of supernumerary domestics, who had preyed so long upon the vitals of my friend" (342), and politicians "as gracious as a hog, greedy as a vulture, and thievish as a jackdaw" (97). There are those who prey on the vain, like Dutton, and those who prey on the weak, like Mrs. Baynard. Her prey, Baynard, is another illustration of a theme dealt with in Ferdinand Fathom, that ignorant and unwary goodness is simply weakness. Baynard has a "heart glowing with all the warmth of friendship and humanity" (287), but he is too weak to take care of his own interests in the face of Mrs. Baynard's foolish predaciousness and is almost ruined before her death and Bramble's interference saves him. There are the despicably hard of heart, like the landlord who refuses Humphry charity because his sickness and raggedness disgrace the stable. There are the grotesques, like Micklewhimmen, extravagant creations that leave the reader uneasy at the revelation of the animal just under the jacket. Micklewhimmen preys on the foolish hopes of women by using flattery and feigning illness, gaining from them constant attention to his bodily comforts. To his "selfish brutality" (176) nothing counts except self preservation, and when he thinks the building is on fire, he pushes even women down to clear a path for himself. His defense, like Ferret's justification of his behavior, is that man is basically an

animal and naturally and rightfully acts like one. In emergencies, he says, the faculty of reason is suspended, and instinct, "which we have in common with brute creation," acts only "for the preservation of the individual, and that by the most expeditious and effectual means" (177). Bramble, who always sees the animal done up in ribbons and lace, wonders if the world has always been as contemptible as it now seems to him, if the "rotten parts of human nature" have always been so easily observable. The predators and other animals are as easily observable in this novel as in the early ones, so that the often-noted softening and mellowing in Smollett is not a matter of his having changed his opinion of the prevalence of animal behavior among mankind. The original dark vision of society and its institutions as primarily loose organizations of prey and predators is still present in the last novel.

What has changed is Smollett's attitude toward this society. Since the mature Smollett portrays man as not wholly bestial, the episode with Dr. Linden can be read as a kind of unconscious satire of the young Smollett, who hung over the close-stool of human nature. There is in this last work a new acceptance of man and a new tolerance of that part of his nature he shares with brute creation. His capacity for kindness, generosity, and benevolence is given a new emphasis, and the animal element is treated as a humorous weakness, even his predacious self-love being

more often comic than threatening, more a sad limitation than a vicious dominating trait that damns him utterly.

To a minor extent this change in attitude is reflected in the imagery. The early imagery most often suggested the predatory beast in man, lions, bears, tigers, foxes, sharks, as predominating. The imagery in this novel, not so prevalent as in the early works, is as often as not revelatory of the comic aspects of man's relationship with the animal kingdom or of the weaknesses he shares with the more helpless members of that kingdom. More inventive and original in this last work, Smollett produces images that make these qualities vivid. Among people at Bath, for example, Bramble sees "a few broken-winded parsons, waddling like so many crows along the North Parade" (72). The helplessness and weakness of man is suggested when Bramble tells Lewis of his futile efforts to get away from the crowded streets of Bath into the clearer air of the highlands. "We poor valetudinarians," he says, "pant and struggle, like so many Chinese gudgeons, gasping in the bottom of a punchbowl" (64). A new lightness in some of the images reflects a Smollett no longer so outraged and indignant as the Smollett that lashed mankind in the early novels.

Some of this new tolerance is also illustrated in the portrayal of Mr. S\_\_**[mollett]**\_\_ and his weekly dinner

guests. What all of them have in common is an affectation that veils their animal nature. One affects spectacles, which no animal wears; another uses crutches though he is physically dexterous; another stands with his back to the window in pretense of disgust at the sight of the country and faints at the sight of a cauliflower in order to hide a youth when he "had many years run wild among asses on a common" (124); another stutters to hide his lack of wit and intelligence; and another pretends distraction in imitation of profound human thought processes of which he is incapable. All of them, however, are preying on Mr. Smollett for food, help in publishing, money, clothes, or reputation through the reflection of Smollett's fame. Although Dick Ivy attributes Smollett's tolerance of them to foolishness, weak pride, and the enjoyment of exposure, Jerry's discovery of Ivy's rancor at Smollett leaves the reader with the impression that it is really attributable to Smollett's kind heart and generous nature. Certainly a Peregrine would have made them the butt of his "practical satire," they being his typical sort of targets, but Smollett now merely smiles.

Significant also is the fact that the tendency to feast on human ridiculousness, as Peregrine did for the satisfaction of his ego and thirst for excitement, is now embodied in Jerry, who is strictly an observer of

human folly, never a chastiser of it. All of Jerry's violence comes in his attempts to protect his sister, which, rather than making it the selfish and instinctive savagery of Peregrine, makes it a human concern for the honor of the family. Jerry never makes an effort to expose the foolishness of mankind or to force anyone into appearing ridiculous. He is a mere bystander who laughs at spectacles like an attorney on crutches kicking the shins of a lord or a fat landlady squeezing through a crowd to greet her brandymerchant. "I cannot account for my being pleased with these incidents," Jerry says, "any other way than by saying, they are truly ridiculous in their own nature, and serve to heighten the humour in the farce of life, which I am determined to enjoy as long as I can. These follies, that move my uncle's spleen, excite my laughter" (49).

The similarity between this observer of folly and the earlier chastiser of it is suggested in Smollett's use of food imagery. Ridiculous human beings are food for his enjoyment. Humphry is "an English pudding, composed of good wholesome flour and suet" while Dutton is "a syllabub of iced froth, which, though agreeable to the taste, has nothing solid or substantial" (208). Lismahago is "a high flavoured dish. . .it was our fortune to feed upon. . .the best part of three days" (191). At another time he sees Lismahago as "a crab-apple in a hedge, which

I have been tempted to eat for its flavor, even while I was disgusted by its austerity" (203), and again Jerry says that Lismahago's temper, "which had been soured and shrivelled by disappointment and chagrin, is now swelled out, and smoothed like a raisin in a plum-porridge" (347). But Jerry never goes hunting for this sort of food, and when he finds it, he merely smiles at it privately with his friend. He never leaps on it to satisfy his ego or his appetite for excitement, never punishes it. His tolerance reflects Smollett's own mellowed tolerance of the lower behavior of men.

Because of his tolerance Jerry functions to provide a more objective report of the objects of Bramble's disgust or anger. Jerry is far more detached, accepting man's animal nature and his weaknesses and follies and looking for his strengths and humanity. The smells at bath that make Bramble faint do not perturb Jerry in the least. Where Bramble is outraged by the company at the Duke of N-----'s levee and finds them stupid, immoral, and unfit for conversation, Jerry neither overpraises nor condemns contemptuously. Bramble is incensed at seeing Clinker preaching to a congregation containing both Tabitha and Lydia, but Jerry is only amused. He becomes, then, a reliable reporter by whose comments Bramble's may be measured. Smollett makes this clear when he has

Jery write, "Without all doubt the greatest advantage acquired in travelling and perusing mankind in the original, is that of dispelling those shameful clouds that darken the faculties of the mind, preventing it from judging with candour and precision" (352). Byron Gassman argues that Jery's reports confirm Bramble's judgments, and often they do, as in Jery's reports of the duke of A-----'s levee. But there are many occasions when Jery's report alleviates much of the harshness of Bramble's, as, for instance, at Harrigate. Bramble says they are "crowded together in paltry inns, where the few tolerable rooms are monopolized by the friends and favorites of the house, and all the rest of the lodgers are obliged to put up with dirty holes. . . ." (165). Doubt is cast on the justice of this severity when Jery reports that the lodgers at the separate inns eat together, having breakfast in deshabbille, everyone being "sociable and familiar," a kind of "family" among whom "there seems to be a general disposition. . .to maintain good-fellowship, and promote the purposes of humanity, in favour of those who come hither on the score of health" (161). In fact the manner of living there was so agreeable, Jery reports in his July 1 letter, that he left the place with regret. It seems obvious then that while the internal satirist Bramble reports the worst, rages, and lashes those whom he meets, Jery serves

as the rational norm, providing a more objective, tolerant, and just view of mankind, certainly a more balanced one, and probably the one really held by the older, more tolerant Smollett.

The new acceptance of man seems obvious too in this last treatment of the purely predatory being. Tabitha, who has a cat's name, green eyes, and a cat's fully predatory nature, is handled with more humor and tolerance than her direct predecessor, Timothy Crabshaw. Being the closest to the purely animal, she, quite appropriately, writes the fewest letters; but what is reported of her by the others is one long list of manhunts. She pounces on every eligible male in sight: Ulic Macmilligut, an "old hound, that, finding her carrion, has quitted the scent" (60), a lame parson "too much a fox to be inveigled into any snare that she can lay for his affection" (162), Dr. Lewis, a Mr. Maclellan, Sir George Coluhoun, Martin, Mr. Barton, Baynard, Micklewhimmen, and finally Lismahago. The list is long, suggesting that Bramble is right when he says that predacious conduct is the result of "the instinctive efforts of her constitution" (344). Her efforts, however, being generally unsuccessful, are humorous since there are no victims.

It seems not to have been noticed how directly Tabitha grows out of Smollett's earlier creation, Timothy Crabshaw, who also represented pure animal nature.

One way this "fantastical animal" (12), "that wild-cat my sister Tabby" (14) resembles Crabshaw is that she, like him, is so perverse in her nature that she seems to "find some diabolical enjoyment in being dreaded and detested" (61). Crabshaw too was so perverse he was universally disliked. Like Crabshaw, also, she has a demonic quality, and satanic imagery is applied to her almost as liberally as it is to him. She is a "domestic daemon" (77), "the devil incarnate come to torment me for my sins" (12). Religion is something she uses only to ensnare her prey. Stingy, malicious, and greedy, she, like Crabshaw, can love only an animal. She parallels him in her love for Chowder, taking him for airings in the carriage, feeding him nothing but white meat, concerning herself constantly with his illnesses and constipation. Like Crabshaw's love for Gilbert, her love for Chowder is based on the mutual recognition of her own kind, a point Jerry makes when he says, "One would imagine she had distinguished this beast with her favour on account of his ugliness and ill-nature; if it was not, indeed, an instinctive sympathy between his disposition and her own" (62). But unlike Crabshaw, she does soften in the course of the novel, and both the softening, the lack of brutal harshness in the comedy, and the good humor with which Smollett rewards her efforts at the end suggest again Smollett's new tolerance toward man and woman.

Since Tabitha represents the animal part of man's nature, it seems fitting that her marriage is consummated with the one character to whom food and animal imagery is applied most consistently, Lismahago. Contentious in spirit like most of Smollett's other representatives of man's lowest nature, Lismahago is compared to many kinds of food, to insects, to a squirrel, and most often to a bear, tame, but easily and quickly made wild when teased. The amount of this kind of imagery applied to him should make critics somewhat cautious about the degree to which his judgments on things are accepted as Smollett's, since Smollett consistently, as has been shown, uses this imagery to suggest the degree of bestiality in the nature of the character. However, even in the portrayal of Lismahago a new degree of acceptance of man's brutish and predacious elements is easily discernible. Just as Bramble has affection for Tabitha, regardless of what she is, so Bramble and Jerry too come to have a certain amount of affection for Lismahago. Jerry reports that when he begins sharing life with another, Lismahago becomes increasingly easy and obliging, and Jerry looks forward to having his company for life, as a friend and relative this time, not just as food for entertainment. The wildcat and the bear being now tamed and domesticated, Bramble has "great hopes that he and Tabby will be as happily paired

as any two draught animals in the kingdom" (559), the new image suggesting animal nature tamed, domesticated, useful, and accepted with fondness. These are the first representatives of animal nature to be so rewarded at the end of a book, and the fact alone shows a new kind of gentleness in Smollett's treatment of the motif.

Contrasting directly with these draught animals as the representative of high human values, despite his making his first appearance with a bare tail, is Humphry Clinker. It is ironic that Tabitha should be so offended at the sight of his bare posteriors, because just as she represents those values closest to the bestial ones, Humphry represents all of the highest ones, gratitude, humanity, purity, generosity, and loyalty. When Tabitha calls him a "mangy hound. . . taken from a dunghill" (83), both the animality and the dirt are her own qualities, not his; and her antagonism toward him is as natural to her as her love for Chowder. It is the instinctive antagonism of one creature for another of an alien species. Humphry's extreme generosity and humility make him her antithesis. A love child, a dead ash or clinker from a dead fire, Humphry is so grateful for a guinea and a few clothes that he is willing to follow Bramble for life for nothing and continues to spurn all material and selfish values throughout the journey. His love has an unselfish,

spiritual quality, a fact suggested at the end when the predatory cat is thrown into the bedroom and Humphry "laid aside all carnal thoughts" (349) in order to pray. He cannot consummate his marriage until the cat is removed. Symbolically, this is both appropriate and suggestive because Humphry throughout has been the representative of a less physical or animal kind of love.

It is generally assumed that the only satiric purpose Humphry serves is that of ridiculing the "new light" Methodists, but if he is regarded in the light of Smollett's earlier portrayals of good figures, another satiric purpose immediately suggests itself. Though less so than Strap, Humphry is a ridiculous figure, primarily because in his extreme simplicity and imprudence he is not well fitted for survival in Smollett's kind of world. He represents, in a sense, values made bastards and outcasts by the kind of society that has made this bestial world by professing values it does not really respect. As good human nature bastardized, Humphry makes a kind of symbolic satiric target, the older Smollett having developed his art enough so that he no longer deals with simple blacks and whites. Humphry is so simple, humble, grateful, generous, and loyal that he is difficult to believe in. Human beings, because of the animal element with its instinctive impulse toward self-survival, seldom reach such levels of selflessness as this. Humphry's "new light" is symbolic of the divine in man which keeps him striving

toward selfless values he is never quite capable of reaching. Thus, the "new light" serves something of the same purpose as Greaves' madness, as a comment on the ridiculousness of aiming idealistically and unreasonably much too high. This is suggested when Bramble tells him "the light of reason" (138) has no part in his "new light." Humphry replies that he is no more than a beast in comparison to Bramble. His statement is paradoxically both true and untrue. He has the higher human virtues in a kind of pristine purity unattainable by Bramble, but he lacks Bramble's intelligence and common sense, qualities also most distinctly human and necessary ingredients in any prescription for an ideal way to live.

That Bramble's limiting and debilitating animal nature is very much dominant at the beginning of the novel is suggested by a number of parallels that are drawn between him and Chowder. Bramble writes Dr. Lewis that "so far from being dropsical, I am as lank in the belly as a grey-hound" (25), this being in itself suggestive of his animal nature and standing as the lone piece of animal imagery applied to Bramble, coming at the beginning of the journey, it may be noted, when his animal nature does dominate him. Just as Dr. Linden thinks Bramble dropsical, "the doctors think he (Chowder) is threatened with a dropsy" (45). The novel opens with

a statement about Bramble's constipation: "I have told you over and over, how hard I am to move" (5). In the next letter Tabitha writes to ask that Chowder's laxative be sent because the "poor creature has been terribly consuprated ever since we left huom" (6). Bramble at bath "made wry faces at the drinking, and I'm afraid he will leave it off" (40) while "Chowder seems to like them no better than the squire" (43). The parallel is suggested again when Jerry looks into the coach and can "scarce refrain from laughing, when I looked into the vehicle, and saw that animal sitting opposite my uncle, like any other passenger. The squire, ashamed of his situation, blushed to the eyes. . ."(79). This is another occasion when it becomes obvious that Smollett was much more than a reporter with a vigorous style; the art of this symbolic parallelism suggests clearly at the very beginning of the novel that Bramble is a man who, despite his fine human impulses, has let the animal part of his nature become dominant.

Bramble's journey is one during the course of which the physical debilities of his animal nature are cured, a point made by several critics. Sheridan Baker has discussed the novel as a satire against social climbing and social disorder in which man is viewed as a cosmic and comic contradiction, his alimentary canal being the

comic leveler, Bramble's journey being one from sickness to health, from clogged to unclogged.<sup>3</sup> B. L. Reid followed with "Smollett's Healing Journey"<sup>4</sup>, developing Professor Baker's last point in further detail by illustrating the novel's movement from negative to positive, constipation to purgation, sickness to health. Recently H. C. Evans has again discussed the return to health, but this time as a return to a genuine and morally healthier version of the rural-Augustan ideal.<sup>5</sup> At the risk of repetition some of these points must be covered again in order to demonstrate Smollett's new and successful attempt to place within the novel a rational norm or standard by which the satirical targets may be measured. During the course of this journey, Bramble learns the positive and beneficial force of kindness, generosity, and responsibility for others as it works in familial relationships, friendships, hospitality, and finally in society as a whole.

At the beginning of the journey Bramble is plagued in both mind and body, suffering physical discomforts, irritated by everything, and annoyed by everyone. He has a

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<sup>3</sup>"Humphry Clinker as Comic Romance", Essays on the Eighteenth-Century Novel. (Bloomington, 1965), 154-164.

<sup>4</sup>Virginia Quarterly Review, XXXI (1965), 549-70.

<sup>5</sup>"Humphry Clinker: Smollett's Tempered Augustinism," Criticism, IX (1967), 257-74.

kind heart; he is quickly moved by Lydia's tears in the opening uproar over Wilson and becomes all tenderness and compassion. But for the most part his generosity is confined to the giving of material things. He orders his grain to be sold to the poor at a shilling a bushel under the market price, orders a widow to be given a cow and forty shillings to clothe her children, and says that a poacher is not to be prosecuted, only fined money to be given to the parish, all within the first pages of the book. Like Peregrine, he has advanced as far as being generous with money he does not need, but he has to learn to be generous with his self also. In Smollett what is most distinctly human is what is most distinct from the greedy concerns of the animal self; and kindness and generosity, or social love, means sharing a part of the self as well as one's goods.

When Jerry says that "when his spirits are not exerted externally, they seem to recoil and prey upon himself" (49-50), he is identifying the cause of Bramble's illness. Bramble is a recluse, a man who says that he has not dwelt with men for thirty years. He does not seek out others; at Bath he goes to the pump room only to pick up "continual food for ridicule and satire" (33). Having no toleration at all for human folly, he is horrified by seeing guests scrambling to the table, screaming, and

struggling for nose-gays and dessert. His hatred of humanity is revealed by his horror at the open sores of the bathers in the water and at the idea that the bathers' dirt and various decaying bodies are getting into the drinking water, by his imagining that he is sleeping in sheets slept in by the sick and dying, and particularly by his fainting at the smell of a crowd of people in a ballroom. The eighteenth-century was a time of rillth generally, so that it is sometimes difficult to know what is satire and what is realism, but it seems obvious that Bramble's reactions to people are exaggerated and extreme. They seem quite clearly a deliberate part of Smollett's effort to illustrate Bramble's misanthropy, an attitude toward humanity openly avowed by Bramble:

But what have I to do with the human species except a very few friends, I care not if the whole was--Heark ye, Lewis, my misanthropy increases every day--The longer I live, I find the folly and fraud of mankind grow more intolerable. . . (47)

Bramble's physical illls are the result of his mental ill, his misanthropy. This psychosomatic theory of medicine is made clear in the June 14th London letter when Bramble writes: "I find my spirits and my health affect each other reciprocally--that is to say, every thing that discomposes my mind produces a correspondent disorder in my body" (154). Bramble is ill because he

needs the curative powers of ties of affection. He is a solitary being who finds a family a vexation. As he writes to Dr. Lewis, "As if I had not plagues enough of my own, those children of my sister are left for me a perpetual source of vexation--what business have people to get children to plague their neighbors?" (5). One form of social love Bramble has to learn is family love, and his cure comes as he expands and learns to accept his family.

The first addition to Bramble's family is Humphry, to whom he says, "I have a good mind to take thee into my family" (84). Later, of course, he learns that Humphry really is a part of his blood family, but even before he knows that he defies Tabitha when she forces him to make a choice between Humphry and her and Chowder. The confrontation here marks a turning point when Bramble utterly rejects his bestial selfishness as symbolized in Chowder and turns toward human and familial values. Immediately afterwards he reports bettering health and peace of mind. It seems significant that it is at Dennison's that he learns that Humphry is his son. Dennison has attained a domestic rural felicity to which Bramble has been "aspiring these twenty years in vain" (320). Dennison has married for love, not for property, and although he has had temporary disagreements with his son, he reports that his son is a joy to him and an asset to the world. His fundamental conception of man's

position in the universe is a comfortable familial one in which the earth is an "indulgent mother, that yielded her fruits to all her children without distinction" (322), so Dennison serves to remind the reader that men need not prey on one another if they limit their animal appetites. They may live as a human family, just as he tries to live in domestic peace with his intimate family. And at the same time that Humphry takes his place as Bramble's son, the Dennisons become part of the family with the marriage of George and Lydia. It might also be pointed out that symbolically, with the acceptance of Humphry, Bramble is accepting simple, good human nature and acknowledging it. He becomes as willing to acknowledge family as Jerry, who is willing to have Mansel's progeny sworn to him and to take financial responsibility for it. He is reunited with something that has been needed for his mental health. Family love is something he has been learning through the course of the journey, a point illustrated when Lydia's concern and suffering at the fear of his having drowned in the river moves Bramble to proclaim "I hope I shall live long enough to shew how sensible I am of your affection" (315). The flurry of marriage at the end then simply culminates the growth of his family through the novel.

Accepting a family cures ills of both disposition and body. In the second half of the book, starting

with the appearance of Lismahago, Tabitha softens and becomes more human, even contributing to the charity given to the blacksmith's widow. At the Dennison's, where Tabitha is finally engaged "the vinegar of Mrs. Taboy is remarkably dulcified" (333), as her predatory, bestial nature is subdued by human familial love.

Lismahago too softens with the approach of marriage; his "harsh reserve, which formed a disagreeable husk about his character, begins to peel off" (359). And Bramble, of course, is much healed at the end of the journey, no longer feeling his family to be a vexation.

The relationship between the growth of his family and his returning health has been remarked before, but the part played by the motif of friendship in enlarging this theme has not. Most of the early letters either begin or end with professions of friendship and appreciations of its value, a theme which is reiterated throughout the book. Lydia is continually professing undying friendship and talking of the effort she intends to make to insure its continuance, while the others speak of friendship frequently. Bramble himself has let most of his friendships fade, having he tells Dr. Lewis only one or two still active ones. And there is a strong pattern of reunions in the book. At Bath, Bramble renews his acquaintance with Quin, and consulting the subscription book, he sees the names of several old friends,

some that he has not seen since his youth. He is full of joy at his reunion with near-Admiral Balderick, a companion of his youth, Colonel Cockril, and a college chum, Reginald Bently. They dine together, and Bramble reports that "truly, this was the most happy day I have passed these twenty years" (56). In a series of such reunions Smollett develops the theme that man has only man and needs friendship, as Bramble either meets or goes to visit one after another of his old friends, learning anew that there is "nothing of equal value with the genuine friendship of a sensible man" (38), as he tells Dr. Lewis early on the trip. The meeting with his old friends makes him see "the power of friendship, the sovereign cordial of life" (56). Dennison too is an old friend, and the reunions culminate with Bramble's taking on the money worries of his old friend Baynard and assuming the responsibilities of his household for him, a thing unthinkable at the beginning when even his own family was a "plague" and "vexation." Baynard too believes that "Friendship is undoubtedly the most precious balm of life" (293); and Bramble learns the curative powers of that balm. When he actively gives of himself in friendship, Bramble is "disposed to bid defiance to gout and rheumatism" since "I have been performing the duties of friendship, that required a great deal of exercise, from which I hope to derive some benefit" (33).

He benefits from more than the exercise, reporting after bringing Baynard to Dennison's with him, "I really believe it would not be an easy task to find such a number of individuals assembled under one roof, more happy than we are at present" (343). Part of his cure is merely a matter of strengthening and extending friendships, which link the travelers in a network of kindness and generosity, even the introduction of Ferdinand and Melville serving to suggest the pervasiveness of such bonds, bonds which stand as standards which sharpen the satirical thrust at the ingratitude of men like Paunceford for generosity extended in friendship.

Although the learning of love and friendship demonstrates the more human and positive side of human nature, animals too know these. Smollett, therefore, adds another dimension to this presentation of man's positive human potential by treating the theme of hospitality, which is another way of extending kindness and generosity. This theme helps to unite the Scottish tour to the rest of the novel, a union critics have found difficult to achieve. The Scottish tour gives Smollett an opportunity to contrast poor hospitality, at which Smollett's satirical thrusts are savage, and good hospitality, found mostly away from the society Smollett is basically satirizing. Among their English hosts is the foxhunting cousin who says and does at his own table "whatever

gratifies the brutality of his disposition" (164). A "hog" who enjoys being scratched so that the blood runs, he keeps insolent and rapacious servants, so that Bramble reports that he could have dined better and cheaper at a fashionable tavern in Pall Mall. The "brute is sometimes so very powerful in him" (165) that he is despised by his family and reviled by his guests. This grotesque portrait is meant as a trenchant comment on old English hospitality, which Bramble points out is never mentioned by foreigners except by way of irony and sarcasm, since "we are generally looked upon by foreigners, as a people totally destitute of this virtue" (164). The attack on the British host's lack of kindness and generosity is continued with the visit to Mr. Pimpernel, "a brutal husband" and an "unnatural parent" (171), whose miserliness makes his hospitality so mean that they find it hard to suffer through.

Smollett loses no opportunity to throw into harsh glaring light the predatory behavior that detracts from hospitality in English society. Lord Oxmington, another of the English hosts is "much more remarkable for his pride and caprice, than for his hospitality and understanding; and indeed, it appeared, that he considered his guests merely as objects to shine upon, so as to reflect the lustre of his own magnificance" (281-2). This ox merely feeds upon his guests out of his vanity; and when he is through with them, he dismisses them



rudely. Their second host on their return from Scotland is Baynard, whose wife's rapacious vanity makes hospitality there a show of fine plate without the extension of either comfort or palatable food, so that the house is "a temple of cold reception" (290) where nothing is really fed except the wife's rapacious ego. Concluding the satiric portraits of English hospitality is that of Sir Thomas Bullford, maimed in his nature as his name and crutches suggest, preying brutally on his guests for entertainment, constituting a thoroughly caustic comment on the bestial nature of the English. He hunts human beings, a fact made clear by the imagery: "This fat buck [Justice Frogmore] had often afforded good sport to our landlord; and he was frequently started with tolerable success. . .but the baronet's appetite for ridicule seemed chiefly excited by Lismahago" (298). With the exception of Dennison, the outsider who has rejected society for rural domesticity, Bramble's English hosts, as suggested both by their animal names and by the imagery, are brutish, selfish, rapacious creatures.

That the satiric point not be missed Smollett provides in the Scotch hosts a rational and more ideal norm by which the brutes may be judged and found wanting. In Edinburgh Jerry finds the people so sociable and attentive to strangers that he easily takes up their manners

and customs and almost feels himself one of them. His entire August 8 letter is an encomium on Scottish hospitality--a description of kindness, jollity, good fellowship, and generosity. Even Bramble finds himself "disposed to think and speak favourably of this people, among whom I have met with more kindnesses, hospitality, and rational entertainment, in a few weeks, than ever I received in any other country in the whole course of my life" (231). The Duke of Queensbury and the other Scottish hosts go beyond mere generous entertainment to a kind of sharing of self that Smollett has come to see as a necessary part of generosity. Bramble reports that they "have been visited by all the gentlemen in the neighborhood, and they have entertained us at their houses, not barely with hospitality, but with such marks of affection, as one would wish to find among near relations, after an absence of many years" (252). The point suggested here is reinforced by the discussion of the Scottish clan relationship with its familial sense of love, concern, and sharing--the point being that Scottish society is not a competitive group of predatory animals, but a cooperative one of human beings so warm and generous that they are as members of one human family, into which even strangers are taken in.

Sometimes rather subtle comparisons between the institutions of Scottish society and those of the English contribute also to Smollett's satirical comments on the lack of justice and generosity, and responsibility in

English institutions. The Justice Buzzard episode makes a stinging comment on the rapacious predators in the court system. Humphry is falsely accused of robbery; and when the victim of the robbery swears that Humphry is not the man, the justice, who knows exactly who the real robber is, proves himself a buzzard by continuing his harsh treatment of Humphry as a criminal in hopes of preying on Bramble for bribes for the release of his servant. As Win says, Humphry "steed like an innocent sheep in the midst of wolves and tigers" (155). Humphry almost completes the job of getting himself hanged by professing Christian principles, which are so little understood that the episode makes a sharp comment on the state of Christianity in a Christian society. In Scotland by contrast the group finds judges of "great dignity. . .character and ability" (232) and magistrates "well adapted both for state and authority" (233). The returning soldier, for example, gets an instant release for his brother in jail. Everywhere the travelers find in Scottish institutions the humanity lacking in the English ones.

The greater generosity (which in Smollett always means humanity) of the Scots is reflected also in the descriptions of the poor in Scotland. Instead of being everywhere preyed upon as they appear to be in all of



Smollett's novels, the poor of Scotland, where it is possible, are generally cared for. Bramble's praise of the charitable institutions of Edinburgh is high. These, he reports, are exceedingly well endowed and maintained. At the workhouse the poor "not otherwise provided for, are employed, according to their different abilities, with such judgment and effect, that they nearly maintain themselves by their labour, and there is not a beggar to be seen within the precincts of this metropolis" (232). This enviable state, he makes clear, is found consistently in the other cities of Scotland. The Scottish people follow the human tendency of caring for the weak and the poor rather than preying on them as the English animals like Buzzard and the various hosts do. Although the peasants are poor where the land is too poor to support agriculture, the peasantry "look better, and are better cloathed" (268) than those of Europe, and Smollett's works make clear, those in England. And quite subtly Smollett implies that much of the poverty in Scotland is attributable to the English themselves. In the September 3 letter from Argyleshire Bramble reports that many of the highlanders are very poor, although the gentlemen are tolerable lodged and exceedingly generous in their hospitality. The state

of the poor is the result of the act of parliament that deprived them of their arms and broke their national spirit, and thus the English again emerge as brutes.

In his great last novel, then, Smollett uses Dennison the outsider and the Scots as the rational norms by which the bestial, predatory denizens of England may be measured and found wanting. The rational norm is simple human kindness and generosity, the two qualities that are for Smollett the essence of humanity without which the supposedly rational animal is no better than the inhabitants of the wood and jungle, a fact suggested repeatedly by the imagery in this book as in the others, primarily by the animal, food, and preying imagery. Smollett is working in this novel with the same themes he dealt with in the earlier ones, but the satire is milder because Smollett is mellower, the form is more workable, and the attempt to provide a positive pole or a rational norm is finally successful.

## CONCLUSION

A perfect judge will read each  
work of wit  
With the same spirit that its  
author writ:  
Survey the whole, nor seek slight  
faults to find  
Where nature moves, and rapture  
warms the mind.

-Alexander Pope, "Essay  
on Criticism"

## CONCLUSION

Smollett's novels are, it has to be admitted, flawed in many ways, primarily because of the novel form's infancy and because of the haste in which Smollett's had to be written. But they were not written by a man without artistic talent and purpose and without interests beyond those of a superficial reporter of a contemporary world. It is not true that one swift reading reveals all there is to know of Smollett or that there is nothing of philosophical depth or universality in his books.

To a modern audience brought up in familiarity with Darwinism and Freudianism Smollett's shocked emphasis on the animal nature of man may seem puerile. To an audience living in easy acceptance of democracy and the welfare state the idea of the necessity of kindness, generosity, and a responsible concern for others may seem a truism hardly worth such an extended treatment. But in Smollett's own day both of these ideas had an impact hard to imagine except in a context of a society in which most of the country's wealth was concentrated in the hands of some 150 families, in which social and economic mobility was extremely limited, in which masses of people lived in abject poverty or at a subsistence level dependent wholly on private charity, and in which the idea that man's finest sensibilities are revealed not in his wealth or

position, but in his capacity for sympathy, was receiving increasingly serious attention. For Smollett and his time generosity was a serious philosophical issue. Smollett's philosophical ideas are seldom stated explicitly in his novels, but the test of their presence is the consistency with which they appear in image, action, and satirical purpose. This study has shown that the same philosophical concerns are fundamental and essential organizing ideas in each of the novels. And this philosophical dimension alone entitles Smollett to a place among the serious artists of his time.

As an eighteenth-century satirist Smollett's major purpose was to use ridicule and exposure to exhort men to behave in a manner rational enough to justify their halfway position just beneath the angels in the Great Chain of Being. Smollett did not believe this an impossible task. He believed that there is always some potentially redeeming quality in man: ". . .there are some remains of religion left in the human mind, even after every moral sentiment hath abandoned it; and that the most execrable ruffian finds means to quiet the suggestions of his conscience, by some reversionary hope of Heaven's forgiveness" (FF, I, 48). Because man is redeemable, the scourging and the concentration on his moral sores are justifiable methods of exhorting him to higher behavior and stronger efforts to control his bestial nature. Smollett saw life as a struggle for

survival, but he believed that it need not be merely that. He believed that it would not be if men exercised enough of the kindness, generosity, and concern for others that he proposes as man's most distinctly human traits.

Each of his novels was a new experiment in a search for the form that would convey this idea most effectively. It seems obvious that Smollett was more than a mere reporter with a rigorous style. He was an artist who took his art seriously enough to have written the best critical discussions of what the novel of his day was and what it attempted to do; to have experimented more with form than any other novelist of his time; and to have allowed the creative imagination to work with metaphoric statement. It has been shown that his imagery is not a matter of haphazard choice, but of thematically purposeful artistry. It has been shown that his failures, like those of the true artist, are predications of later successes as each novel represents an attempt to resolve the artistic problems of its predecessor. It has been shown that basic to each of the novels is a serious satirical purpose and morally exhortatory effort. And it is here suggested that Smollett deserves the place at the top that he had in his own time, when his intent was more easily discernible. If his books are read in the same spirit in which they were writ, his aims are admirable and his achievement memorable.

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## APPENDIX A

## APPENDIX A

### A LIST OF THE CATEGORIES OF SMOLLETT'S IMAGERY WITH NOTATIONS OF NUMBER AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### BUSINESS

Number of images: 6

Characteristics: These images are general ones and show no special knowledge on Smollett's part, most of them mere cliches about retailing remnants.

Samples:

- . . .they began to retail his remnants (witty sallies) (PP623)
- . . .trudging from street to street, with his pack of knowledge on his shoulders, and selling his remnants of advice by retail (FF,II,134-5)
- . . .distributing the wages of corruption by retail (LG123)

#### SPORT AND GAMES

Number: 6

Characteristics: Hunting imagery has been excluded here because it forms an extremely large category in itself. Only one in Ferdinand Fathom shows any originality; four of them are mere cliches about arrows shot from bows.

Samples:

- . . .our hero was exactly in the situation of a horseman, who, in riding at full speed for the plate, is thrown from the saddle in the middle of the race, and left without sense or motion on the plain (FF,II,152)
- . . .darted out like an arrow from a bow (FF,II,19)

## JEWELS

Number: 10

Characteristics: With one exception these are conventional descriptions of girls or their eyes.

## BIRTH AND BABIES

Number: 11

Characteristics: Except for being big with a secret, the largest number of these are variations accompanying the idea of innocence.

Samples:

- . . .as innocent as the foetus in embryo (RR303)
- . . .as innocent as the child unborn (LG96)
- . . .as ignorant as a new born babe (HC287)

## THRONE, POWER, GOVERNMENT

Number: 13

Samples:

- . . .ravenous claws of usurping ambition (RR274)
- . . .rod of power (RR290)
- . . .regained the empire of himself (PP309)
- . . .gained an absolute dominion over the hasty passions of the soul (PP101)

## CRIMINALS

Number: 13

Characteristics: Out of thirteen examples, all are different.

Samples:

- . . .led him in like a criminal, bowing on all hands (PP241)
- . . .ludicrous posture of defection, like a malefactor at the Old Bailey, when sentence is about to be pronounced (PP251)

- . . .hung his head in silence like a detected sheepstealer (FF,I,29)
- . . .straddled betwixt a pair of long crutches, like the mummy of a felon hanging in chains (HC55)

## MADNESS

Number: 17

Characteristics: Two expressions predominate, "like a Bedlamite," and "run distracted"

Samples:

- . . .turned out in his short like a frantic maniac (PP45)
- . . .capering about the room like a madman (KK229)

## CLOTHING

Number: 15

Samples:

- . . .coxcombs. . .that hang like tatters on the skirts of gallantry, and bring fashion into disgrace (PP540)
- . . .features were gradually elongated, like the transient curls of a Middle-row periwig (PP581)
- . . .see her fair eyes disrobed of that sentiment (PP761)
- . . .scarred body appeared like an old patched leathern doublet (FF,II,23)

## MUSIC

Number: 22

Characteristics: Smollett appears to have known music well enough to be able to distinguish the sound of one instrument from another.

Samples:

- . . .jaws rattled like a pair of castenets  
(RR389)
- . . .voice that seemed to be the joint issue  
of an Irish bagpipe, and a sow-gelder's  
horn (PP12)
- . . .set up the sportsman's hollow, in a voice  
that sounded like a French horn (PP771)
- . . .voice resembled the sound of a bassoon  
(FF,II,3)
- . . .like treble and bass in the same concert,  
they make excellent music together  
(HC50)

HUMAN BODY

Number: 25

Characteristics: Most are common expressions.

RELIGION

Number: 40

Characteristics: Only twelve of these are Biblical.  
It is characteristic of Smollett to use these  
images with humorous intent, 90% of them being  
used with a reducing effect of the tenor.

Samples:

- . . .sat like the leaden statue of some river  
god, with the liquor flowing out a  
both sides of his mouth (PP237)
- . . .he began to snore like a congregation of  
presbyterians (PP299)
- . . .nodded to each other like a congregation  
of anabaptists (PP357)
- . . .shall all die like so many psalm-singing  
weavers (HC150)

## ASTRONOMY, HEAVENS

Number: 43

## Samples:

- . . .diamond buckles that flamed forth rivals  
to the sun (RR221)
- . . .his colour changed from tawny. . .to a deep  
and dusky red, such as we sometimes  
observe in the sky when it is replete  
with thunder (PP30)
- . . .if he is not unhappily eclipsed. . .before  
his terrene parts are purified. . .he will  
shine forth a star of the first magnitude  
(FF,II,221)
- . . .had traced him in all the course of his for-  
tune from his first appearance in the  
medical sphere to his total eclipse  
(FF,II,245)
- . . .Caledonian luminary, that lately blazed so  
bright in our hemisphere. . .at present  
glimmers through a fog; like Saturn with-  
out his ring, bleak, and dim, and distant  
(HC97)
- . . .those who shine most in private company are  
but secondary stars in the constellation  
of genius (HC124)
- . . .Humphry is certainly the north-star to which  
the needle of her affection would have  
pointed (HC213)
- . . .considered his guests merely as objects to  
shine on, to reflect the lustre of his own  
magnificence (HC281-2)

## MACHINERY, INDUSTRY, PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Number: 45

Characteristics: Nine of these are from physical science, but since most of those from science have to do with industrial machinery, they are hard to separate. These images are usually illustrative rather than decorative or emotive in purpose; and among them are some of the most striking and original of Smollett's images, many of them being extended metaphors.



- . . .heart went knock, knock, knock, like a fullingmill (RR107)
- . . .bisquit whereof like a piece of clock-work moved by its own internal impulse, occasioned by the myriads of insects that dwelt within it; and butter served out. . .that tasted like train-oil thickened with salt (RR211)
- . . .the father's head, which by a circular motion, the priest began to turn around in his grasp, like a ball in a socket (PP288)
- . . .secured between the Capuchin's teeth, with as firm a fixure, as if it had been screwed in a blacksmith's vise (PP289)
- . . .had got a backside of block-tin (PP577)
- . . .operated upon her spirits like friction upon a glass globe (PP62)
- . . .heart being thus, as it were, suspended between two objects that lessened the force of the other's attraction (PP540)
- . . .mind couldn't digest incidents, but, like the faithful needle, embraced them all by turns, tho shaken for an instant from its poise, immediately regains its true direction, and points invariably to the pole (FF,II,253)
- . . .shakes and quivers like a vail of quick-silver (LG94)
- . . .(man) bent into a horizontal position, like a mounted telescope (HC55)
- . . .they sat in a state of mutual repulsion, like so many particles of vapour, each surrounded by its own electrified atmosphere (HC116)
- . . .as amber has a power to attract dirt, and straws, and chaff, a minister is endued with the same kind of faculty (HC98)

## DISEASE, MEDICINE

Number: 46

characteristics: These are usually rather common expressions, only a few of them revealing Smollett's own experience in the field.

**Samples:**

- . . .skull actually rung like an apothecary's mortar (PP157)
- . . .all the uncouth gravity and supercilious self-conceit of a physician piping hot from his studies (PP224)
- . . .daemon of play hovers in the air, like a pestilential vapour, tainting the minds of all present with infallible infection . . .which communicates. . .like the circulation of a general pannic. . . Peregrine was seized with this epidemic fever (PP607)
- . . .tottering and grasping like a man suddenly struck with the palsy (PP655)
- . . .nation full of High German quacks, that have blistered, sweated, bled, and purged nation into atrophy. . .evacuated her into consumption (LG128)
- . . .the capital is become an overgrown monster, which, like a dropsical head, will in time leave the body and extremities without nourishment and support (HC87)

**SHIPS, SEA**

Number: 52

Characteristics: This includes only the expressions in Smollett's prose itself, excluding all the salty talk of the naval characters. In Smollett's own prose this imagery lacks the color and specificity it has in the mouths of his naval characters, most of the images being rather commonplace.

**Samples:**

- . . .stood out against all the considerations of dignity or disgrace, like a bulwark of brass (PP47)

- . . .his action resembles that of heaving ballast into ship (PP274)
- . . .despairing of being able to steer the bark of his fortune. . .between two such dangerous quicksands (FF,I,96) (Smollett uses "bark" more often than "ship.")
- . . .his body bent like a Greenland canoe (LG72)
- . . .had always acted on his own bottom (HC148) ("In/on. . .bottom" is a favorite expression of Smollett's)

#### LITERATURE, PAINTING, AND THEATER

Number: 114

Characteristics: Fifty-nine of these are the expected references to Greek and Roman mythology and literature. Thirteen of the images come from art, Hogarth predominating, and one each to Rubens and Raphael. Nineteen of these images come from the world of the stage. Images drawn from more modern literature come from Shakespeare, Rabelais, and Cervantes.

#### Samples:

- . . .(Pallet) staring like a Gorgon's head, with his mouth open, and each particular hair crawling and twining like an animated serpent (PP254)
- . . .vaulted into the saddle like a winged Mercury (LG250) (Mercury and Hercules get more mentions than the other gods.)
- . . .lifted up his eyes and hands, putting himself in the attitude of Hamlet when his father's ghost appears (PP336)
- . . .render himself so agreeable to the fair sex, that like the boxes of the playhouse, during. . .new performance, his company was often bespoke for weeks (FF,II,260)

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## THE AFTERWORLD

Number: 61

## Samples:

- . . .as chagrined as a damned soul would be at  
a glimpse of heaven (RR345)
- . . .whom he looked upon as a fiend of darkness,  
sent by the enemy of mankind to poison  
the minds of weak people (PP284)
- . . .nurse. . .sat stewing. . .like a damned  
soul in some infernal bagnio (LG124)

Some very small groups have been included in order to give an idea of the range and frequency of the imagery, but much of the imagery cannot be classified into groups large enough to set up a category. The following groups, however, are large enough and typical enough to be of some significance in determining canon.

## WEATHER

Number: 75

Characteristics: Weather imagery is unpleasant at the most and usually violent. Characteristically, it is seldom developed, appearing for the most part in nouns, verbs, and participles. Noun metaphor almost invariably follows the Ais B of C pattern. This imagery is almost without exception visual and emotive rather than decorative in intent.

## Samples:

- . . .this menace, which was thundered out (RR114)  
Smollett habitually uses "thunder,"  
"thunderbolt," and "thunderstruck at,"  
the last frequently his sentence opening.
- . . .fell into a main high passion, and stormed  
like a perfect hurricane (PP6)
- . . .disposition inreicious and will hang like a  
damp upon the festivity (FF,II,262)
- . . .soul overwhelmed by tempests of horror and  
floods of grief (FF,II,178)

- . . .when the hurricane was over (Tabitha's search for flannels) (HC29)
- . . .glide in their chariots like lightning (HC88)
- . . .dissipate the clouds of mental chagrin (HC154)

## FIRE, HEAT, LIGHT

Number: 83

Characteristics: If all dead metaphors were included, the number would be much higher. Some of Smollett's favorite words are "inflamed," "kindled," and "glow." This imagery is not characteristic of the late style.

Samples:

- . . .kindled the spirit of emulation in his breast (PP55)
- . . .resentment glowed with a double fire (PP307)
- . . .he blew the coals of her jealousy (FF,II,56)
- . . .valet's jealousy, like a smaller fire, swallowed up in the greater flame inkindled (FF,II,187)

## WAR

Number: 85

Characteristics: This imagery is more typical of the early style, only fourteen of these images appearing in the last two novels. Many of the images are the typical language of love.

Samples:

- . . .put in practice against me the whole artillery of her charms (RR287)
- . . .placing himself in the gap, like soldiers in the breach (RR336)
- . . .discharged a volley of dreadful oaths (PP267)

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- . . .lifted up their hands as one man, and  
like soldiers at the word of command,  
discharged about 40 cats (PP579)
- . . .(periwigs) rose slanting backward, like  
the glacis of a fortification (PP640)
- . . .if the constitution of the mind did not  
allow them to bring one passion into  
the field against another (PP678)
- . . .until all the bulworks of her chastity  
were undermined. . .submitted. . .not  
with the reluctance of a vanished peo-  
ple, but with all the transports of a  
joyful city, that opens its gates to  
receive a darling prince ret'ned from  
conquest (FF,I,247)

## WATER

Number: 102

Characteristics: Again, if all dead metaphors were counted, the number would be considerably higher. Favorite words are "flood," "plunge into," "flow of," "deluge," "poured forth," "canel," and "channel."

## Samples:

- . . .endeavored with a deluge of small beer  
the heat (RR177)
- . . .the conversation flowed in a more general  
channel (PP284)
- . . .a voice, like the sound of many waters,  
denouncing damnation to those who obeyed  
the lusts of the flesh (PP542)
- . . .dive into the meaning of this injunction  
(PP762)
- . . .lingered in this situation, without going  
up or down, floating like a wisp of straw  
at the turning of the tide (FF,II,153)

- . . .as the torrent of his despair had disordered the current of his sober reflection, so now, as that despair subsided, his thoughts began to flow deliberately in their ancient channel (LG221)
- . . .sucked into the channel of their manners and customs (HC221)

## PLANT AND PRODUCE

Number: 137

Characteristics: Favorite words are "fruit of," "seeds of," and "ripen."

Samples:

- . . .the rough unpolished husk that cased the soul of Trunnion (PP29)
- . . .the seeds of future events lie mingled and perfectly distinct (PP555)
- . . .countenance resembled the rough bark of a plum-tree, plastered with gum (PP598)
- . . .connections planted in infancy and grown up to fidelity and friendship (FF,I,24)
- . . .seeds of insinuation seasonably sown upon the warm luxuriant soil of youth, could hardly fail of shooting up into such intemperate desires as he wanted to produce, especially when cultured and cherished (FF,I,50)
- . . .judgment is ripened by experience. . . have seen many a rich harvest lost, for want of a fellow-laborer in the vineyard (FF,I,249)
- . . .might have grown up like a young oak, which, being firmly rooted in its kindred soil, gradually raises up its lofty head, expands its leafy arms, projects a noble shade, and towers the glory of the plain (FF,II,171) (Most of the extended metaphors in this category consist of the rooted in soil image.)

- . . .scatter the seeds of dissatisfaction  
through the land (FF,II,123)
- . . .child, fruit of a private amour (FF,II,344)

Hunting-preying, food-eating, and animal imagery are so extensively quoted in the body of this study that no further examples seem necessary. Specific counts are as follows:

Hunting and preying: 109, excluding those counted  
under Animal Imagery

Food and Eating: 178

Fish: 14

Reptiles: 31

Animal: 283

Birds: 43

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