JOHN BARTH AS MENIPPEAN SATIRIST

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ABSTRACT

JOHN BARTH AS MENIPPEAN SATIRIST

By

James Thomas Gresham

John Barth's negative critics lack generic tolerance and understanding. His positive critics misunderstand his genre, mistaking anti-romance for romance, Menippean satire for "fabulation," embracism ("Cosmophilism") for escapism ("Mythotherapy"). My two-fold purpose is (1) to define and analyze a literary genre, and (2) to view Barth's works in this generic context.

First I survey critical attitudes toward Menippean satire, especially those of Northrop Frye. Like the Novel, the Menippean satire records a disillusionment with "systems" or simplifications of experience, but in ideological rather than experiential terms, affirming experience obliquely, through parody of art, rather than through "imitation" of experience. Structurally, it is an anti-romance; it usually destroys its targets--intellectual, philosophical, historical, or literary--in an avalanche of their own jargon. It contains an admixture of verse, stylized or "humor" characters, argumentative dialogues or symposiums, facetious self-consciousness or self-parody, a lack of "seriousness," catalogues of erudition, and, often, a satura lanx-ious taste in food. It prefers "practice to theory, experience to metaphysics." Like all satire, it is "various," digressive, coarse, obscene, and attack-oriented. However, it differs from conventional satire in its norm, which is not the Good or the Ideal, but the Real. Lucidity--perception of "reality"--is the goal, and the delusory Ideal is generally

viewed as a manifestation of Romance or rubricizing.

I discuss the major patterns of Menippean satire by surveying works of Petronius, Lucian, Cervantes, Swift, Voltaire, Sterne, Burton, Joyce, Rabelais, and others, emphasizing the Menippean satirist's ambivalence toward the Real, Romance, and lucidity. The redeeming quality of the Real is its vitality; "corrective" catalogues and multiplicity are sources of mockery--deflating reductive systems--but also sources of profound merriment. Menippean satire's "affirmation" of experience reflects comic vitality--the kind of "satyric," pseudo-sexual delight in chaotic reality evinced by Rabelais.

I emphasize the Menippean tendencies in Barth's three problematic minor works: extreme self-consciousness, literary parody, ambiguous ridicule of existentialism, the motif of minstrelsy, the doctrine of "exhaustion," and distrust of mimesis.

In my discussion of The Sot-Weed Factor, I emphasize the dialectical systems deflated during Ebenezer Cooke's Quixotic, Candidean progression from innocence to experience. One must distinguish between mythotherapy and cosmophilism, between embracing "art" (consider Ebenezer) and embracing life (consider Burlingame). In this Rabelaisian work, Barth, like Burlingame, becomes a "Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories, Husband to all Creation, the Cosmic Lover," which is not to say that his is a totally happy marriage, for the Menippean satirist always finds Reality a tempestuous mate.

Giles Goat-Boy is a kind of Menippean "satyr," with comic, tragic, and satiric overtones, suggested by the "goat"--the Christian and Attic scapegoat and Dionysian satyr. The dialectical structure (tick and tock, East and West, parody and parodied, order and chaos, light

and darkness, Taliped and Oedipus, Bray and Giles, Giles and Jesus, Eierkopf and Croaker, Rexford and Stoker, Satyr-play and tragedy, romance and anti-romance) reflects a metaphysic which to some degree converts the tensions and "contradictions" of Menippean satire into "passèd paradox." Giles's lesson is essentially that of Lucian's Menippus; as Max Spielman says: "'Be glad if you can learn to be a man--that's hero-work enough!'" Paradoxically, Giles does become a "hero" by failing to become a "Hero" in this Menippean satire, this comic and tragic satyr.

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By

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CHAPTER I. BARTH, THE CRITICS, AND MENIPPEAN SATIRE

1. Introduction

Readers raised on the Novel are shocked when they open John Barth's two most important and notorious works, The Sot-Weed Factor and Giles Goat-Boy. Therein they find avalanches of adventure, romance, and myth, alternately or simultaneously mocked and exalted. They are bewildered by verbal extravagance, philosophical dialogues, literary self-consciousness, self-parody, and an exuberantly ideological orientation. They must fight their way through a long parody of Oedipus Rex and a lengthy "gloss," or tour de force of pedantry, in Giles Goat-Boy. Songs, poems, and digressions abound. What should we do with Benjamin Bragg's permutations of thin and fat, plain and ruled, cardboard and leather, folio and quarto, in The Sot-Weed Factor, and the hudibrastic rhymes catalogued by Eben Cooke and Henry Burlingame, and the six pages of French and English synonyms for "hooker," and Henry Burlingame's "pandect of geminology," and the list of dishes consumed by Henry's grandfather and Attonce the Ahatchwhoop in their gluttonous contest for the hand and bed of the Indian maiden, Pokatawertussan? How account for the constant obscenity, the sexual heights and scatological depths of the parodic "Privie Journall" and "Secret Historie" or Max Spielman's Riddle of the Sphincters--obscenity thrust into priapic prominence

at the thematic, sexual "climaxes" of Giles and The Sot-Weed Factor? These distressing elements seem to reflect a "philosophy" which is vaguely "nihilistic."

Some readers--many readers--react negatively, attacking Barth's works as mere playful experiments in philosophic nihilism, often referring to Barth's own statements about his "nihilistic" intentions,[1] ignoring the degree to which such statements describe mere intentions, or the degree to which they are reductive, tongue-in-cheek, post facto "interview" rationalizations. Charles T. Samuels, Alan Holder, Earl Rovit, and Richard W. Noland are representative. Samuels, for example, calls The Sot-Weed Factor a "prodigy of tedium . . . the sort of novel one dares in some nihilistic stupor."[2] These negative critics attack Barth's "intellectual attitudes," "self-consciousness," lack of "seriousness" or of "feeling," especially of "moral seriousness," his lack of "moral vision," and his disregard for the "concrete ambiguities of human experience." Clearly, however, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with, say, literary self-consciousness. These complaints stem from false or, more often, unconsciously narrow, generic expectations. Samuels, Holder, Rovit, Noland, and others seem to value and/or expect a "realistic" and "moral" (the terms are rather incompatible) "novel," or at least an appropriately "moral" satire when they read Barth. In his article on The Sot-Weed Factor, Rovit complains that the modern "parody-novel" is self-destructive because it has no underlying system of values:

> Hence parody becomes employed without the rigorous passion that can make effective satire. And the twentieth-century parody-novel which shapes itself under the superimposition of an external order will run the desperate danger of being a hollow vessel,

> a cosmetic rather than a cosmic design, decorative, playful, ultimately turning upon itself in bitterness, its ambiguities forced and mendacious because unrooted in the concrete ambiguities of human experience.[3]

Rovit is vaguely aware that Barth is writing something other than a "novel," but he cannot admire the genre in general any more than The Sot-Weed Factor in particular, due, I think, in this case, not to narrow generic expectations so much as narrow generic tolerance and understanding.

Barth's positive critics tend to start where Rovit finishes, with awareness that they are reading something other than novels; again, Barth's positive critics can refer to his own statements about intentions. He has called The Sot-Weed Factor a "philosophical-picaresque extravaganza" and an "ideological farce."[4] "The future of the novel is dubious," he has said. "So I start with the premise of the 'end of literature' and try to turn it against itself. I go back to Cervantes, Fielding, Sterne, the 'Arabian Nights,' to the artificial frame and the long connected tales."[5] He says one of his "intentions" in his "comic novel," Giles Goat-Boy, "was to do something a little analogous to what Cervantes did with the chivalry novel in 'Don Quixote.' . . . My intention was to begin by satirizing the basic myth [of the Hero] and then, hopefully, escalate the satire into something larger, darker and more compassionate."[6] In various interviews he has linked himself with the "authors of the Novellini and the Arabian Nights, Boccaccio, Cervantes, Rabelais, Robert Musil, Laurence Sterne . . . Machado de Assis."[7] Guided by such pronouncements and, more importantly, by Barth's own works, critics have associated him with an impressive group of non-novelists. John Bradbury and Brian Dippie note the similarity between The Sot-Weed Factor and Voltaire's Candide.[8] Leslie Fiedler lists as ancestors "Rabelais,

Sterne, Sir Thomas Browne and the Marquis de Sade."[9] A reviewer of The Sot-Weed Factor in the Times Literary Supplement invokes Rabelais, Boccaccio and Cervantes.[10] Thomas Rogers, one of Barth's former colleagues at Penn State, says that in The Sot-Weed Factor Barth "stole magisterially from Samuel Butler, Rabelais, Voltaire, and half the 18th-century English novelists."[11] Russell Miller, discussing The Sot-Weed Factor as "A Contemporary Mock-Epic," sees influences in Pope and Dryden.[12] In a curiously equivocal review of Giles, Anthony Burgess refers to Swift, Sterne, and Cervantes.[13] Granville Hicks refers to Rabelais and also thinks Giles's "goats are rather like Gulliver's Houyhnhnms."[14] Joseph Featherstone entitles his review of Giles "John Barth as Jonathan Swift," although he does not mention Swift in the review itself.[15] In fact, and in short, casual references are very much the rule. An anonymous reviewer in Time magazine, discussing Barth as an "Existential Comedian," typifies the "positive" critic who is vaguely, but only vaguely aware of Barth's genre. He says "Barth is essentially a humorist who believes that it is absurdly comical to take anything too seriously, including himself. . . . Whatever else it is, Giles Goat-Boy is also an attempt to deride the novel." It resembles a "Swiftian satire." Barth is "mocking tradition-bound literature as much as he mocks mankind." The Time critic refers to Rabelais and Boccaccio, then tantalizes his readers by concluding, "As he reaches farther and farther for new literary forms, Barth is actually going back to the literary past"--exactly where, the reviewer is evidently not sure--perhaps "Scheherazade."[16]

Invariably, Barth's positive critics trace his "literary form" back to Scheherazade, largely because of Robert Scholes's three rave essays on Giles, in The Fabulators and (twice) in the New York Times

Book Review.[17] The first of these essays, entitled "Disciple of Scheherazade," is a kind of critical watershed. Barth has often referred to Scheherazade as his "avant-gardiste,"[18] and Scholes focuses on this infatuation with "story" to define Barth's genre as the "fabulation," a form of neo-romanticism. Barth's article, "Muse, spare me," contains the kind of manifesto that has led almost all generically oriented critics astray:

> My love affair with Scheherazade is an old and continuing one. As an illiterate undergraduate I worked off part of my tuition filing books in the Classics Library at Johns Hopkins, which included the stacks of the Oriental Seminary. One was permitted to get lost for hours in that splendrous labyrinth and intoxicate, engorge oneself with story. Especially I became enamored of the great tale-cycles and collections: Somadeva's Ocean of Story in ten huge volumes, Burton's Thousand Nights and a Night in twelve, the Panchatantra, the Gesta Romanorum, the Novellini, and the Pent- Hept- and Decameron. If anything ever makes a writer out of me, it will be the digestion of that enormous surreptitious feast of narrative.[19]

Led astray by Barth's Scheherazade manifestoes, by Scholes's The Fabulators, and by strong elements of romance, myth, and "story" in The Sot-Weed Factor and Giles Goat-Boy, critics, I think, misconstrue Barth's generic intentions, mistaking anti-romance for romance and satire for "story"; they do not understand the degree to which Barth's norm is the Real rather than a romantic or mythic Ideal, the degree to which he advocates a policy of embracism rather than escapism. This critical error is epitomized by the Times Literary Supplement review of The Sot-Weed Factor, descriptively titled, "Invitation to Escape," and it ranges in sophistication from David B. Morrell's "overview" (borrowed largely from Scholes), his contention that Barth uses "fabulation" (or, borrowing Barth's term, "mythotherapy") as a means of rejecting

life in favor of art, to Campbell Tatham's contention that Barth's "central" "aesthetic" theme is not simple escapism but advocacy of self-conscious mythotherapy: "although a falsification, artistic order can deal with experience, provide a momentary stay against confusion."[20]

I do not deny that this element of simple or sophisticated escapist "fabulation" exists in Barth's works. I agree that Barth is, in fact, quite entranced by "mythotherapy." However, I consider this a contrapuntal element, working against the generic grain, and I believe my analysis of Barth's literary genre will account for the contrapuntal motion. Indeed, Scholes's followers have ignored an important aspect of his description of "fabulation," for Scholes, too, descries a contrapuntal movement, away from romance and "fabulation" as such. "Fabulation," he says, "seems to partake inevitably of the comic. It derives, I would suggest, from the fabulator's awareness of the limits of fabulation. He knows too much--that is the modern writer's predicament, and that is precisely what prevents his perspective from being seriously mythic."[21] Scholes sees a conflict between "the philosophical and mythic perspectives on the meaning and value of existence, with their opposed dogmas of struggle and acquiescence," while I see the conflict as one between romance and anti-romance, and Scholes describes the "philosophical" or anti-romance element as the minor, contrapuntal theme, while I reverse the relationship, believing that romance interferes with anti-romance, not vice versa, but at least Scholes recognizes a conflict which the disciples of "fabulation" tend to ignore or suppress. Scholes, aware that the realistic novel is dying or changing, tries in The Fabulators to define a new genre and relate it to its literary predecessors. I think Scholes goes astray, at least in the case of Barth,

and I intend to define what I see as Barth's literary genre.

I believe Barth is, in general terms, an anti-romanticist, and, specifically, a Menippean satirist. Giles Goat-Boy and The Sot-Weed Factor are his two great Menippean satires, but Lost in the Funhouse, The Floating Opera, and The End of the Road also have a Menippean flavor. By analyzing Barth's genre, I hope to defend him of the charges lodged by his negative critics--charges stemming from narrow generic expectations and tolerance--and also to correct those positive critics who, I think, admire but misunderstand his genre.

Merely defining Barth's genre is not automatically a positive evaluation. Is The Sot-Weed Factor, for example, a "good" Menippean satire? For now I will assume this is a legitimate and important question. Answering it involves definition of the values of Menippean satire, and analysis of Barth's adherence and additions to these values. A related question is: how can one compare a Menippean satire with, say, a realistic novel? Or, in regard to Barth's negative critics: how can one evaluate a Menippean satire in relation to a realistic novel? Is it a case of apples and oranges? I will view Barth in the light of Menippean norms, but also in the light of the moralistic-realistic (the two terms are, as I said, incompatible) norms enunciated by Samuels, Holder, Rovit, and Noland. I should be able to judge Barth by these critics' "realistic" standards, for I think Menippean satire, despite crucial differences, shares some basic norms with the Novel. My discussion of Menippean satire will also necessarily come to grips with "moral" norms, the traditional focal point of satire criticism.

****

Barth uses several terms which I will use to clarify what I see as the mistakes of his negative and positive critics. These terms are "cosmopsis," "mythotherapy," and "cosmophilism."[22] I think his negative critics fail to understand the relation between cosmopsis and cosmophilism, while his positive critics fail to understand the relation between cosmophilism and mythotherapy. His negative critics fail to see that cosmopsis, which induces philosophic nihilism, can, with a slight but profound shift, become cosmophilism, which affirms life or experience (philos = love). His positive critics fail to distinguish between mythotherapy, which affirms art, and cosmophilism, which affirms life or experience.

Cosmopsis is, in part, paralysis of the will, caused by "knowledge" and "imagination"--knowledge that there are no absolute values, no essences preceding existence.[23] All alternatives, all choices of action are arbitrary and of equal value. This is an existential malady. Its epistemological equivalent is that all attempts to rubricize,[24] conceptualize, and categorize existence or experience are equally valid--or, rather, equally invalid. Existence not only precedes essence; it "defies essence" (ER, p. 128). Cosmopsis, then, induces philosophic nihilism. However, cosmopsis involves a peculiar receptivity toward experience. Barth's characters (Todd Andrews and Jacob Horner to some degree, but especially Ebenezer Cooke) are paralyzed by experience largely because they are astonished or awed by it. Their cosmoptically clear (and dangerous and painful) perception or "knowledge" of the world can potentially shift to "acknowledgment" of the world;[25] knowledge can shift to acknowledgment; seeing (opsis) to loving (philos), a relationship obscurely and obscenely implied by the Biblical term

"know," which also means "to have sexual intercourse." This opsis-philos relationship exists between Ebenezer Cooke, paralyzed by cosmopsis, and Henry Burlingame III, "knower of the Cosmos," the great cosmophilist, who, in the chapter on "Geminology," which I consider the thematic climax of The Sot-Weed Factor, shouts: "'I am Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories, Husband to all Creation, the Cosmic Lover!'" (p. 536). The same metaphor and message recur at the thematic and sexual climax of Giles Goat-Boy, as George and Anastasia "pass" in WESCAC's belly (p. 731).

Several critics have seen and emphasized what I (but not they) call the shift from cosmopsis to cosmophilism. These range from John C. Stubbs, who concludes that "Barth's works constitute a muted affirmation of the human condition,"[26] to Benedict Kiely, who says: "His [Burlingame's] aim, and the aim, it could be, of Barth in the two later enormous torrential novels, is to swive life steadily and swive it whole."[27]

Cosmophilism is one cure for the existential-epistemological malady of cosmopsis. Mythotherapy is another, easier, more common cure. Positive critics--those of the Fabulator school--tend to assume Barth is using this cure or this cure alone. Mythotherapy is a process of romantic rubricizing and wish-fulfillment, of self-protective, self-aggrandizing myth-making,[28] a means of ordering and bending life to man's will, a falsification and distortion of experience--all this comprehended by the term "art." This "cure" resembles that of cosmophilism in certain respects; sometimes it is hard to distinguish the affirmation or embracing of "art" from the affirmation or embracing of "life." However, it is absolutely essential that such a distinction be drawn if one is to understand the works of John Barth. The distinction

between cosmophilism and mythotherapy is essentially a distinction between anti-romance and romance, between a normative Real and a normative Ideal. It is hard to distinguish between these apparent opposites because they tend to merge in Barth's works, as in most Menippean satires, creating the complex emotion which Mary Mungummory and Eben Cooke, describing Henry Burlingame's reaction to "the case," that is, to reality, call a simultaneous "loving and loathing" (SWF, p. 449), and which Gilbert Highet calls the "satiric emotion": "a blend of amusement and contempt," a "ferment of repulsion and attraction, disgust and delight, love and loathing, which is the secret of [the satirist's] misery and . . . power."[29]

Barth's two great Menippean satires are radically dualistic and dialectical--a pattern epitomized by the notion of "twins," of opposites merged, embraced, embracing, and destroyed. In the following chapters I will discuss these "twins," More importantly, I will discuss the curiously related twins, Romance and Anti-Romance, or the Ideal and the Real, showing how they alternately kiss and slap each other, like squabbling brother and sister, as members of the strange race or genre known as Menippean satire. Barth's works are doubly dualistic, then: structurally dialectical and tonally ambivalent. My dissertation is also dualistic. I have a two-fold purpose: (1) to define and analyze a literary genre, and (2) to view Barth's works in this generic context.

2. Menippean Satire Historically and Critically Considered

Due perhaps to the nature of satura-satire itself, critical definitions of Menippean satire comprise a veritable hodgepodge. Most of

the characteristics inflated at one time or another to prime importance in the definition apply to Barth, but I am especially interested in Northrop Frye's definition, which is quite provocative and perhaps definitive; I will end this section of the chapter with Frye. However, the five figures with whom any discussion of Menippean satire must begin are [1] Menippus of Gadara, after whom it is named; [2] Marcus Terentius Varro, who named it; [3] Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, or Quintilian, who established and distinguished it as a genre; [4] Lucian of Samosata, who insured survival of the name and tradition; and [5] John Dryden, who carried the name and tradition into the modern age.

[1] Menippus, the cynic philosopher, evidently lived from about 340-270 B.C. In his Ancilla to Classical Reading,[30] Moses Hadas, having briefly discussed the "realistic and often bawdy" 5th century B.C. Greek mime, says

> Somewhat akin to the mime is the moralizing prose discourse interspersed with bits of verse which Menippus apparently learned in Semitic Gadara, and which is called Menippean satire. Here, as in the clearly cognate Arabic maqama ["humorous causeries interspersed with verse for conveying earnest comment on men and life"[31]], the performer dealt humorously with some moral theme (the Greeks said spoudo geloion, 'serious-laughable'; the Romans spoke of ridendo dicere verum, 'to speak truth with a smile') and brightened his remarks with snatches of verse. None of Menippus' own work is extant, though we do have many titles and some snatches of Varro's imitation of Menippean satires.[32]

Hadas thus describes two major characteristics of Menippean satire: its mixture of prose and verse, and mixture of the serious and laughable. J. Wight Duff distinguishes the same two characteristics: "The satires called after [Menippus'] name were philosophic feuilletons of a Cynic strain with interspersed verses. This blend of verse and prose was

also a blend of the grave and gay. . . ."[33] Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg shift the emphasis slightly and importantly when they describe this blend of the serious ("moral" in Hadas) and laughable, or grave and gay, as a mixture of the comic and philosophic; Menippus, they say, "was one of the first writers to deal comically with philosophical themes"--and, beginning with Lucian, the "comic" was "usually parodic as well."[34]

[2] A blending of prose and verse, of the grave and gay, of comedy and philosophy: some of these characteristics evidently appealed to Varro (116-27 B.C.), for he wrote about 150 works which he called Saturae Menippeae, or Menippean Satires, of which we have only fragments--some 600 lines. According to C. A. Van Rooy, Varro's title, Saturae Menippeae, meant "satiric medleys in the (Cynic) manner of Menippus," medleys in form and content, predominantly critical in tone.[35]

If Varro obtained the "Menippean" from Menippus, where did he get the "Satire" for his title? The origins of the term and genre "satire" or satura have obsessed critics for centuries, largely due to the etymological and orthographical confusion with "satyr" and Greek satyr-drama (satyroi), a confusion originating in about the first century A.D., popular by the fourth century, totally accepted during the Elizabethan period, refuted by Isaac Casaubon in 1605, but lingering on (in Milton, for example), until again refuted, by Dryden, in 1693.[36] Varro himself may have been influential in initiating this confusion between Roman "satire" and Greek satyr-drama,[37] largely because by the time he wrote, the term satura had probably come to mean not only "medley" or "hodgepodge," but also "criticism" or "invective," which quality seemed to link it with both Aristophanic Old Comedy and Greek satyr-drama.[38]

Yet Varro seems to have been fully aware of the "medley" meaning and derivation of "satura." The term was originally used as an adjective meaning "full" in the phrase satura lanx, or "full plate," which was a platter of mixed fruits offered to the gods. The term may have had a similar meaning in the phrase lex per saturam, or "omnibus law," the phrase becoming replaced in colloquial speech by the single term, satura. Or, again, according to Varro,[39] satura may have been an alternate term for a kind of stuffing ("farcimen," from which "farce" is derived). Juvenal seems to have a similar gastronomic connection in mind when, in Satire I, he refers to "the mixed mash [or "farrago"] of my verse."[40]

The connotation of "medley," "variety," or "hodgepodge" seems to account for the early adoption of the term satura as the title of an ancient Roman stage show--a kind of traditional, parodic, improvisational variety show, vaguely resembling Italian commedia dell-arte (or perhaps Barth's "Original and Unparalleled 'Ocean-Going' Floating Opera"?). Highet believes it is from this Roman variety show that Quintus Ennius (239-169 B.C.), originator of Roman "satire," borrowed the title for his four books of miscellaneous poems. "Therefore," says Highet, "when Ennius called his poems saturae, he meant not only that they were a mixed dish of simple coarse ingredients, but that they grew out of an improvised jollification which was (although devoid of plot) dramatic, since it mimicked and made fun of people and their ways, and contained dialogue sung or spoken. All or most of these elements have remained constant in most satire: variety, down-to-earth unsophistication, coarseness, an improvisatory tone, humor, mimicry, echoes of the speaking voice, abusive gibing, and a general feeling, real or assumed, of devil-may-care nonchalance."[41]

Lucilius (168?-102 B.C.), Ennius' successor, Varro's predecessor, and, according to Horace (Satire I, 4), the "inventor" of Roman satire, added to Ennius' "medley" satire the censorious element that was to give satire "its true and final nature" (according to Highet, p. 233). Lucilius' works

> are concerned with political controversy, often by way of ridicule; [and] with literary criticism (frequently expressed by way of parodic imitations), including his theory of satire. . . . They contain realistic narratives and descriptions of contemporary life, including vivid accounts of erotic matters; mocking parodies, letters to friends, and dialogues; fables, and other topics of Cynic and Stoic popular philosophy; and a strong personal and autobiographic element. [Van Rooy, p. 52]

Thus, from Ennius and Lucilius, Varro obtained the title "satire" and the elements of "medley" and "censoriousness." He added "Menippus," the elements of mixed prose and verse, a strongly philosophic orientation, and a characteristically grave and gay tone. Highet notes a few more characteristics:

> [Varro] wrote a large number of Menippean satires in prose interspersed with verse, which--to judge by their titles [many of which remain, listed by Duff], their reputation, and the pitifully few fragments that have survived--were learned and original and witty. Many of the best of these, it would seem, were not discursive monologues, but narratives of fantastic adventure told in the first person. Their language was so rich in vulgarisms, archaisms, neologisms, and bold imagery, and their metrical interludes so skillful and so various, that they even make the straight verse satires of Horace and Juvenal look rather tame and monotonous. [Anatomy, p. 37]

[3] The rhetorician Quintilian, born about 35 A.D., was the first critic to distinguish satura as a specifically Roman genre, and, more importantly for our purposes, the first to distinguish two different strains of satire. Because the passage in his Institutio Oratoria

relating to Menippean satire is so crucial, yet so brief, I will quote all of it. Having noted that some Roman poets "also challenge the supremacy of the Greeks in elegy," Quintilian says

> Satire, on the other hand, is all our own.[42] The first of our poets to win renown in this connexion was Lucilius, some of whose devotees are so enthusiastic that they do not hesitate to prefer him not merely to all other satirists, but even to all other poets. I disagree with them as much as I do with Horace, who holds that Lucilius' verse has a 'muddy flow, and that there is always something in him that might well be dispensed with' [Horace, Satire I, 4]. For his learning is as remarkable as his freedom of speech, and it is this latter quality that gives so sharp an edge and such abundance of wit to his satire. Horace is far terser and purer in style, and must be awarded the first place, unless my judgment is led astray by my affection for his work. Persius [34-62 A.D.] also, although he wrote but one book, has acquired a high and well-deserved reputation, while there are other distinguished satirists still living whose praises will be sung by posterity. There is, however, another and even older type of satire which derives its variety not merely from verse, but from an admixture of prose as well. Such were the satires composed by Terentius Varro, the most learned of all Romans. He composed a vast number of erudite works, and possessed an extraordinary knowledge of the Latin language, of all antiquity and of the history of Greece and Rome. But he is an author likely to contribute more to the knowledge of the student than to his eloquence.[43]

So Quintilian goes on to something else. Aside from brief mention of Varro's learnedness, he limits his distinction of Menippean satire, this "older type" of satire, to its admixture of prose. Thus there are two kinds of satire: (conventional) verse satire, and Menippean satire, which is a mixture of verse and prose. Numerous recent critics maintain the same simple distinction--[44]but, usually, <u>only</u> until they start analyzing those "satiric" works which, due to their "admixture of prose" (or, more often, their admixture of verse), must be classified as Menippean, at which time words such as "realism," "parody," "narrative," "invented

tales," and "philosophy," begin to appear as criteria. The classical representatives of the group are Petronius' Satyricon, Seneca's Apocolocyntosis (or Pumpkinification of Claudius), Apuleius' Golden Ass (though there is some disagreement here[45]), and, above all, the works of Lucian.

[4] Given the loss of Menippus' own works and of Varro's Menippean Satires, critics usually accept Lucian's (116?-179? A.D.) characterization of Menippus and Menippean satire. Lucian's Charon and Hermes describe Menippus during one of his trips to the underworld: "laughing and jeering at the other passengers, and whistling when all the rest were whining! . . . Menippus is always like that--completely uninhibited, and never takes anything seriously."[46] Lucian-Menippus shifts the critics' attention from the medley of verse and prose to the "comic" treatment of "philosophy" and to the parodic narrative form. (These are the characteristics described by Scholes and Kellogg.[47]) Anticipating my discussion of Lucian in Chapter II, I will simply note for now that Lucian's satiric targets are generally philosophy, myth, the Gods, the epic, and Romance, as in Philosophies Going Cheap and The True History. His view of life is dazzlingly "cosmic," as in Icaromenippus, wherein high-flying Menippus sees the world from afar: "It's enough to say that it was a spectacle of infinite variety. . . . what a hotch-potch it seemed. . . . this variety show of human life" (pp. 121-122). And Lucian's "common sense" norm, whatever the cost, is always the "real," epitomized by Tiresias' advice to Menippus in Menippus Goes to Hell: "The best way to live is to be an ordinary human being. So give up all this metaphysical nonsense. Stop worrying about first principles and final causes, and forget all those clever arguments--they don't mean a thing. Just live in the moment and get along as best you can, trying to see the

funny side of things and taking nothing very seriously" (pp. 109-110).

[5] If Lucian is the major literary source for definitions, Dryden is the major critical source for definitions of Menippean satire. In his 1693 Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire, Dryden begins his discussion of Menippean or "Varronian" satire with Quintilian's comment about the mixture of verse and prose, but, from fragments, he deduces that "in the composition of [Varro's] satires he so tempered philology with philosophy, that his work was a mixture of them both."[48] And Dryden notes other characteristics as well:

> [Varro] entitled his own satires Menippean; not that Menippus had written any satires (for his were either dialogues or epistles), but that Varro imitated his style, his manner, and his facetiousness. All that we know further of Menippus and his writings, which are wholly lost, is, that by some he is esteemed, as, amongst the rest, by Varro; by others he is noted of cynical impudence, and obscenity: that he was much given to those parodies, which I have already mentioned; that is, he often quoted the verses of Homer and the tragic poets, and turned their serious meaning into something that was ridiculous [Dryden is apparently equating Menippus and Lucian here]. . . . Lucian, who was emulous of this Menippus, seems to have imitated both his manners and his style in many of his dialogues; where Menippus himself is often introduced as a speaker in them, and as a perpetual buffoon. . . . But Varro, in imitating him, avoids his impudence and filthiness, and only expresses his witty pleasantry. . . . This we may believe for certain, that as his subjects were various, so most of them were tales or stories of his own invention.[49]

Dryden seems to consider the matter of original, invented tales a major characteristic of the form as he draws up a list of Varronian satirists: Petronius, Lucian (particularly the True History), Apuleius, Seneca, Erasmus (Praise of Folly), and, curiously, Dryden himself (Absalom and Achitophel and MacFlecknoe). Several modern critics have concluded that the essential criterion in Dryden's definition is

"narrative." David Worcester sees Dryden defining Varronian satire as "satire overlaid on a narrative pattern."[50] Ian Jack describes Hudibras as Varronian (like MacFlecknoe) in Dryden's sense because the "basis of the poem is narrative."[51] And Alvin P. Kernan summarizes thus:

> Criticism has . . . traditionally distinguished, under various names, only two main types of satire: formal verse satire and Menippean satire. The term Menippean originally referred to those satires which were written in a mixture of verse and prose, but it has gradually come to include any satiric work obviously written in the third person or, to put it another way, where the attack is managed under cover of a fable.[52]

Kernan discerns three useful but perhaps misleading dimensions of satire: "scene," "satirist," and "plot." The plot tends to be the scene in movement, and the satirist (specifically, the satyr-satirist) is Kernan's main interest in The Cankered Muse, his study of Elizabethan satire. In the passage from which the above extract is taken, he resists aligning the "two types of satire" with his own categories, but later in his work he tends to equate verse satire with the "satirist" and Menippean satire with the "scene." He says that in later plays Ben "Jonson turned to writing Menippean satire, stressing the scene rather than the satirist."[53]

We may now summarize the pre-Northrop Frye definitions or conceptions of Menippean satire: first, from Roman satura, or satire in general, it obtains the characteristics of (1) medley, "fullness," variety, or hodgepodge, and (2) censoriousness, ridicule, criticism, the element of attack.[54] Menippean satire (according to Quintilian) "derives its variety from" a mixture of prose and verse, but also from a mixture of the "serious and laughable" (Hadas) or "grave and gay" (Duff). The latter is sometimes described as a tone of "facetiousness,"

"cynical impudence and obscenity," a tendency to make everything "ridiculous" (Dryden)--a "devil-may-care attitude," sometimes "improvisatory," a lack of "seriousness" (Highet). In some ways, these various mixtures seem to be intensifications of the "medley" aspect of satura; hence, in the introduction to his translation of Horace, S. P. Bovie considers "potpourri" the distinguishing feature of Menippean satire.[55] Scholes and Kellogg describe the ingredients in the mixture as the "comic" and "philosophic"; specifically; comic, parodic treatment of philosophy. Or one can say that philosophy is the target of Menippean satire. This is an aspect of Menippus' "Cynic strain" (Duff, Van Rooy). Associated with this philosophic, anti-philosophic orientation is the "learned" (Quintilian) quality of Menippean satire. Comic, parodic treatment of philosophy and related subjects is a process of "realistic" deflation: hence, in the introduction to his translation of Petronius, William Arrowsmith sees the comic-philosophic mixture in a slightly different way, describing Menippean satire as "the curious blending of prose with verse and philosophy with realism."[56] Finally, "comic," prose-verse, parodic Menippean satire seeks the vehicle of "narrative" (Dryden, etc.), in the form of inverted (parodied) tales, "invented tales" (Dryden), or narratives of "fantastic adventure" (Highet).

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Many aspects of this hodgepodge description reappear in Frye's definition.[57] Before turning to Frye, I want to isolate and elaborate on the "learned," "philosophical" orientation, which is a crucial factor in distinguishing between Menippean satire and the Novel, and also involves an important distinction between Menippean and conventional satire. This discussion should provide readier access to Frye's

definition. I will begin with Maurice Z. Shroder's essay, "The Novel as a Genre,"[58] which does not once use the term "Menippean satire." However, those works described by Shroder as contes philosophiques or philosophical tales are the works labelled "Menippean satires" by others.

In his attempt to define the Novel as a genre, Shroder discusses three categories of fiction. First (last, historically) is the Novel, which "records the passage from a state of innocence to a state of experience, from that ignorance which is bliss to a mature recognition of the actual way of the world. In the less loaded terms of Lionel Trilling, the novel deals with a distinction between appearance and reality" (p. 14). Shroder goes on to distinguish the novel from two generically, thematically, and historically related literary types:

> the theme of the novel is essentially that of formation, of education. The terms of the education are themselves important, since the process described in the novel is analogous to that described in two other fictional forms, which serve perhaps as the boundaries between which the novelistic sensibility functions. At one extreme stands the romance, with its tale of triumphant adventure and its heroic protagonist. At the other extreme stand such contes philosophiques as Candide and Gulliver's Travels, tales which depend on protagonists who are incredibly naïve and largely unheroic, which deal in the disillusionments one suffers in trying to apply systems to the unsystematic realities of life. The novel . . . is perhaps more like the conte philosophique than like the romance, in that it records a similar process of disillusionment; but while philosophical tales cast such disillusionment in ideological terms, novels treat it experientially, in the terms of quotidian reality. Both the novel and the philosophical tale, however, reject that 'spirit of romance' which sees the world through a haze of imaginative and subjective interpretation, colored at the least by sentimentality and transformed at the most by the poetry of legend and of myth. [pp. 16-17] [59]

The Novel, says Shroder, is derived from the Romance. Its basic

"action" or "process" resembles that of the romantic "quest"; but, of course, the Novelistic quest leads not to romantic triumph or wish-fulfillment but to a kind of "fortunate [i.e., "educational"] fall." This Shroder calls a "thematic" difference. Perhaps contradicting himself, or confusing terms, he says that

> the process [my italics] of the novel . . . is one of 'demythification,' the formal or generic equivalent to the experiential disillusionment of the novel's protagonist. . . . Formally or generically, then, the novel is an 'anti-romance'--the term, after all, originally designated Sorel's Berger extravagant, which literally began where Don Quixote left off, with a reduction to the absurd of pastoral romance. Useful as the concept of 'demythification' is, however, it is somewhat misleading: it is a critical category, while the terms of the novel are experiential.[60] [p. 17]

Shroder goes on to distinguish between, or, especially in the case of Don Quixote, to trace the progression from, burlesque to irony--from ideological conte philosophique to experiential Novel. At times the difference seems to be merely one of degree, "irony involving a more subtle contrast of appearance and reality, a more ambiguous form of incongruity, than does burlesque" (p. 20). Cervantes' "novel--and the paradigm he established surely is, as Harry Levin has indicated, the route to realism--does indeed begin in burlesque and parody, in the confounding of illusion through a confrontation with reality in its most ludicrous and most solid forms. But to pass from the first book of Don Quixote to the second, from the absurd imitation of knightly romance to the ambiguous adventures in the Cave of Montesinos and on the magic horse Clavileño, is to move from burlesque to irony"(p. 20). There are several obscurities here: If Don Quixote is the "route to realism," how can it be a "novel"? Is it a novel, or a conte philosophique?

Because the difference between Novel and *conte philosophique* is not a *thematic* one, Shroder tends to forget his distinction when contrasting the Novel with its thematic opposite, the Romance. Furthermore, what Shroder sees as a shift from blatant burlesque to "ambiguous" irony, from *conte philosophique*, or ideological anti-romance, to Novel, or experiential anti-romance, may also or instead be a shift from anti-romance to *Romance*--not just a shift from blatant to subtle and sympathetic ridicule of the "romantic" Don Quixote, but a shift from anti-romantic ridicule to sympathetic romanticizing. More of this later.

For now, we may ignore the ambiguities of Shroder's essay (which are to some extent the ambiguities of *Don Quixote*) and summarize its additions to our understanding of Menippean satire. The *conte philosophique*, which I equate with Menippean satire, is like the Novel insofar as it is an anti-romance, decrying romantic systems or the "spirit of romance," recording a process of disillusionment. But the *conte philosophique*, unlike the novel, casts its disillusionment in "ideological" rather than "experiential" terms. This is the "learned" and "Cynic" and "philosophical" side of Menippean satire. Shroder does not emphasize an obvious paradox: within the *conte philosophique*, "ideological" terms are "used"--but used to destroy one another. This is the method of burlesque. Romantic "systems" are glibly, mechanistically built, only to clash with each other and with "reality"; they necessarily fall, revealing a "disillusionment" with systems which is shared by the Novel and *conte philosophique*, or Menippean satire. Thus Menippean satire, like the Novel, yields an affirmation of "experience," even though it does not do so in experiential terms.

Harry Levin, whom Shroder mentions in his essay (see p. 21, above),

elucidates this relationship between the Novel and Menippean satire:

> The novelist must begin by playing the sedulous ape, assimilating the craft of his predecessors; but he does not master his own form until he has somehow exposed and surpassed them, passing from the imitation of art through parody to the imitation of nature.[61]

The predominating pattern of Don Quixote, says Levin, is "the pattern of art embarrassed by confrontation with nature."[62] This is what Shroder calls "disillusionment": what one suffers "in trying to apply systems to the unsystematic realities of life." That is, one (perhaps the first, perhaps the only) way to "see" reality is to see that our "art" and our "systems" do not "imitate" it. We parody and ridicule our art, or our systems, acknowledging their failure to accurately imitate reality. "The writer's problem," says Levin, "is . . . the rivalry between the real world and the representation we make of it. . . . After all, no one can express what is by nature inexpressible. Life itself is infinitely larger than any artistic medium. However, by revealing the limitations of their medium, writers like Cervantes heighten our consciousness of what existence means."[63]

There are at least two related problems here, one aesthetic, the other epistemological. Can one "imitate" nature? Levin implies as much by tracing the historical (or is it cyclic?) progression from "imitation of art through parody to the imitation of nature" in the Novel. This is what Shroder calls the progression from burlesque to irony. But is "imitation" the same as "expression," as in--"no one can express what is by nature inexpressible"? Either the terms are synonymous, in which case Levin is contradicting himself, or "imitation" means (approximately) "approximate representation"--in which case "imitation" is a mere

attempt which must constantly be confronted with "reality," found wanting, and parodied or ridiculed. This problem introduces several other questions. As we pass from imitation of art through parody to the imitation of nature, are we constantly, cumulatively approaching "reality" itself? Or is it that "imitations" constantly grow stale, inducing stock perception, obscuring the "reality" which is supposedly being imitated, necessitating destruction of old imitations and creation of new ones? These aesthetic questions lead to an epistemological question: can we "know" reality in an absolute or ultimate sense? What exactly is the role of language, literature, or art, in this process of knowing? Is art merely a vehicle for "expressing" or communicating what we already "know"? Or is art part of the knowing process itself?

Some of these questions may be misdirected. One difficulty is that there are different degrees and levels of "reality," and Levin is sometimes talking about one degree, sometimes about another. It is one thing for a satirist or novelist to reveal "reality" (windmills) beneath "illusion" (giants) in the conventional sense. But it is another thing for a satirist or novelist to reveal, express, imitate, or represent "reality" in an ultimate sense: the way things really are, beneath the veil of appearance, accessible only through the human mind, language, emotions, and senses. Writers of Novels and of <u>contes philosophiques</u>, or Menippean satires, as I have described them, seem to advocate different approaches to this ultimate "reality"; or perhaps they have different degrees of confidence in "imitation." The Novelist tries to approach "reality" or experience directly, through imitation. The Menippean satirist approaches reality or experience indirectly, negatively in a way, by "imitating," parodying <u>art</u>, displaying art's inability

to leash experience. "Art" includes philosophy, mythology, and all other means of mentally ordering and rubricizing experience. Levin's pivotal, provocative essay on "The Example of Cervantes" implies such a distinction, although it never completely clarifies the relation between the two approaches to reality. Do we indeed "pass" from one stage to the other? Which direction? In a historical sense (as Levin sometimes implies and Shroder emphasizes)? Or in a periodic, cyclic sense (as Levin also implies)? Is the Novel capable of direct "imitation" of reality, or must it always remain an anti-romance, or, in the later stages, an anti-Novel?

Ronald Paulson tackles some of these problems in Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England.[64] I will deal with his work again in Chapter II; for now, Satire and the Novel will provide a commentary on Shroder and Levin and lead us into Frye.

Like Shroder, Paulson distinguishes between the Novel and satire (grossly equivalent to conte philosophique, for our purposes) on "experiential" grounds. Satire's concern is "law"--judging men by their actions--rather than "justice"--judging men by motives. The Novel is more interested in the individual, Satire in society. The Novel is "subjective," Satire "objective." The Novel is "immersed" in character, Satire "detached." But the "conventions in which our two genres, satire and the novel, found their common ground were those of realism."[65] The Novel emerged with a "commitment to the presentation of reality--not moral truth but the truth of actual experience--and the avoidance of convention and artifice" (p. 11). It was early defined in opposition to Romance; thus it borrowed the conventions of burlesque, anti-romance, or (interpolating terms) Menippean satire. In discussing this

interchange, Paulson uses three categories from Charles Sorel's 1664 Bibliothèque françoise: Romance, Nouvelle, and Roman satirique (or burlesque, or comique). These are somewhat comparable to Shroder's Romance, Novel, and conte philosophique, the main difference between Nouvelle and Roman satirique being the latter's militantly moral (rather than "ideological," as in the case of the conte philosophique) flavor.

The Novel's debt to Satire becomes clear as Paulson describes Satire's juxtaposition of the "ideal" and "actual," or "real." Satire (unlike "comedy," which is interested in incongruity for its own sake) makes one side normative; often the normative "strengthens into the ideal, and the contrast sharpens to one between good and evil" (p. 16). But the Ideal is not always normative; often the Ideal becomes associated either with "illusion" or with Romance, restriction, and convention, and the Real becomes normative, because it is honest, free, "vital," or, simply, "real."

> The satirist customarily regards reality as something that the ordinary person can see only if he takes off the glasses of convention (the conventions of romance, pastoral, epic). He says, in effect: I am going to show you things as they really are. [1] See how simple--all of this that appeared complex can be reduced to lust and greed; or else, [2] See how complex--all of this that appeared to be simple is less easily formulable than you think. Surprising exposure is a basic satiric aim, and satirists have developed many ingenious ways of revealing truth under appearance. They have accordingly tended to adopt the pose of convention-destroyers and anti-romanticists. [pp. 18-19]

Here Paulson puts his finger on a crucial distinction: satire can reveal that (1) complexity is a disguise for simple reality; or that (2) simplicity is a disguise for complex reality. I believe this is the fundamental difference between conventional satire and Menippean satire. Conventional satire ultimately reduces the conflict between the Real

and Ideal to a conflict between Good and Evil; what appeared "complex" is exposed as "simple" lust or greed; "reality" is exposed as evil; Good (which is also the Ideal) is, of course, normative. Menippean satire, on the other hand, stops with the conflict between the Real and Ideal and makes the Real normative. The two kinds of satire mix at times, with complex results, often manifested as a simultaneous attraction and repulsion, loving and loathing of the Real.

Paulson, I think, shows that the second--Menippean--type of satire is the Novel's closer relative. Discussing Fielding's characteristic judicial "tolerance," or dislike for monistic theories of motivation, he says

> Fielding must have arrived at this characteristic effect through the parallel phenomenon of Lucianic and Shaftesburyian satire, beginning with the attack on forms and the intention to shatter stereotypes, Pamelian and otherwise. This kind of satire, which uses the multifarious complexity of experience to ridicule the over-formalized reaction, is the one branch of satire that is more or less parallel to the aim of the novel. . . . [p. 156]

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Which brings us directly to Frye:

> The central theme in the second or quixotic phase of satire, then, is the setting of ideas and generalizations and theories and dogmas over against the life they are supposed to explain. This theme is presented very clearly in Lucian's dialogue The Sale of Lives [Philosophies Going Cheap]. . . . Lucian's attitude to Greek philosophy is repeated in the attitude of Erasmus and Rabelais to the scholastics, of Swift and Samuel Butler I to Descartes and the Royal Society, of Voltaire to the Leibnitzians, of Peacock to the Romantics, of Samuel Butler II to the Darwinians, of Aldous Huxley to the behaviorists. . . . Anti-intellectual satire . . . is based on a sense of the comparative naivete of systematic thought. . . . Insofar as the satirist has a 'position' of his own, it is the preference of practice to theory, experience to metaphysics. When Lucian goes to consult his

> master Menippus, he is told that the method of wisdom is to do the task that lies to hand, advice repeated in Voltaire's Candide and in the instructions given to the unborn in Erewhon. Thus philosophical pedantry becomes, as every target of satire eventually does, a form of romanticism or the imposing of over-simplified ideals on experience.[66]

This description of Menippean satire appears in "The Mythos of Winter: Irony and Satire," which is part of Frye's "Third Essay / Archetypal Criticism / Theory of Myths." Before continuing with it, I want to show how Frye reaches this point in his Anatomy, because his progress to this point says something about the Menippean satirist's "negative" or "indirect" approach to "reality," and about what Paulson calls the conflict between the Real and Ideal. The following, brief review of Frye's early chapters will necessarily bewilder the reader unfamiliar with Frye's elaborate taxonomy.

In the "First Essay / Historical Criticism / Theory of Modes," Frye establishes a fivefold system. There are five fictional modes: (1) Mythic, (2) Romantic, (3) High Mimetic, (4) Low Mimetic, and (5) Ironic, based on the Aristotelian criterion of the protagonist's distance from a common human norm. Another criterion, the protagonist's relation to society (alienation or integration), generates two more fivefold systems: the Tragic Fictional Modes, and the Comic Fictional Modes. The same criterion (alienation from or integration into society) applied to the author generates two more fivefold systems: Episodic Thematic Modes, associated with tragedy or alienation, which tend to be lyric; and Encyclopaedic Thematic Modes, associated with comedy or integration, which tend to be epic. Finally, Frye's historical Modes have correspondent "existential projections": the "tragic" criterion is projected as a doctrine of "fate"; the "comic" as a doctrine of

"providence." And the fivefold modal equivalents are: (1) theology, (2) belief in the supernatural, ghosts, etc., (3) a quasi-Platonic philosophy of ideal forms, (4) a philosophy of genesis and organism, and (5) existentialism. One notes that the fictional modes precede the existential equivalents, not vice versa.

In the "Second Essay / Ethical Criticism / Theory of Symbols," Frye describes another fivefold system--the "phases" of symbolism corresponding to the historical modes: (5) literal, (4) descriptive, (3) formal, (2) archetypal, and (1) anagogic. The first essay runs downhill from Myth; the second essay runs uphill toward it.

In the "Third Essay / Archetypal Criticism / Theory of Myths," Frye's fivefold system polarizes. The dualistic orientation hitherto implicit in the five modes becomes explicit, as Frye discusses (1) Apocalyptic Imagery, (5)Demonic Imagery, and, briefly, the three "displaced" central modes, where the Demonic and Apocalyptic "operate dialectically" (p. 151). These central modes are (2) the Analogy of Innocence, (3) the Analogy of nature and reason, and (4) the Analogy of Experience. Frye slights the third mode "in order to preserve the simpler pattern of the romantic and 'realistic' tendencies within the two undisplaced structures" (p. 151).

The quotation marks around "realistic" reflect Frye's "distaste for this inept term" (p. 140), and also an important ambiguity in his system. I believe it is this ambiguity that allows Frye's system to become cyclic or circular, the Ironic Mode ultimately turning back toward the Mythic Mode (see p. 42, for example). In one sense, the (5) Ironic Mode is the mode furthest "displaced" from the (1) Mythic Mode. In another sense it is not "displaced" at all. In one sense

"displacement" proceeds from (1) to (5); in another sense it proceeds from (1) to (2) and simultaneously from (5) to (4). This is because Frye has two, confused sets of polar opposites: Myth/Reality and the Apocalyptic/Demonic.

Displacement is the "adaptation of myth and metaphor to canons of morality or plausibility," says Frye (p. 365). "In terms of narrative, myth is the imitation of actions near or at the conceivable limits of desire" (p. 136). At the Mythic pole the world seems totally humanized, ordered, controlled by human wishes, or, in Freudian terms, controlled by the pleasure principle. Displacement is the process of censoring or limiting the "Mythic" qualities of literature, of yielding to the demands of "reality" or the reality principle, of making one's characters less godlike, of diluting wish-fulfillment. So that "Irony" is finally defined as "The mythos . . . of the literature concerned primarily with a 'realistic' level of experience, usually taking the form of a parody or contrasting analogue of romance" (p. 366). In this sense the Ironic Mode represents the ultimate "displacement" of Myth in the direction of "reality."

But, says Frye, trying to spit out that distasteful word, if "Ironic literature <u>begins with</u> realism" it "<u>tends toward</u> myth, its mythical patterns being as a rule . . .suggestive of the demonic. . ." (p. 140; my italics). For to "begin with realism" is "to throw the emphasis on content and representation rather than on the shape of the story" (p. 140), that is, to imitate nature or "reality" rather than art. And, the fact is, as an imitation of "art," Ironic literature comprises an <u>un</u>displaced vision of the Demonic, which is the dialectical twin of the Apocalyptic:

> undisplaced myth . . . takes the form of two contrasting worlds of total metaphorical identification, one desirable and the other undesirable. These worlds are often identified with the existential heavens and hells of the religions contemporary with such literature. These two forms of metaphorical organization we call the apocalyptic and the demonic respectively. [p. 139]

The system becomes cyclic: driven by "displacement" toward Irony, having reached the wall of "realism," the furthest you can get from Myth, you suddenly see that you have reached the Demonic, which is the Mythic twin of the Apocalyptic. "Reality" is not something that exists; it is, rather, the absence or negation of human wishes and order. You do not imitate "reality," for "reality" is a negation. It would seem, then, that the only way to affirm "reality" or experience in Frye's system--reality conceived as a negation--is purposely to negate "Myth": write a Romance-parody, because art "imitates" art, not life, or "reality."

Frye's Apocalyptic and Demonic Poles, with their respective "analogies" of Innocence and Experience, and the two directions (up and down) implied by the dialectical tension, generate four mythoi or "generic plots."

> The top half of the natural cycle is the world of romance and the analogy of innocence; the lower half is the world of 'realism' and the analogy of experience. There are thus four main types of mythical movement: within romance, within experience, down, and up. The downward movement is the tragic movement. . . . The upward movement is the comic movement. . . . Tragedy and comedy contrast rather than blend, and so do romance and irony, the champions respectively of the ideal and the actual. On the other hand, comedy blends insensibly into satire at one extreme and into romance at the other; romance may be comic or tragic; tragic extends from high romance to bitter and ironic realism. [p. 162]

Frye's categories (romance and irony, Innocence and Experience, ideal and actual) recall Paulson's categories (Ideal and Real), but

one must be careful not to equate Frye's "ideal," which in this context usually means the "desirable," with a specifically moral ideal. For, as Frye contends, "Civilization tends to try to make the desirable and the moral coincide," but, at least in literature, generally fails (p. 156). Morality "comes to terms with experience and necessity," while desire "tries to escape from necessity" (p. 156). Morality acknowledges "experience" or reality (cf. the Freudian ego and super-ego) and is thus a tool of displacement, necessarily at odds with "the conceivable limits of desire." Frye often distinguishes "romantic" displacement from "realism" by noting its "general tendency to present myth and metaphor in an idealized human form" (p. 367;my italics; see also pp. 136-137). That is, Romance remains closer than "realism" to the "ideal" of the amorally "desirable." Frye's use of the categories Ideal and Actual thus reveals another dimension of the ambiguity I noted earlier regarding Paulson's "Real and Ideal." The conflict between the Real and Ideal can not only be reduced to or mixed with a conflict between Good and Bad; it can also be reduced to or mixed with a conflict between the amorally desirable and the morally desirable, or between the "bad" Good and the "good" Good.

Having reviewed Frye's progress to the essay on mythoi, I can now discuss his definition of Menippean satire. He begins his discussion of "Irony and Satire" by reiterating the need for an indirect, negative approach to reality or experience:

> We come now to the mythical patterns of experience, the attempts to give form to the shifting ambiguities and complexities of unidealized existence. We cannot find these patterns merely in the mimetic or representational aspect of such literature, for that aspect is one of content and not form. As structure, the central principle of ironic myth is best approached as a

> parody of romance: the application of romantic mythical forms to a more realistic content which fits them in unexpected ways. [p. 223]

Although Frye distinguishes six phases of satire-irony, only the first three, which correspond to the first three phases of comedy,[67] pertain to "satire" as such.[68] For "With the fourth phase we move around to the ironic aspect of tragedy, and satire begins to recede" (p. 236). The last three phases correspond to the last three phases of tragedy, and omit the ridicule (wit plus attack) that is "essential to satire."

The three phases of satire yield three satiric "norms," the first corresponding to what I have called "conventional" satire, the second and third corresponding to what I have called Menippean satire. Frye refers to Menippus, Lucian, and Menippean satire in this chapter, but does not emphasize the label until later in his Anatomy. The first phase, or "satire of the low norm" relies on and recommends "conventional life at its best." "On all doubtful points of behavior convention is [the first-phase satirist's] deepest conviction" (p. 226). However, the "strength of the conventional person is not in the conventions but in his common-sense way of handling them. Hence the logic of satire itself drives it on from its first phase of conventional satire on [i.e., against] the unconventional to a second phase in which the sources and values of conventions themselves are objects of ridicule. . . . [S]atire may often represent the collision between a selection of standards from experience and the feeling that experience is bigger than any set of beliefs about it. . . . Philosophies of life abstract from life, and an abstraction implies the leaving out of inconvenient data. The satirist brings up these inconvenient data. . ." (p. 230). And there follows the description of Menippean satire I quoted on pp. 27-28, above, the

"central theme" being "the setting of ideas and generalizations and theories and dogmas over against the life they are supposed to explain."

There are several ambiguities in Frye's definition, notably his insistence that this "anti-intellectual," and in some ways even "Cynic" attitude is "neither philosophical nor anti-philosophical, but an expression of the hypothetical form of art"; or, similarly, that this form of anti-romanticism, whose basic structure is that of "a parody of romance," is nevertheless a <u>defense</u> of the "systems" of "art" against other encroaching "systems of reasoning" (pp. 231, 233). Also puzzling is Frye's description of the "<u>ingenu</u> form" of second phase satire, wherein a naive "low norm" character contrasts his "set of simple standards with the complex rationalizations of society" (p. 232). Here Frye seems to be confusing conventional or "low norm" with Menippean satire.

In addition to those characteristics quoted on pp. 27-28, above, Frye describes one other crucial tendency of second or quixotic phase satire (with a passing glance at the ancient definition of Menippean satire):

> The romantic fixation which revolves around the beauty of perfect form, in art or elsewhere, is also a logical target for satire. The word satire is said to come from <u>satura</u>, or hash, and a kind of parody of form seems to run all through its tradition, from the mixture of prose and verse in early [Menippean] satire to the jerky cinematic changes of scene in Rabelais. . . . <u>Tristram Shandy</u> and <u>Don Juan</u> illustrate very clearly the constant tendency to self-parody in satiric rhetoric which prevents even the process of writing itself from becoming an over-simplified convention or ideal. [pp. 233-234]

It is this technique of self-parody or "disintegration" that ostensibly leads Frye to the third phase of satire, or "satire of the high norm." His two-page discussion of this phase is quite disjointed,

quite satura-like, apparently progressing via the association of ideas. In the third phase "we must let go even of ordinary common sense as a standard. For common sense too has certain implied dogmas, notably that the data of sense experience are reliable and consistent, and that our customary associations with things form a solid basis for interpreting the present and predicting the future" (p. 234). Phase three seems to flow more naturally from phase two than phase two does from phase one, and were it not for Frye's self-contradictory insistence that phase two satire is not directed at the "systems" of "art" itself; or, perhaps more importantly, were it not for his musical analogy, dictating six "phases," he could easily combine phases two and three.

Third phase abandonment of "common sense" as a norm induces the satirist to give "ordinary life a logical and self-consistent shift of perspective," as in Gulliver's Travels, Icaromenippus, and The Golden Ass (p. 234). This is a shift to a kind of cosmic view, telescopic, microscopic, or animalistic, and shows that man is ultimately "ridiculous." The shift often takes the form of a romance parody, as in Lucian's True History (p. 235), says Frye. And it often elicits horror, or appears obscene; obscenity is a means of deflating dignity, bringing us down to "a bodily democracy" of ridiculousness. The brief discussion of obscenity leads Frye to the "riotous chaos of Rabelais, Petronius, and Apuleius," which is the "final victory over common sense," and then to a similar notion, that of the "catalogue," a manifestation of "creative exuberance." The latter Frye calls "almost a monopoly, of third-phase satire" (p. 236).

The catalogue also plays an important part in Frye's other discussion of Menippean satire--in the "Fourth Essay," "Specific Continuous

Forms (Prose Fiction)." In this discussion of four types of prose fiction, the intellectual, analytic, encyclopaedic aspect of Menippean satire leads Frye to rename his literary form the "Anatomy," after Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy. Here Frye emphasizes the "intelligible" world of Menippean satire, distinguished from the "experiential" world of the novel (p. 314).

> The Menippean satire deals less with people as such than with mental attitudes. Pedants, bigots, cranks, parvenus, virtuosi, enthusiasts, rapacious and incompetent professional men of all kinds, are handled in terms of their occupational approach to life as distinct from their social behavior. [p. 309]

Menippean satire handles "abstract ideas and theories" and "differs from the novel in its characterization, which is stylized rather than naturalistic, and presents people as mouthpieces of the ideas they represent. . . . A constant theme . . . is the ridicule of the philosophus gloriosus. . . . The novelist sees evil and folly as social diseases, but the Menippean satirist sees them as diseases of the intellect, as a kind of maddened pedantry which the philosophus gloriosus at once symbolizes and defines" (p. 309).

Frye notes that Menippean satirists such as "Petronius, Apuleius, Rabelais, Swift, and Voltaire all use a loose-jointed narrative form often confused with the romance." But Menippean satire has an "intellectual structure" involving "violent dislocations in the customary logic of narrative" (pp. 309-310). Frye does not follow up this statement with comments on the parodic, anti-romantic structure of Menippean satire, as one might expect. Instead, he somewhat deviously discerns two odd strains of Menippean satire: (1) the "entirely fantastic" literary fairy tale--such as Alice in Wonderland; and (2) the "entirely

moral" Utopian vision. Perhaps this passage is dictated by Frye's desire to pour every type of prose fiction into one of his four categories (Novel, Romance, Confession, Anatomy). And the Anatomy or Menippean satire is his catch-all vessel.

Frye goes on to note a "short form" of the Menippean satire: the "dialogue or colloquy" involving a "conflict of ideas." The longer form of dialogue usually takes the setting of a "cena or symposium, like the one that looms so large in Petronius," or which recurs often in Peacock (p. 310).[69] By a kind of association of ideas or of etymologies, the cena ("symposium") idea leads Frye to a consideration of the Menippean catalogue, a subspecies of which is the "encyclopaedic farrago."

> The Menippean satirist, dealing with intellectual themes and attitudes, shows his exuberance in intellectual ways, by piling up an enormous mass of erudition about his theme or in overwhelming his pedantic targets with an avalanche of their own jargon. [p. 311]

Frye tends to equate the catalogues of jargon and erudition, typically spilled out around a banquet table, with the food catalogues spewed out at such banquets. And it is at this point that he changes terms, saying, "The word 'anatomy' in Burton's title means a dissection or analysis, and expresses very accurately the intellectualized approach of his form." So Frye somewhat clumsily adopts this "convenient name to replace the cumbersome and in modern times rather misleading 'Menippean satire'" (pp. 311, 312).

Finally, glancing at Sterne, Boethius, and Izaak Walton, he sums up the characteristics of the form: the "digressing narrative, the catalogues, the stylizing of character along 'humor' lines, the [parodic and fantastic] marvellous journey, . . . the symposium discussions,

and the constant ridicule of philosophers and pedantic critics"; the "dialogue form," "verse interludes" or "mixture of prose and verse," the "pervading tone of contemplative irony," the "cena setting," or "deipnosophistical interest in food" (p. 312). The thrust of this particular essay is that all works of prose fiction can be viewed as a combination of four forms (Novel, Romance, Confession, Anatomy), generally with one of the four predominating. Frye lists as Menippean satirists Menippus, Varro, Petronius, Apuleius, Lucian, Erasmus, Rabelais, Burton, Swift, Voltaire, Sterne, Peacock, Butler, Huxley, and others. His discussion of satire and of the "anatomy," and the Anatomy of Criticism as a whole, provide a somewhat unwieldy, but nevertheless provocative, exhaustive definition of the genre.

3. A Definition of Menippean Satire

Summarizing critics from Quintilian through Frye, we can gather the following definition. The Menippean satire, like the Novel, records a disillusionment with "systems" or simplifications of experience (including "idealism" and "innocence"). However, unlike the Novel, it represents its disillusionment in ideological rather than experiential terms. It is a kind of "intellectual odyssey."[70] This "intellectual" approach destroys intellectual systems, hence the negation of systems is the affirmation of experience. The process can also be described as a movement away from myth and wish-fulfillment and toward reality. The "systems" attacked are of all kinds: intellectual, philosophical, historical, and literary--specifically, those literary forms associated with the romance. Structurally, the genre takes the form of a

romance-parody or anti-romance, and it is likely to destroy its targets--intellectual, philosophical, historical, literary or whatever--in an avalanche of their own jargon. It generally contains an admixture of verse, stylized or 'humor' characters, argumentative dialogues or symposiums, facetious self-consciousness or self-parody, a lack of "seriousness," catalogues of erudition, and, often, a satura lanx-ious taste in food. It prefers "practice to theory, experience to metaphysics." Like all satire, it is "various," digressive, coarse, obscene, and attack-oriented. However, it differs from conventional satire in its norm, which is not the Good or the Ideal, but the Real. Lucidity--perception of "reality"--is the goal, and the delusory Ideal is generally viewed as a manifestation of Romance, rubricizing, or system-building.

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It seems to me that Barth's basic method in his great Menippean satires, The Sot-Weed Factor and Giles Goat-Boy, is to build and then deflate a vast series of dialectical systems, epitomized by the matter of "twins." As Northrop Frye says, "the central form of romance is dialectical" (p. 187). In fact, almost all "systems" are dialectical. In the case of romance, the dialectic may take the form of Hero-Villain, or Messiah-Demon; in the case of other "systems," the dialectic may take the form of Good-Bad, Light-Darkness, Innocence-Experience, Up-Down, Recto-Verso, Tick-Tock, East-West: the string is endless and in his Menippean satires Barth magnificently, outrageously deflates, merges, and "destroys" all such dialectical systems, affirming (nay--swiving) "experience" in the process. Yet he often deflates these systems by embracing them, collapsing them in his arms. There is a remnant of

loathing in his loving of "experience." Similar patterns appear in the pre-Barthian Menippean satires surveyed in the next chapter.

NOTES

[1] In John Enck's "John Barth: An Interview," Wis. Studies in Cont. Lit., VI (1965), 3-14; Judith Golwyn's "New Creative Writers--35 Novelists Whose First Work Appears This Season," Library Journal, LXXXI (June 1, 1956), 1496-1497; and R. W. Murphy's "In Print: John Barth," Horizon, V (January 1963), 36-37.

[2] Charles T. Samuels, "John Barth: A Buoyant Denial of Relevance," Commonweal,85 (1966), 80. The other negative exemplars are Alan Holder, "'What Marvelous Plot . . . Was Afoot?' History in Barth's The Sot-Weed Factor," AQ, XX (1968), 596-604; Earl Rovit, "The Novel as Parody: John Barth," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, VI, ii (1963), 77-85; and Richard W. Noland, "John Barth and the Novel of Comic Nihilism," Wis. Studies in Cont. Lit., VII (1966), 239-257.

[3] Earl Rovit, "The Novel as Parody," p. 85.

[4] Actually, most critics have not had direct access to this first statement, since it was the description Barth used in a 1958 application for monetary aid from Penn State. Quoted in David Bernard Morrell, John Barth: An Introduction (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1970) , p. 76.

[5] "Heroic Comedy," Newsweek, LXVIII (August 8, 1966), 82 (largely an interview).

[6] Phyllis Meras, "John Barth: A Truffle No Longer," New York Times Book Review, August 7, 1966, p. 22.

[7] John Enck Interview, p. 3.

[8] John M. Bradbury, "Absurd Insurrection: The Barth-Percy Affair," SAQ, LXVIII (1969), 319-329. Brian W. Dippie, "'His Visage Wild, His Form Exotick': Indian Themes and Cultural Guilt in John Barth's The Sot-Weed Factor," AQ, XXI (1969), 113-121.

[9] Leslie A. Fiedler, "John Barth: An Eccentric Genius," The New Leader, XLIV (February 13, 1961), 22-24.

[10] "Invitation to Escape," Times Literary Supplement, October 27, 1961, p. 765.

[11] Thomas Rogers, "John Barth: A Profile," Book Week, August 7, 1966, p. 6.

[12] Russell H. Miller, "The Sot-Weed Factor: A Contemporary Mock-Epic," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, VIII, ii (Winter, 1965), 88-100.

[13] Anthony Burgess, "Caprine Messiah," The Spectator, March 31, 1967, pp. 369-370.

[14] Granville Hicks, "Crowned with the Shame of Men," The Saturday Review, XLIX (August 6, 1966), 21.

[15] Joseph Featherstone, "John Barth as Jonathan Swift," The New Republic, CLV (September 3, 1966), 17-18.

[16] "Existential Comedian," Time, LXXXIX (March 17, 1967), 109.

[17] Robert Scholes, The Fabulators (N.Y., 1967); "George Is My Name," New York Times Book Review, LXXI (August 7, 1966), 1, 22 (this is the review Barth's dust covers and paperback editions quote); "Disciple of Scheherazade," New York Times Book Review, May 8, 1966, p. 5.

[18] This particular quote comes from the Enck Interview, p. 6.

[19] John Barth, "Muse, spare me," Book Week, September 26, 1965, p. 28.

[20] Morrell: see note 4, above. Campbell Tatham, The Novels of John Barth: An Introduction (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Wis., 1968), p. 72. Tatham presents the same idea in "John Barth and the Aesthetics of Artifice," Contemporary Literature, XII, i (Winter, 1971), 60-73. Of the other three unpublished dissertations on Barth, two are quick surveys of his "existential" themes, treating Barth in relation to Sartre, Camus, and contemporary novelists such as Heller, Purdy, Kesey, and Bellow. The third dissertation is also philosophically (i.e., "existentially") oriented and deals with Barth's use of mirrors and "masks"; Barth realizes the limits of mirrors (imitation), and believes that "exhausted" literature reflects "universal entropy."

[21] The Fabulators, p. 171; the ensuing references are from pp. 171-173.

[22] "Cosmopsis" and "Mythotherapy" are introduced in The End of the Road. "Cosmophilism" is introduced in The Sot-Weed Factor; Henry Burlingame uses the term once (Bantam ed., N.Y., p. 762) and is often referred to as a "cosmophilist," as in the title of Chapter 2, Part III: "A Layman's Pandect of Geminology Compended by Henry Burlingame, Cosmophilist. The standard editions of Barth's works are as follows: The Floating Opera, revised edition (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967); The End of the Road, rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967); The Sot-Weed Factor, rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967); Giles Goat-Boy (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966); Lost in the Funhouse (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967). Throughout this dissertation I use the following easily obtainable paperback editions: The End of the Road (N.Y.: Bantam, 1969); The Sot-Weed Factor (N.Y.: Bantam, 1969); Giles Goat-Boy (N.Y.: Fawcett Crest, 1966); Lost in the Funhouse (N.Y.: Bantam, 1969). See note 15, Chapter III, concerning The Floating

Opera. I will occasionally abbreviate Barth's titles as follows: FO, ER, or the Road, SWF or The SWF, Giles, Funhouse. When the context is clear, I will insert page references parenthetically in the text.

23 I will discuss cosmopsis at greater length in Chapter III, in relation to ER.

24 Abraham Maslow defines this term in Toward a Psychology of Being (Princeton, N.J., 1962). He associates "rubricizing" with what he calls "D-Cognition," in this context, cognition motivated by personal needs, and distinguished from "B-Cognition," wherein "the experience or the object tends to be seen as a whole, as a complete unit, detached from relations, from possible usefulness, from expediency, and from purpose" (p. 70, italicized in the text). "Rubricizing" is a kind of perception: "this is not so much a full perception of all aspects of the objects or person being perceived, as it is a kind of taxonomy, a classifying, a ticketing off into one file cabinet or another" (pp. 70-71). I will deal with the term and idea at greater length in Chapter III, in regard to Mythotherapy, and in Chapter IV, in regard to "autocentric" perception.

25 I will discuss this idea at length in Chapter IV.

26 John C. Stubbs, "John Barth as a Novelist of Ideas: The Themes of Value and Identity," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, VIII, ii (1963), 115.

27 Benedict Kiely, "Ripeness Was Not All: John Barth's Giles Goat-Boy," Hollins Critic, III, v (December 1966), 3.

28 More of this in Chapter III, in regard to ER.

29 Gilbert Highet, The Anatomy of Satire (Princeton, 1962), pp. 21, 238.

30 Moses Hadas, Ancilla to Classical Reading (Morningside Heights, N.Y., 1954), pp. 58-59. Highet cites Hadas in his Anatomy of Satire, p. 251.

31 Moses Hadas, A History of Greek Literature (N.Y., 1950), p. 219.

32 The reference to the semitic origins of Menippean satire recalls Barth's numerous references to Scheherazade, Scholes's article, "Disciple of Scheherazade," etc.; see note 17 and pp. 4-5, above.

33 J. Wight Duff, Roman Satire : Its Outlook on Social Life (Berkeley, 1936), p. 33.

34 Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (N.Y. - 1966), p. 78.

35 C. A. Van Rooy, Studies in Classical Satire and Related Literary Theory (Leiden, 1965), p. 56.

[36] Van Rooy's study analyzes the origins of both (1) the term and (2) the genre, utilizing (1) the list of four etymologies in Ars Grammatica, by the 4th century grammarian Diomedes, and (2) Quintilian's famous dictum about the origin of the genre, "Satura Quidem Tota Nostra Est." An earlier critical study of the subject is G. L. Hendrickson's "Satura Tota Nostra Est," reprinted in Ronald Paulson's anthology, Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1971), pp. 36-60. Numerous other critics deal with the origins and etymology of satire, including Mary Claire Randolph, "The Medical Concept in English Renaissance Satiric Theory," reprinted in Paulson's anthology, pp. 135-170 (she, for example, comments on Milton's adherence to the satire-satyr etymology in his Apology against Smectymnuus); Highet; Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art (Princeton, 1960); and Alvin Kernan, The Cankered Muses Satire of the English Renaissance (New Haven, Conn., 1959)--here Kernan links Elizabethan satire with the satyr-etymology. Casaubon exposed the satyr-satire fallacy in his Graecorum poesi et Romanorum satira.

[37] Possibly by being misunderstood by others, such as Diomedes: see Van Rooy, Chapters 1 ("Satura: Derivation, Meaning, and Extension of Connotation in Pre-Literary Usage"), 6 ("Satura and Satyroi: The Development of Greek Satyr-Drama and the Rapprochement of Literary Terms"), and 7 ("Latin Satire, Greek Satyr-Drama, and Attic Old Comedy in Literary Theory and Terminology").

[38] Unless otherwise noted, my main source in this discussion is Van Rooy.

[39] And thence Diomedes, according to Van Rooy, Chapter 1.

[40] The Sixteen Satires, trans. Peter Green, Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1967), p. 68. All references to Juvenal will be to this edition.

[41] Anatomy of Satire, p. 233. Van Rooy discounts the importance of the Roman variety show and assumes that Ennius chose the title "Saturae" simply to reflect his own variety of interests and styles. See Van Rooy, Chapter 2 ("Quintus Ennius and the Founding of a Literary Genre").

[42] This is the famous "Satura quidem tota nostra est" (see note 36, above). The crux of the problem is this: does Quintilian mean "although we Romans merely challenge the supremacy of the Greeks in elegy, we are totally superior in the genre of satire"--implying that Roman satire is derived from Greek satyr-drama, Old Comedy, or some other ancestor? Or does he mean "although we share the genre of elegy with the Greeks, the Romans invented the genre of satura or satire; therefore we are not 'superior' to the Greeks here for they have no generic equivalent"? Van Rooy and Hendrickson both opt for the second interpretation.

[43] Institutio Oratoria, trans. H. E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library ed. (London, 1921), pp. 53-54 [Vol. IV, Book X.i, 94-96].

[44] Including Hadas, Duff, Highet, Elliott.

[45] First J. Wight Duff says The Golden Ass has not enough verse to qualify as a Menippean satire, but, later, in comparing it with the Satyricon, his standard seems to be one of "realism" (see p. 104, Roman Satire). Similarly, his definition of Menippean satire as a blend of verse and prose and of the grave and gay shifts as he discusses Varro, Seneca, and Petronius: these three, he says, are "linked together by resemblance in their blend of prose and verse, in their borrowings from the common speech and proverbial lore, in their introduction of parodies on the grand style, and in their use of irony at the expense of gods and mythology" (p. 104).

[46] From the Chapter Menippus Gets Away With It, in Lucian, Satirical Sketches, trans. Paul Turner, Penguin Classics (Baltimore, 1961). All future references to Lucian will be to this edition, a witty and pithy collection and translation.

[47] See note 34, above, and p. 12 of the text.

[48] Essays of John Dryden, ed. W. P. Ker (N.Y., 1961), II, 65.

[49] Ibid., p. 66.

[50] The Art of Satire (N.Y., 1940), p. 157.

[51] Augustan Satire: Intention and Idiom in English Poetry, 1660-1750, Oxford Paperback ed. (London, 1966 [first published, 1952]), p. 25.

[52] The Cankered Muse (see note 36, above); the first chapter, "A theory of Satire," is reprinted in Paulson's anthology, pp. 249-277, and contains most of Kernan's theoretical ideas. Here, p. 257 in Paulson's anthology. Elliott evidently disagrees with these critics, carelessly concluding that Dryden defines Menippean satire just as Quintilian does, with the emphasis on the mixture of verse and prose (see Power of Satire, p. 186).

[53] The Cankered Muse, pp. 164, 191.

[54] Attack or aggression is the major theme of Elliott's Power of Satire; Matthew Hodgart provides a pseudo-psychological analysis of satire, centered around aggressive urges, in Satire (London, 1969). A crucial source of such studies is Freud's Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious (N.Y., 1916).

[55] Horace, Satires and Epistles, trans. Smith Palmer Bovie (Chicago, 1959) - p. 98 (introduction to Book II). All references to Horace will be to this edition. This footnote might be a good place to hide a strange and careless definition of Menippean satire. In their introduction to Satire from Aesop to Buchwald (N.Y., 1971), Frederick Kiley and J. M. Shuttleworth link conventional with "Horatian," Menippean with (harsh, dark) "Juvenalian" satire.

[56] Petronius, The Satyricon, trans. William Arrowsmith, Mentor Classic ed. (N.Y., 1959), p. viii. All references to Petronius will be to this edition.

[57] Given the mixed mash of my subject, I must for the sake of coherence pretend or imply at times that Frye's definition postdates the descriptions of others, since it exceeds them in comprehensiveness. Such is not the case, of course. Elliott, Scholes and Kellogg, Paulson, and others, refer directly to Frye's 1957 Anatomy of Criticism in their works; however, no one (except Elliott, in passing) pays very close attention.

[58] Reprinted in The Theory of the Novel, ed. Philip Stevick (N.Y., 1967), pp. 13-29.

[59] Shroder's tri-partite categorization bears some resemblance to that of Sheldon Sacks in Fiction and the Shape of Belief (Berkeley, 1964). Shroder's conte philosophique resembles Sacks's "apologue" in its detachment from the "experiential," in its ultimate disregard for the "fates" of its characters. Shroder's Novel resembles Sacks's Novel or "Action" in its immersion in the experiential: Sacks defines the Action as a work wherein "characters about whose fates we are made to care are introduced in unstable relationships which are then further complicated until the complications are finally resolved by the complete removal of the represented instability" (p. 15, Fiction and the Shape of Belief).

However, Sacks's system, unlike that of Shroder, does not aim at distinguishing between Romance and Novel. In fact, Sacks's definition of the Novel or Action could serve as a definition of the Romance. Furthermore, Shroder's conte philosophique resembles Sacks's "satire" more than his "apologue," due to its "anti" quality; its "informing principle" (to borrow Sacks's phrase) is deflation and ridicule, rather than the presentation of "a fictional example of the truth of a formulable statement or closely related set of such statements" (again quoting Sacks, his definition of the apologue, p. 8). An indication of the difference between the two critics is that Shroder classes Gulliver's Travels and Candide together as contes philosophiques, while Sacks rates Gulliver's Travels a "satire" and Candide an "apologue" (see his note, p. 60; Candide was published in 1759, the same year as Rasselas, which is Sacks's prototypal apologue).

This is not to say that Sacks's system is more perceptive or discriminating. It is of much less use for my purposes. I think Sacks's distinction between "satire" and "apologue" disguises or reductively bisects more than it illuminates, a crucial ambiguity: the degree to which destructive satire implies a constructive ethical norm. I think Shroder's distinction between Novel and conte philosophique, which takes into consideration the Romance, is more useful than Sacks's distinction between Satire and Apologue in regard to this ambiguity. Or, to borrow one of Sacks's techniques, I think the question "What is the difference between Don Quixote and Pride and Prejudice?" is more "legitimate" and important than the question "What is the difference between Gulliver's Travels and Candide?" (At least superficially, the answers to both questions involve a distinction between a negative attack and a positive statement.)

[60] Charles Sorel's 1627 Le Berger extravagant was republished in 1633 as l'Anti-roman, which can be translated either as The Anti-Novel or The Anti-Romance.

[61] "The Example of Cervantes," reprinted from Contexts of Criticism (Cambridge, Mass., 1957) in Cervantes: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Lowry Nelson, Jr., Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969), pp. 34-48. The quotation is the last sentence of Levin's essay; my italics.

[62] Ibid., p. 34.

[63] Ibid., p. 42.

[64] Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (New Haven, Conn., 1967).

[65] Ibid., p. 11. The first part of this paragraph is a rough outline of Chapter I, "Satire and the Conventions of Realism."

[66] Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), pp. 230-231. Frye errs in regard to Lucian and Menippus. Tiresias gives the advice to Menippus, not Menippus to Lucian. See pp. 16-17, above.

[67] Ronald Paulson presents a concise discussion of the relations between Satire and Comedy in the introduction to his anthology.

[68] Alvin Kernan summarizes (with a few minor distortions, I think) these first three phases in The Plot of Satire (New Haven, Conn., 1965), pp. 13-15. Elliott summarizes Frye's definition of Menippean satire in The Power of Satire, Chapter IV.

[69] This paragraph provides a good example of the way Frye's logic sometimes meanders (provocatively): the "short form" of the Menippean satire is a dialogue; "sometimes this form expands to full length," that is, to the symposium--but, now, the "form" referred to is not the "Menippean satire" as such, but the dialogue.

[70] Elliott's term, The Power of Satire, p. 188.

CHAPTER II. MAJOR PATTERNS OF MENIPPEAN SATIRE

In a sense this chapter is merely a gloss on my definition of Menippean satire--except that the literary works discussed here precede and overshadow the definition presented in Chapter I. I mean "overshadow" ambiguously: these works are more important; they also necesarily escape the boundaries of my definition. Satire (to say nothing of generic definitions in general) is a very elusive subject. I shall try to corral it without killing it by using five somewhat distinct pens or categories, each facet of my discussion dominated by one author but involving others as well. I will discuss (1) Lucian in regard to the Real and Ideal, (2) Cervantes in regard to Romance and Anti-Romance, (3) Swift in regard to Menippean lucidity and anti-intellectualism, (4) Burton in regard to the Menippean catalogue, and (5) Rabelais in regard to comic vitality.

If the following discussion deals neither thoroughly nor justly with some of history's famous satirists, it at least lists Barth's literary ancestors, providing a generic and historical context for such otherwise puzzling phenomena as the "philosophical minstrel show"[1] called The Floating Opera; or another floating opus, "The Anonymiad," from Lost in the Funhouse;[2] or perhaps the siamese twin "Petition" from the same Funhouse collection; or the burlesque designs of Giles Goat-Boy and The Sot-Weed Factor; or Dr. Eblis Eierkopf's "grand

historico-chemico-mathematico-biologico-mythophysical treatise upon the egg"; or the list of dishes consumed by Burlingame I and Attonce the Ahatchwhoop; or (as John Barth would say) et cetera.

1. Lucian: the Real and Ideal (Aristophanes, Seneca, Petronius, Apuleius, Lucian)

Before discussing Lucian, who is ideologically and historically seminal, I will glance by way of introduction at three of his predecessors, Aristophanes, Seneca, and Petronius, and at one of his contemporaries, Apuleius. Seneca, Petronius, and Apuleius have been termed Menippean satirists since Dryden's 1693 Discourse, and Aristophanic Old Comedy has traditionally been viewed as a source of the satiric impulse (though not of the satura genre), and of Lucianic Menippean satire in particular.[3]

In certain respects, it is appropriate that our survey of Menippean satire should open with Aristophanes' Clouds--specifically, with Strepsiades trying to waken his son, Pheidippides, who is "snoring fore and aft"[4]--because sexual and excremental obscenity is satire's profound and fundamental vehicle of the Real. Obscenity takes us to the bottom of both the human anatomy and the saturnalian, satyric, satiric impulse. In Aristophanes, obscenity seems to have two major functions: (1) expression of the comic vitality (see section 5, below) inherent in Greek satyr-drama and related, licentious, saturnalian, fertility festivals, as in the phallic extravagance of Lysistrata; and (2) satiric exposure of the "actuality" beneath "appearance," as in Bdelycleon's warning to his talkative father in Wasps: "Talk your fill. Like a man an anus

washing, at the end you'll see, / Scrub and scour as you will, immaculate it cannot be" (p. 160). These "comic" and "satiric" aspects of obscenity are related. Reviewing the cathartic social motive of saturnalian festivals, Matthew Hodgart says "Obscenity, like the saturnalian festival itself, is reductive. It reduces men to equality, humbling the mighty"[5]--which involves a "satiric" attack, but also a kind of anarchic "comic" joy.

Beneath Aristophanes' notorious conservatism, his reliance on what Frye would call the "low" or conventional norm of satire, there is a primitive and anarchic joy in upsetting everything rigid or established. Often the satiric targets are conventional: law, litigiousness, politicians (Wasps); pride, arrogance, lawlessness (a major motive for Aristophanes' anti-intellectualism in Clouds and for his debunking of seers, projector-surveyors, etc., in Birds); and war (Lysistrata). Yet in Aristophanes' joyous attacks on Socrates and sophists in Clouds, or on the gods in Birds, or on authors and critics in Frogs, there is a Menippean lust for flux and even chaos, at the expense of conventional stability. This anarchic impulse Hodgart calls "a general rule of Aristophanic satire, which is largely true of Rabelaisian and Swiftian satire: if the satirist is ridiculing something in favour of its opposite, which he sets up as an ideal, he will tend to ridicule the opposite as well. Satire often cannot help overflowing its bounds and making everything ludicrous."[6]

It is hard to distinguish between a "Menippean" distrust of systems and a primitive and cathartic delight in anarchy or trickery for its own sake. The latter is often complicated by even as it compromises "moral" justification. Clouds is a case in point. There are many, conventional,

moral justifications for the attack on sophists: the "acumen and casuistry, verbal sleights, circumlocutions, / Quick repartee and knock-out arguments" of these "chatterers" are, first of all, irreverent and arrogant; argumentation breeds contentiousness; sophistry is "freakish," absurd, immodest, "impudent," reflects idleness, and is impractical--or it it?--because it also disguises mercantile motives (the real motive for letting Strepsiades into Socrates' school), to say nothing of lechery. These sometimes self-contradictory justifications are further complicated and/or compromised when they are voiced by Strepsiades, whose "practical," thieving motives provide a very shifty, dubious norm by which to judge Socrates' "impractical" (or are they "practical"?) motives. Strepsiades, swayed by the Sophists and the lure of gain, is finally "caught in the tangle of his own net" (p. 136), learns "fear of the Gods" (p. 140), sees that sophistry leads to familial and cosmic chaos, and joins in the final scourging of "the Lesser Logic crew," but the moral contradictions and ambiguities tend to cancel each other out, and one finally feels they were not so much justification for satiric attack as rationalization for an anarchic and "comic" (incongruous, tumultuous) upsetting of things in general. This tumult has a Menippean tone, but, although the Menippean attack on system-mongering is in some respects an attack on over-civilization (rubricizing, romanticizing, philosophizing), one misses a certain Menippean self-consciousness and intellectual self-awareness in Aristophanes' saturnalian primitiveness.

One can also explain Aristophanes' moral ambiguities in terms of theories of comedy: for example, Frye's notion that "the social judgement against the absurd is closer to the comic norm than the moral judgement against the wicked."[7] The ambiguity of Clouds results from an attempt to make

the undisplaced "social judgement against the absurd" coincide with the displaced "moral judgement against the wicked."

Almost any one of the satirists discussed in this chapter could yield most of the Menippean patterns in which I am interested, but I must reserve such thoroughness for John Barth. Therefore I will ignore such juicy and potentially Menippean fruits as the debunking of the gods in Aristophanes' Birds and proceed to a lesser fruit: Seneca's Pumpkinification of Claudius (Apocolocyntosis).

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The Pumpkinification has traditionally been rated a Menippean satire because of its mixture of prose and verse. The verse exists largely to be deflated by prose--an interesting manifestation of the Ideal-Real relationship, also reflected in the age-old association of verse with "idealism" and prose with the prosaic. Thus Seneca deflates a Fieldingesque poetic introduction ("now had the sun with shorter course drawn in his orbit's light, / And by equivalent degrees grew the dark hours of night" etc.) with an "economic" prose explanation: "I shall make myself better understood, if I say the month was October, the day was the thirteenth. What hour it was I cannot certainly tell you; philosophers will agree more often than clocks; but it was between midday and one afternoon."[8]

Seneca also uses obscenity as a deflator, as in the description of Claudius' death: "The last words he was heard to speak in this world were these. When he had made a great noise with that end of him which talked easiest, he cried out, 'Oh dear, oh dear! I think I have made a mess of myself.' Whether he did or no, I cannot say, but certain it is he always did make a mess of everything" (p. 447).

Another common pattern, contained in both quotations above, is the author's mock-honest assertion he tells only the exact, corroborated "truth." This is part of the main Menippean pattern of burlesque in The Pumpkinification, the aim being mockery of the dead king Claudius but also of those who would have deified him. Seneca's short burlesque resembles Byron's Vision of Judgment: Claudius, like George III, is tried in heaven; like George, he is found guilty--but more so; he is deported to hell, retried by his old victims and again found guilty; but, like George, he escapes--not scot-free and by the skin of his teeth, like George--but at least a severe sentence; he is made law-clerk to the freedman of Aeacus, his judge in hell. Thus, aside from the verse-prose mixture and a certain burlesquing of literary "systems," The Pumpkinification of Claudius is essentially a conventional or low-norm satire, concerned with judging Claudius in terms of Good and Bad.

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Good and Bad are hardly the main concerns of Seneca's contemporary, Petronius, whose fragmentary Satyricon evidently gets its title and tone both from (potentially moral) satura and (unequivocally amoral) "satyr."[9] The Satyricon is in some respects the ultimate Menippean satire, certainly the ultimate pre-Lucianic Menippean satire, due to its verbal extravagance, gastronomic catalogues, and literate, parodic, anti-romance structure. It could be discussed in part 5 of this chapter as an example of Rabelaisian comic vitality, the lust for "experience" in Petronius' case being less unequivocally "perverse"; among other things, the Satyricon is an unabashed manifesto of hedonism--which is not to say that it is not ironic, turning on itself in self-parody, mocking Encolpius ("The Exotch") even as he mocks others. Priapic deflation of romance

is a primary device, manifested in the burlesque buggery-battle between Encolpius and Ascyltus over pretty Giton, or, later, in the parodic journey of Encolpius and friends to Croton and Circe. A high point of the latter episode is Encolpius' burlesque speech to his limp phallus; his various pharmaceutical attempts to achieve tumescence anticipate a major theme of The Sot-Weed Factor; and the climax of the episode, projecting the ultimate image of the fragmentary Satyricon, the heights or depths of deflation, the veritable resurrection of the tale, is a re-erection: "utterly incapable of believing his eyes, he reached out his shaking hands and caressed that huge pledge of heaven's favor. . ." (p. 163).

The justification for this obscenity, the norm involved, is the Real, epitomized by Encolpius' defense of his goal of Pleasure:

> To prudes I now assert
> my purity of speech;
> such candor in my pen
> as will not stoop to teach.
> I write of living men,
> the things they say and do,
> of every human act
> admitted to be true. . . .
> Nothing is falser than people's preconceptions and ready-made opinions; nothing sillier than their sham morality. . . . [pp. 151-152]

The latter comment, essentially an unmasking of hypocrisy, smacks of conventional satire, as in Paulson's description of the satire which says "See how simple--all of this that appeared complex can be reduced to lust and greed" (see p. 26, above). But this is not conventional satire, for Encolpius is not denouncing, rather, he is glorifying, the "pleasure" of "every human act admitted to be true"--pleasures which others would hide in shame, or cover with "preconceptions," "ready-made opinions," and "sham morality."

Nevertheless, there is a taste of conventional satire here and in the Satyricon as a whole, especially in the Trimalchio episode, when Encolpius unmasks the "real" boorish motives of the upstart slave and seems to condemn him. But even here there are several layers of ambiguity, or irony: the fact that perverted Encolpius and friends should condemn anyone (a recurring pattern in the Satyricon); or the fact, after all, that Encolpius and his friends seem to enjoy the crass extravagance of Trimalchio and his low-born friends--an enjoyment not just contemptuous or condescending, betrayed (at least in context) by such phrases as "We all applauded our droll astrologer," "We chuckled at these jokes," or "applau[ded] . . . this elaborate tour de force" (pp. 48, 63, 66). These equivocations qualify, although they do not totally undermine, Erich Auerbach's contention that the "realism" of the Trimalchio episode is severely limited due to (1) its emphasis on ethical judgment; (2) its non-tragic, non-serious, or non-problematic utilization of the conventional, "comic," "low" subject and style; and (3) its lack of "popular" immersion in realism; no, says Auerbach, the Satyricon's "realism" is, instead, "a piquant condiment for the palate of a social and literary elite accustomed to viewing things from above with epicurean composure."[10] Auerbach ignores the degree to which the "aristocrat" Petronius is not upset by the "vulgar and orgiastically lawless" aspects of reality.[11] Petronius' partial condemnation of Trimalchio seems to be socially motivated, linked with Trimalchio's "vulgarity," all right, but it is not "ethical," not based on an (aristocratic) "ideal." Auerbach's analysis of the Satyricon as mimesis does not, in my opinion, depict Petronius' attitude toward "reality" so well as does the analysis of the Satyricon as parody. Mimesis implies a norm of the Ideal;

parody implies a norm of the Real. Another way to state this is that Auerbach's definition of the "comic" is quite narrow--limited to comedy's "satiric," censorious aspect,[12] ignoring its "satyric," exultant, joyous, amoral origins. The Satyricon is "comic" in the latter, more than the former sense.

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Apuleius' Golden Ass is also quite "amoral" at times, but tends to morally rationalize its sensual and violent incidental tales, as well as the mildly parodic main tale of Lucius' transformation into an ass and back into a man again. The parody of literary styles,[13] mock-heroic similes (e.g., the sexual "battle" between Lucius and Fotis in Chapter 2), word-play, and mockery of myth and the gods are often inflationary rather than deflationary; used as mere embellishment. A notable exception is the miniature anti-romance enacted in the amphi-theatre near the end, when Lucius, about to be sexually humiliated (but saved just in time by Isis), describes an elaborate pageant of the Trojan War apple-preliminaries on Mount Ida, then reveals the event for what it is: "a barefaced sexual bribe." Lucian uses the same deflationary technique in A Beauty Competition; Barth uses a similar method in his "Menelaiad." Even this burlesque episode in the Golden Ass is ambiguous, however: one suspects Apuleius' denouncement of the "real" motive behind the Venus-Paris bribe is an excuse for more safe ogling. We know his "real" motive, which qualifies and complicates the superficially Menippean, self-parodic conclusion of his "moral" denouncement: "Forgive this outburst! I can hear my readers protesting: 'Hey, what's all this about? Are we going to let an ass lecture us in philosophy?' Yes, I dare say I had best return to my story" (p. 260).

If the story of Lucius' transformations occasionally seems parodic--resembling the Satyricon--it finally resolves into a "serious" pattern of trial and redemption. The author seems confused: is Lucius' salvation due merely to "fortune" or is it "on account of his former innocence and good behaviour"? (see pp. 272, 273)--but Apuleius' intention is clear: to rationalize a tale which panders to unethical drives or lusts; thus to turn most satiric elements into ethical guardians whose real motive is not suppression, but protection, hence liberation. The Golden Ass is more Romance than Menippean satire.

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We turn now to Apuleius' contemporary, Lucian.[14] In Chapter I (pp. 16-17) I noted that Lucian's usual satiric targets are philosophy, myth, the Gods, epic, and romance, that his perspective is usually "cosmic," and that his norm is the Real. Ronald Paulson concisely distinguishes between this stance and that of the conventional satirist: "Juvenal juxtaposes the idealized past with the degenerate present . . . Lucian juxtaposes the misleading appearance with the reality. . . . Juvenal deals with two realities. . . . Lucian works with an appearance or an illusion and a reality. . . . While in Juvenal the ideal is good and the present reality evil, in Lucian the illusion is evil and the exposed reality not good but--and this is the most important change--real."[15] However, the Real, as it becomes "normative," also gains a degree of "good"ness, generating a characteristic confusion or mixture of standards--at least in later Menippean satirists. Lucian, admittedly, has an unusual capacity for ignoring this confusion, or the moral paradoxes arising from a normative Real.

In the first chapter I quoted Tiresias on "how to live" (by being

an ordinary human being, living in the moment, taking nothing very seriously). Lucian expresses a similar confidence in the Real and distaste for "illusion" in Fishing for Phonies. His statement seems pertinent to my earlier discussion of the Menippean satirist's "negative approach to "reality":

> I'm an anti-cheatist, an anti-quackist, an anti-liarist, and an anti-inflated-egoist. I'm anti all revolting types like that--and there are plenty of them, as you know. . . . Not that I'm not an expert probody too. I'm a pro-truthist, a pro-beautician, a pro-sinceritist, and a pro-everything that's pro-worthy. But I don't find much scope for exercising my talents in that direction, whereas thousands of people are always queuing up for the anti-treatment. In fact I'm so out of practice as a probody, that I dare say I've lost the knack of it by now--but I'm a real expert at the other part of my profession. [pp. 176-177]

Lucian's "anti" technique is often a process of unmasking, and his exposure of hypocrisy or vanity (there is an important difference, as Fielding notes in his introduction to Joseph Andrews) often has a conventional flavor, as in Icaromenippus, when Menippus describes philosophers: "They're exactly like actors in tragedy--take off the mask and the gold-embroidered costume, and all you have left is a funny little specimen of humanity that's been hired for that particular performance at a fee of seven drachmas" (p. 130). This flavor pervades Fishing for Phonies, wherein Lucian, perhaps fishing for self-defensive arguments, insists his attacks have been merely on phonies, not on Philosophers as such. It also pervades Alexander, or, The Bogus Oracle. And it somewhat equivocally (insofar as laughter, not totally derisive, replaces moral condemnation) surfaces in a story by Lucian which parallels Jacob Horner's maxim, "In my cosmos everybody is part chimpanzee. . ."[16]:

> There's a story that a certain king of Egypt once taught some monkeys to dance the sword-dance. Monkeys are very good mimics, and before long they were doing it splendidly, complete with masks and purple robes. The show was a great success, until a frivolous member of the audience who happened to have some nuts in his pocket threw them on to the stage. As soon as the monkeys saw them, they forgot about the dance and reverted to normal--that is, they became monkeys instead of ballet stars. They all started fighting for the nuts, smashing their masks, and tearing their costumes to pieces in the process. The performance ended in chaos, and the audience shrieked with laughter. [p. 185]

But this conventional flavor is mixed with a Menippean flavor when Menippus, for example, "uncloaks" a philosopher in the underworld and finds not only "conceit" (vanity) and "lying" (hypocrisy) but also "ignorance," "tricky questions and thorny problems and tortuous arguments," "wasted effort," "nonsense," and "a lot of fuss about nothing!" (p. 68); or when Menippus says, "the more I had to do with philosophers, the more aware I became of their ignorance and helplessness, until finally the ideas of the man in the street began to seem positively brilliant by comparison" (p. 99). Sometimes even this skeptical attitude toward philosophers has a conventional flavor, tasting of what A. O. Lovejoy calls "uniformitarianism"[17]--anti-intellectualism based on the belief that reality is simple, accessible to all men, and made overly complex by ingenious thinkers. This flavor surfaces in the attack on the Cynic Pyrrho in Philosophies Going Cheap (pp. 164-165). But, usually, Lucian's "cosmic" view and belief that everything is "ridiculous" imply that common sense, pragmatism, and "living for the moment" do not involve comprehension of reality so much as recognition or acknowledgment that it cannot be comprehended--certainly not through philosophical system-mongering. Thus, if there is one thinker who

emerges unharmed from Philosophies Going Cheap, it is Democritus, the "laughing philosopher," who distinctly resembles Menippus.

Democritus' conception of the "universe" as "a lot of empty space with a few atoms rushing about in it" (p. 155) is not unlike the cosmic view obtained by Icaromenippus / Up in the Clouds and by Charon on Parnassus. What they see is "a complicated muddle--a world full of utter confusion. . . . If only people could get it into their heads right from the start that they're eventually going to die--that after a brief excursion into life they'll have to be off again, and leave this world behind them like a dream--they'd lead far more sensible lives and make far less fuss about dying" (pp. 90-91). Lucian's naive satisfaction in lucidity, his unpained, unquestioning laughter at man's ridiculousness, is often frightening. For Lucian, it is enough merely to be a member of the "small minority who refuse to have their ears waxed, because they prefer to face facts, see things clearly, and know what's what" (p. 93)--no matter how terrible "what's what" is. Here Lucian establishes the Menippean norm of the Real, although his reaction to it is neither sophisticated nor typical.

The "cosmic" view--epitomized by Icaromenippus--is as close as Lucian comes to a "mimetic" representation of the Real. His normal method as a Menippean satirist is parody--the "anti" approach, epitomized by the True History. In this anti-romance, says Lucian, "every episode is a subtle parody of some fantastic 'historical fact' recorded by an ancient poet, historian, or philosopher" (p. 249). Lucian uses many burlesque devices: mock-accuracy (details, numbers); gross exaggeration; a tongue-in-cheek ease of fabulation (as in the hilarious interplanetary wars); exaggerated glibness; mock-seriousness; understatement; puns; travesty;

colloquialism (as in Odysseus' letter to Calypso); obscenity; and anti-climax ("Thus we finally landed on the continent at the other side of the world; and what happened to us there, I will tell you in another book"). Lucian's standard in this parodic History is, of course, "truth"--the Real. When he visits the Islands of the Damned he finds that "the worst punishments of all were reserved for those who had written Untrue Histories"; thank goodness Lucian's own conscience is "absolutely clear in that respect"! (p. 286). But the doubly ironic tone here, and the exuberant fantasizing of the True History as a whole, reflect ambivalence--a simultaneous repulsion and attraction to "untruth," fabulation, or Romance. Lucian clearly relishes the Romance he mocks--an appropriately ambiguous note on which to end discussion of Lucian and begin discussion of Cervantes.

2. Cervantes: Romance and Anti-Romance (Cervantes, Fielding, T. L. Peacock, Lewis Carroll, Samuel Butler II)

Don Quixote is an Anti-Romance, as Levin says. But in An Introduction to Cervantes, Jean Cassou accounts for the romantic, reverse direction as well: "It is true that in Don Quixote Cervantes has written a satire on the romance, but at bottom he was primarily a writer of chivalric romances. He lacked only the courage--and perhaps the time."[18] Romance competes sometimes awkwardly with Anti-Romance in Part I, which is generally acknowledged to be relatively clumsy, a kind of literary preparation for Part II. This view is reflected in Shroder's assertion that the progression from Part I to Part II is a progression from Burlesque to Irony. The Anti-Romance deflations of Part I are as

blatant as a bruise or the waving arms of a windmill. The contrapuntal Romantic elements are also clear: the canon's open praise of certain chivalric Romances as he burns them early and his equivocation as he preaches against them late in Part I; the non-burlesque verses[19]; the numerous interpolated tales, obviously directed to the Romance sensibility, "chivalric" enough to fascinate Don Quixote himself; indeed, late in Part I, at the inn, Don Quixote is tricked and buffeted about (as in the hanging-by-the-wrists episode) not as the target of an Anti-Romance so much as the buffoon of a Romance--providing comic interludes between interpolated tales.

The Romance-Anti-Romance ambivalence is not simple in Part I, however; and by the end of Part II it is infinitely complex: ambiguously "vital" in a "novelistic" sense.[20] It cannot be described simply as the result of "fear" or of indecision: shall I write a Romance or Anti-Romance? One complicating factor is a conflict between the Real and Ideal as norms. The Real is normative when we laugh at Don Quixote's romantic delusions, when we see his "art" confounded by "nature." The Ideal is normative when we lament the degree to which the real world does not measure up to Don Quixote's ideal conception of it.[21] When the Real is normative, we emphasize the knight's error; when the Ideal is normative, we emphasize his innocence. "Don Quixote," says Paulson, "is by all odds the most seminal narrative satire of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; in the majority of works influenced by it these contrary interpretations appear separately, with the emphasis at first on his error and then, in the later eighteenth century [as Sensibility and Romanticism emerged], increasingly on his innocence. Only in a significant few do they join."[22]

This conflict between the norms of the Real and Ideal could also be explained in terms of Frye's distinction between "the social judgement against the absurd" and "the moral judgement against the wicked." Our laughter at Don Quixote is "a social judgement against the absurd," while our condemnation of the world that lashes him is a "moral judgement against the wicked." In his essay on comedy Frye uses Moliere's Alceste as an example. At least in the case of The Misanthrope, the social judgment prevails over the moral one, according to Frye.[23]

Paulson introduces a somewhat similar moral criterion when he describes the ambivalence in terms of "punisher-punished" or "Knave and Fool" relationships. Don Quixote is "punished" for his delusions. "But if punishment in the picaresque tends to incriminate the punisher, the effect is yet more disturbing when it is meted out to an elderly gentleman, quite out of his wits, who has the best intentions behind his every act. . . . [Thus] [a]s a satiric paradigm, the Quixote figure is radically ambiguous."[24] The guilt of the punisher is not a major factor in the relatively heavy-handed first part of Don Quixote, but in Part II, as both Don and Sancho become better developed, better known, and better loved, the punishment--especially that administered by the duke and duchess--becomes quite oppressive, as in the lashing of Sancho, the Clavileño (flying horse) episode, Don Quixote's encounter with the cat, Sancho's adventures on his island, or the Altisidora incident:

> To make a long story short, all the duennas slapped him [Sancho] and many other members of the household pinched him, but the thing he could not stand was the pinpricks. When it came to that, he rose from his chair with a show of anger and, seizing a lighted torch that stood near by, began laying about him among the duennas and all his other tormentors, crying, "Away with you,

> ministers of Hell! I am not made of brass so that
> I do not feel such unusual torture as this!" [p. 960]

Until even Cid Hamete Benengali is aroused to assert his "personal opinion that the jesters were as crazy as their victims and that the duke and duchess were not two fingers' breadth removed from being fools when they went to so much trouble to make sport of the foolish" (p. 964). The punisher-punished element suppresses the conflict between the Real and Ideal to some degree, forcing us to side with Don Quixote not because of his Ideological innocence but because of his pathetic innocence, and uniting Don and Sancho (Ideal and Real in some respects) as common victims of a malicious world.

There is still another factor involved in the conflict between Romance and Anti-Romance. Late in Part II, a "certain Castilian," seeing the name-sign that has been secretly pinned to the back of Don Quixote's coat, calls him a madman and yells: "'Go back to your home, you crackbrain, attend to your own affairs, see to your wife and children, and leave off these absurdities that eat your brain away and skim off your wits'" (p. 917). Whereupon Don Antonio, Quixote's host, replies, "'Brother, . . . go about your business and do not be giving advice to those that do not ask for it. Señor Don Quixote de la Mancha is quite sane, and we who are with him are not fools. Virtue is to be honored wherever it is met with. . .'" (p. 917). This seems to be a case of Don Antonio's esteem for the Ideal exceeding his esteem for the Real, although, when he soon after tricks Don Quixote with the "enchanted head," one wonders if it might have been merely a ruse to keep the gullible Don in his grasp. A sequel to this scene occurs three chapters later, when Sansón Carrasco tells Don Antonio that he, disguised as the Knight

of the White Moon, vanquished Don Quixote in order to bring him back to his senses and rid him of the follies of chivalry. Don Antonio replies

> "My dear sir, . . . may God forgive you for the wrong you have done the world by seeking to deprive it of its most charming madman! Do you not see that the benefit accomplished by restoring Don Quixote to his senses can never equal the pleasure which others derive from his vagaries. . . . and if it were not uncharitable, I would say let Don Quixote never be cured, since with his return to health we lose not only his own drolleries but also those of his squire, Sancho Panza, for either of the two is capable of turning melancholy itself into joy and merriment." [p. 939]

Clearly, Antonio, like the reader, does not simply esteem Quixote's innocence, nor does he just want to keep him as a butt for jokes; he has become immersed in the character, drawn by Quixote's drolleries, vagaries, and charming madness, which are not just functions of his innocence, but of his vividness and familiarity and the comaraderie established through some 900 pages of action. Our love for Don (and Sancho) is not just the result of a "love" for Romance; indeed, one could argue that it is more contingent on our love for Anti-Romance: how else achieve the "drollery" of Quixote? Nor is it simply the result of pity for the punished, of esteem for the Ideal, or of a moral judgment against the wicked. This aspect of our love for Quixote leads Cassou to rhapsodize:

> True experience, or truth that has been lived, consists of a fragile and precious harmony which must be treated with the most charitable reverence, beyond which it is fatal to venture. . . . Experience must be sought, but we must also know at what point it becomes dangerous, and meet it then with a tranquil heart and a simple confidence in nature and the future. . . . The ideal and the real do not have to be imposed brutally on each other. A gradual harmony should be born from their interaction.[25]

A similar "harmony" exists in The Sot-Weed Factor and Giles Goat-Boy,

but, as in the case of Don Quixote, this two-part harmony can be analyzed (though perhaps not "heard" or intuited) as ambivalence; that is, as a not always harmonious coexistence of norms: esteem for the Real, combined with dread of Reality, hence esteem for the Ideal. Thus Cervantes (like Barth) must write an Anti-Romance, partly because he esteems the Real, but also because this is the only way to embrace (even while deflating) Romance.

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Although it is inaccurate to call Fielding's Joseph Andrews ("Written in Imitation of The Manner of Cervantes") a Menippean satire, this History, Novel, Satire, Comic Romance, or Epic of the Road yields some similar patterns, especially when paired with its sister or mother work, Shamela. In addition, our Barthian context demands at least a glance at Fielding, in light of Barth's only half facetious remark that one intent in The Sot-Weed Factor "was to see if I couldn't make up a plot fancier than Tom Jones."[26]

Shamela has approximately the same relation to Joseph Andrews that Part I of Don Quixote has to Part II. There is a progression from burlesque to irony, from parody to imitation, from "anti" to "pro," from attack to "alternative."[27] Shamela is clearly an Anti-Romance; it travesties, exposes, and deflates Pamela's "romantic," wish-fulfillment amorality--which is of course immorality in Fielding's opinion, at least when disguised by shallow moralism. It ruthlessly, hilariously strips Pamela of her innocent "appearance" to show the shameful, self-serving "reality" beneath. The exposure of hypocrisy--the moral perspective--establishes Shamela as a conventional satire, unlike Part I of Don Quixote. Still, Shamela's burlesque--notably its obscene--devices

resemble those of Aristophanes, Petronius, Rabelais, and Barth. It pivots on the same gross shaft as the Satyricon and Sir Henry Burlingame's Privie Journall. Its burlesque method is epitomized by Shamela's reason for preferring Parson Williams to Squire Booby: "O Parson Williams, how little are all the men in the world compared to thee!" (p. 324).

Joseph Andrews is another, more delicate, matter. Here, for example, lust and chastity can both be ridiculed, as in Slipslop and Joseph, respectively. Of course, strictures against lust are "moral" while those against chastity are "social." Slipslop is immoral while Joseph is absurd (which is not to say that both characters are not lovable or that Slipslop is not absurd too). Paulson says

> The romance in the old Quixotic sense . . . is embodied in Joseph and Parson Adams. They have a true ideal that does not agree with the world around them, which behaves according to the code of the Cibbers and Pamelas. The romance values are chastity and charity, Christian virtues, all ironically exposed as inappropriate to eighteenth-century England. In short, Fielding has adopted the interpretation of Don Quixote that attacks the accepted morality and criticizes it by the standard of an absolute. His interpretation of Quixote always carries this emphasis, sensing that in this world Richardson and Cibber, the innkeepers and merchants, express the real and Quixote the romance. [28]

This interpretation ignores the way charity is glorified while chastity is being knowingly, sympathetically ridiculed, but describes the essential, romantic flavor of Joseph Andrews. A moral criterion ordains Joseph Andrews a Romance, just as it ordains Shamela an Anti-Romance.

The "innocence" of Adams and Andrews is sympathetically mocked at times, conceived on these occasions as ignorance of the world's ways. Joseph and the Parson are gullible, and they are "punished," like Don Quixote. But their romantic wandering, or "quest" (to borrow

Shroder's idea) is not deflated as in an Anti-Romance or Novel. After a series of Romantic reversals, revelations, and recognitions, they are rewarded for their innocence, not disillusioned. The final dig at Pamela (Joseph, utterly happy, refuses to "make his appearance in 'high-life'") emphasizes not that Joseph Andrews is an Anti-Romance, but that it is an "alternative" to Pamela, that is, a moral Romance. Pamela may be further displaced in the direction of reality or plausibility; but Joseph Andrews is further displaced in the direction of morality.

Before passing on to three 19th century writers of Romance-Anti-Romance, I will look at one potentially ambiguous "Anti-Romantic" aspect of Joseph Andrews: the "parody" or "burlesque" in the "diction" (but not in the "sentiments and characters") which, according to Fielding's introduction, is "chiefly calculated" for the "entertainment" of "the classical reader" (p. 8). Fielding mainly has in mind the mock-epic battles. Which way does the burlesque work? Is it "high burlesque," as David Worcester describes it?[29] That is, does it emphasize the difference between the low subject and that which is above it? Or is it "low burlesque," which emphasizes the similarity between a high subject and that which is below it? Worcester also distinguishes between "specific" and "general" burlesque: Specific High Burlesque is Parody, imitating a particular model. General High Burlesque is Mock-Heroic, imitating a general type. Specific Low Burlesque is Travesty; General Low Burlesque is Hudibrastic. Shamela is clearly a travesty; it specifically imitates the domestic subject and the "immediate" epistolary style of Pamela, showing the similarity between "high" Pamela and "low" Shamela. Incidental burlesque in Joseph Andrews

is sometimes general, imitating typical epic patterns, and sometimes specific, as in Book III, Chapter ix, which imitates the Iliad: "'He fell with a thud, and his armor clanged upon him'" becomes "he fell prostrate on the floor with a lumpish noise, and his halfpence rattled in his pocket" (see pp. 218, 362). But is it high or low? Perhaps the Iliad burlesque is high, emphasizing the grotesque incongruity (rattling halfpence vs. clanging armor) between the fallen, evil captain, who has tried to abduct Fanny Goodwill, and his heroic counterpart. But Parson Adams and Joseph Andrews are implicated in this mock-epic battle, too. There may be some parodic or mock-heroic deflation in their case, but, clearly, they are not simply debunked by the burlesque. They are actually glorified by the epic comparison to some degree, and at the same time they bring the epic end of the simile down to their "low" level. In trying to "entertain" the "classical reader," Fielding was probably not too concerned with which direction his burlesque operated. His readers were certainly secure enough not to be upset at having their classical literature debunked--if anything they would probably be delighted--just as delighted as when they saw the other, the "low" end of the burlesque simile, sinking. This anarchic delight would of course be augmented by the delight of mere recognition. In short, Fielding's burlesque, like most burlesque, works both ways, up and down, as almost all critics of satire acknowledge.[30] High and low burlesque merge in about the same manner as Romance and Anti-Romance.

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I will close this section by noting how Romance and Anti-Romance merge in three 19th century British authors whom Frye calls Menippean satirists: Thomas Love Peacock, Lewis Carroll, and Samuel Butler.

Peacock, first chronologically, is the only one of the three who is clearly a Menippean satirist, as indicated by his constant versifying; ideological dialogues and symposiums; frequent references to Hudibras Butler, Rabelais, Aristophanes, Petronius and others; anti-intellectualism; verbal extravagance; and anti-romanticism. Peacock's anti-romanticism is familiarly ambivalent but peculiar in its focus on what Frye calls "sentimental" Romance rather than "naive" Romance[31]--that is, on 19th century romanticism of the Shelley-Coleridge variety. Let us look briefly at two of Peacock's best known works, one early, one late: Nightmare Abbey (1818) and Crotchet Castle (1831).

"The Genius Loci, the tutela of Nightmare Abbey," and of Nightmare Abbey, is "the spirit of black melancholy."[32] Melancholy is the distinguishing feature of the Romantic age, manifesting itself in morals as misanthropy (displayed by the character Cypress, based on Byron, with appropriate passages from Childe Harolde); in politics as--well, as Shelleyism (the "hero" of Nightmare Abbey is Scythrop Glowry, based on Peacock's friend, Shelley); in manners as lethargy (witness Mr. Listless); in religion as pessimism (Mr. Toobad); and in "metaphysics" as mystery. Mr. Flosky ("lover of shadows"), based on Coleridge, is the prime Menippean target of the satire. Mystery is the "mental element" of this "lachrymose and morbid gentleman." He lives "in the midst of that visionary world in which nothing is but what is not," a "great friend to enthusiasm," "elaborate reasoning," or "synthetical reasoning, setting up as its goal some unattainable abstraction" (pp. 7, 32), constantly spouting his "dusky" jargon, never "trespassing within the limits of common sense," which is Peacock's main, though undefined, value (p. 45). Mr. Hilary comes closest to being the author's spokesman,

as he protests against the "false and mischievous ravings" of the melancholy Romantics who "rail against humanity for not being abstract perfection, and against human love for not realizing all the splendid visions of the poets of chivalry. . . ." His solution is "cheerfulness," and he tries to "reconcile man as he is to the world as it is" (pp. 69-71).

If the ideology of Nightmare Abbey is anti-romantic, so is the structure, in some ways. Peacock buries Flosky and friends in an "avalanche of their own jargon"--although one quickly senses that Peacock is often as fond of this jargon as they are. He also buries "the admirers of the minutiae in poetry and romance" in some of their own jargon, in an extravagantly detailed description of the melancholy Scythrop (pp. 86-87). (Elsewhere, attacks on literature become quite ambiguous, when voiced by Flosky, or the "enthusiast" icthyologist, Asterias.) Most importantly, the love-triangle plot of Nightmare Abbey has the outlines of an Anti-Romance. At least the mysteries, subterfuges, complications, and final recognition do not resolve romantically into "happiness": Scythrop-Shelley, forced to choose between two equally attractive women, cannot; he retreats "into his stronghold, mystery," and the women marry, respectively, Flosky and Listless. But of course this "melancholy" ending is Romantic in the Nightmare Abbey sense; therefore, the real deflation comes when Scythrop's "common sense" and Peacockian vitality prevail over his suicidal gloom: seeing that "these repeated crosses in love qualify [him] to take a very advanced degree in misanthropy" and thereby gain fame in the world, he chooses not to shoot himself, but to celebrate with wine (p. 94)!

A similar "common sense" norm appears in Crotchet Castle,[33] but

this potential Anti-Romance ends as a Romance. The Reverend Doctor Folliott displays a "common sense" interest in eating, drinking, and fishing, and a Menippean skepticism toward the "march of the mind" dominating the other guests at Crotchet Castle. Coleridge reappears among these guests as Skionnar, the transcendental poet. Other monomaniacs include Firedamp, the malaria-fearing meteorologist; MacQuedy, the economist; Eavesdrop (Leigh Hunt), the "bookseller's tool"; Dr. Morbific, the mad self-inoculator; Henbane, the toxicologist; Philpot, the geographer; Trillo, the musician; Mr. Toogood (Robert Owen), the "co-operationist"; and Mr. Chainmail, champion of Romance and the dark ages. Some of these monomaniacs could be more aptly described as humor characters or comic characters in "ritual bondage" than as Menippean characters with "diseases of the intellect" (see Frye, pp. 168, 309). Crotchet Castle's anti-intellectualism is ambiguous largely because Dr. Folliott's opposition to the "march of mind" smacks of reactionary conservatism and comfortable epicureanism. He opposes the "march of mind" because education fixes "blockheads"--the "mass of mankind"--in their "stupidity," creating social and political disorder; Dr. Folliott sees himself as a kind of Rabelaisian Friar John, beating these ruffians--between "common sense" drinks; he opposes the "march of mind" in "intellectuals" or the "Modern Athenians" because it often disguises selfish, mercenary motives, as in MacQuedy the economist--a suspiciously comfortable rationalization. Another problem is that Dr. Folliott himself emerges as a monomaniac: a mad advocate of Greek culture. Other ambiguities abound: one's impression that Peacock (like Mr. Crotchet) is more interested in intellectual controversy for its own sake than in the "settlement" (see p. 661) of controversies. Witness the boat trip

north into Romance country, and the author's comment:

> In this manner they glided over the face of the waters, discussing every thing and settling nothing. Mr. MacQuedy and the Reverend Doctor Folliott had many digladiations on political economy. . . . We would print these dialogues if we thought any one would read them: but the world is not yet ripe for this haute sagesse Pantagrueline. We must, therefore, content ourselves with an échantillon of one of the Reverend Doctor's perorations. . . . [p. 715]

Or witness the attack on Romance as a falsification of "reality" (pp. 712-713)--undermined because voiced by mercenary Mr. MacQuedy.

In fact, the anti-romantic, Menippean aspects of Crotchet Castle finally disintegrate as "Romance" becomes opposed to "business." The opposition occurs at several levels and always resolves in favor of Romance, notably in the two love plots. Chainmail the Romantic marries the heroine, Susannah Touchandgo, whom Young Mr. Crotchet earlier abandoned for mercenary reasons. Furthermore, he marries her only after choosing between "pure" love and the mercenary, "feudal pride" which had caused him to hesitate until he knew for sure that Susannah had a "good" (fashionable, rich) name. Similarly, Clarinda Bossnowl finally chooses love (Captain Fitzchrome) over the riches (Crotchet) that formerly attracted her. Crotchet Castle ends, significantly, at Chainmail Hall, with a banquet and a series of Romantic airs; the last is sung by converted Clarinda:

> In the days of old,
> Lovers felt true passion,
> Deeming years of sorrow
> By a smile repaid.
> Now the charms of gold,
> Spells of pride and fashion,
> Bid them say good morrow
> To the best-loved maid. . . .

Romance has another appeal, too. It is associated with feudal

social stability, and opposed to the futile anarchy produced by the modern "march of mind" (or by the hypocrisy underlying MacQuedy's "march"). Thus, when the "rabble" threatens Chainmail's banquet, Rev. Folliott, in the spirit of Friar John, dons helmet and lance and runs out to rout the foe, crying "let us see what the church militant, in the armour of the twelfth century, will do against the march of mind" (p. 755). Romance wins the battle.

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There is no real battle between Romance and Anti-Romance in Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. Here one finds elements of satire, in the hilarious sadism of the Queen of Hearts, or the chaotic justice of "Who Stole the Tarts"; there is even Menippean seasoning in our laughter at the petulant "logic" of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, or at the "impractical," quixotic White Knight (see Frye, p. 225), or at Wordsworth's Leech Gatherer, parodied in the White Knight's song:

> "Come, tell me how you live," I cried,
> "And what it is you do!"
> He said "I hunt for haddocks' eyes
> Among the heather bright,
> And work them into waistcoat-buttons
> In the silent night.[34]

But Alice is essentially Romance, or fantasy. "All in the golden afternoon / Full leisurely we glide," it begins (p. 17). "Reality" is "dull" (p. 152), so we escape to "nonsense," the "queer," "absurd," "mad," and the beauty is, there's no "moral," despite--no, because of--the Duchess' absurd insistence in Through the Looking Glass that "Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it" (p. 111). Or, as the Gryphon impatiently exclaims when the Mock Turtle asks Alice to "explain"

how she has become a "different person" through her adventures: "'No, no! The adventures first . . . explanations take such a dreadful time'" (p. 128).

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Samuel Butler's Erewhon is more problematic. The ambiguities of this strange book can be credited to audacious sophistication, the undercutting of both sides of all questions or "systems," the upsetting of all mental complacency; or they can be credited to cautious equivocation, puzzled, puzzling ambivalence, Victorian bewilderment.[35] Unlike Peacock's works and the Alice books, Erewhon lacks a Menippean admixture of verse and verbal extravagance, but it does have the "ideological" focus, a Menippean anti-intellectualism epitomized by ridicule of the "hypothetics" of the College of Unreason, and it is based on a norm of "common sense," which is an ill-defined mixture of "reason" and "instinct" (see pp. 167, 199, 214). The shallow, adventure-love-escape "plot" is not a Romantic form interfering with an Anti-Romantic content; rather, it happens to be the quickest Utopian vehicle, the fastest way to get in and out of Erewhon and the intellectual ambiguities existing therein.

As the protagonist enters Erewhon, a miniature, and, in some ways, typical Menippean Anti-Romance is enacted. The natives give "signs of very grave displeasure" when they find his watch.

> I remember that when they first found it I had thought of Paley, and how he tells us that a savage on seeing a watch would at once conclude that it was designed. True, these people were not savages, but I none the less felt that this was the conclusion they would arrive at; and I was thinking what a wonderfully wise man Archbishop Paley must have been, when I was aroused by a look of horror and dismay upon the face of the magistrate, a look which

> conveyed to me the impression that he regarded my watch not as having been designed, but rather as the designer of himself and of the universe; or as at any rate one of the great first causes of all things.
>
> Then it struck me that this view was quite as likely to be taken as the other by a people who had no experience of European civilization, and I was a little piqued with Paley for having led me so much astray. . . . [pp. 59-60]

The natives' negative reaction to the watch is perhaps a deflation of the usual Romance pattern (i.e., awed by white man's watch or compass, natives free or enthrone him in fear and reverence). This kind of deflation is not typical, as Butler is seldom concerned with "structure." More important and typical is the Menippean deflation of Paley's optimistic Natural Theology, Paley's reduction of the universe to an intricate but oversimplified watch implying a benevolent creator. Butler offers an "alternative system" (to borrow Frye's idea, p. 229) which, in addition to deflating Paley's system, provides a more realistic (and pessimistic) vision of determinism. Ruthless determinism rules, not a kindly Determinor.

This miniature Anti-Romance is somewhat complicated but quite unambiguous, unlike Butler's later comments on determinism. Determinism and "responsibility" are major concerns in Butler's reversal of the usual attitudes toward crime and sickness, also in the Erewhonians' "Birth Formulae" (revealing the paradoxes of "responsibility" within Darwinian deterministic evolution), and in their attitude toward "machines." The Erewhonians' (as well as Butler's) fear of machines is linked with fear of blind determinism and of a Darwinian struggle for survival of the fittest (see p. 181). This attitude is undermined by Butler's method of quoting both pro and con from "The Book of Machines,"

but even more so by his contradictory call for "competition" among schoolchildren, to replace the current policy of "Inconsistency and Evasion," and to encourage "genius" and "originality" (pp. 162-164).

These ambiguities are partly due to Butler's normative confusion, I think, and partly due to his mixture of satiric methods. Sometimes his satire is Utopian, sometimes Anti-Utopian; sometimes ridiculing by contrast (e.g., Erewhon's negative, rather than positive attitude toward machines), sometimes ridiculing by exaggeration (Erewhon's churches are "musical banks" issuing false currency; its citizens literally send artificial tears to the bereaved). Simultaneously, Butler's values are confused, or inconsistent, as when he debunks art become "trade" (p. 106), then praises Erewhon's Art School for teaching both of Art's branches: "the practical and the commercial--no student being permitted to continue his studies in the actual practise of the art he had taken up, unless he made equal progress in its commercial history." Money, "common sense," the "practical": this trio is of course the crux of much confusion in Erewhon, as it is in The Way of All Flesh--attacked as the cause of crass hypocrisy and selfishness, but embraced as an antidote to impractical "hypothetics" and as the basis of an honest, "enlightened regard to one's own welfare" (p. 135), Butler's chief but murky value in Erewhon.

Normative and methodological confusion dilute more than they enrich the Menippean flavor of Erewhon. In terms of the satiric norms of the Real and Ideal, Erewhon is more conventional than Menippean, as implied by its "low norm" of "common sense," which "drives on" to Frye's second, quixotic, or Menippean phase only with hesitation and equivocation. Menippean esteem for the Real is diluted by conventional esteem for an

Ideal--of Justice, Love, Hope, left in an abstract state rather than embodied in a conventional God and Church (pp. 129 ff.). Menippean skepticism is diluted by the deflationary technique of offering "alternatives" which complicate and augment at least as much as they disrupt "systems." Ambivalence in Erewhon is better understood in terms of the intellectual content than in terms of the Romance-Anti-Romance structure, since the shallowly romantic (and fantastic) structure is merely a vehicle for ideas which are sometimes pro, sometimes anti "Romance" (or, in the broad sense, "System")--which is a good place to end discussion of Romance and Anti-Romance and begin discussion of a related phenomenon: Menippean anti-intellectualism.

3. Swift: Menippean Lucidity and Anti-Intellectualism (Samuel Butler I, Montaigne, Pope, The Scriblerians, Swift, Voltaire, Sterne)

I shall begin by stepping back two centuries to the other Samuel Butler, whose Hudibras helped to initiate the Augustan Age which will be the focus of this section. Like Cervantes, Butler is somewhat ambivalent toward Romance, even while burlesquing it. A complex case in point is Part III, Canto III, wherein Hudibras, fleeing the Widow's Bow'r with his squire, chastises Ralpho for having previously fled from Th'Infernal Conjurer, Sidrophel. Hudibras (a likely candidate!) laments modern cowardice; that courage is no longer valued; that warfare has been reduced to a kind of low, mock level. Ralpho replies that valourous values are obsolete; they died with the Romances--which were false anyway, disguising vulgar, vicious motives with romantic, idealistic cant. Therefore, suggests Ralpho, Hudibras should not employ Romantic

valor in his attempt to regain the widow, but, rather, "modern" law tactics. After hypocritically objecting, Hudibras agrees, and the hilarious satire on modern law tactics which follows seems to affirm the romantic values Hudibras had, earlier, paradoxically and hypocritically glorified.

Evidently swayed by passages such as this, and ignoring the attendant ambiguities, Ronald Paulson makes a case for Hudibras as "mock-heroic" rather than "travesty" (using these terms approximately the same way Worcester does, as, respectively, high and low burlesque).

> Travesty exposes as illusory the assumptions that are generally accepted by society; it puts the lie to society's cherished beliefs that pious men are chaste, that love is eternal, or war is heroic. The mock-heroic satirist relies on society's general agreement with his view of the ideal of piety or love or heroism as well as the small size of the pretender to these.[36]

Thus, "unlike Quixote who really saw giants in herds of sheep . . . Hudibras only finds it useful to see" such things, says Paulson. Therefore the satiric target of Hudibras is not a quixotic Ideal, but, rather, "illusion"--specifically, Hudibras' hypocrisy.[37] One cannot deny the centrality of "hypocrisy" as a target. Nevertheless, mock-heroic deflation of Hudibras' hypocrisy seems complicated by travesty, or by "hudibrastic," as Worcester rather significantly calls it: Butler mocks even the "cherished beliefs" or "assumptions that are generally accepted by society" as "hypocrisy."

Witness the widow's anti-romantic and not just mock-heroic deflation of the "Heroical Epistle of Hudibras to his Lady." She insists that Romantic lovers really want the vehicles, not the tenors of their ridiculous similes: the diamonds to which eyes, the pearls to which

teeth, and the gold to which hair is compared. One could argue that she is merely revealing the hypocrisy of modern lovers, or that this is a tour de force of deflation aimed only at Hudibras, which cannot be held accountable for other ramifications.[38] In this case, one might cite Butler's description of Talgol the butcher in Part I, Canto II:

> . . . he was of that noble Trade
> That Demi-gods and Heroes made,
> Slaughter, and knocking on the head;
> The Trade to which they all were bred;
> And is, like others, glorious when
> 'Tis great and large, but base if mean.[39]

Is this high or low burlesque? Again, a case could be made for mock-heroic: one could argue that Butler is merely deflating the "base," modern version of the Heroic; heroic values are still "glorious when . . . great and large"--or old. But, clearly, the burlesque operates as "hudibrastic," too. The "slaughter and knocking on the head" performed by "Demi-gods and Heroes" is reduced to a butcher's "Trade." They "all were bred" to this trade. Butler's burlesque is double-edged, and even sharper honed--on both sides--than that of Fielding. The admixture of low burlesque, which undermines conventional values, is what lends Hudibras its Menippean tone.

The anti-intellectualism of Hudibras is somewhat less ambivalent, less Menippean, and more conventional. Again, ambiguity results from a shifting of targets. Sometimes Butler attacks "pride" (cf. Fielding's "vanity"); sometimes "hypocrisy." Even when the target is pride (i.e., believing, not just pretending, that one knows what in truth one knows not), attacks on the "abuses of learning" or "ingeniousness of argumentation" are essentially conventional, as in Part I, Canto III, when Butler denounces Hudibras' "learning" as "a cobweb of the brain,

profane, erroneous, and vain." Hudibras' learning is

> A fort of Errour, to ensconce
> Absurdity and ignorance;
> That renders all the avenues
> To Truth impervious and abstruse,
> By making plain things, in debate,
> By Art, perplext and intricate. [p. 98]

Butler invokes a uniformitarianistic standard. Hudibras vainly elaborates on a "reality" that eludes his grasp not because it is too complex but because it is too simple. (Indeed, the only thing "complex" about it is Lovejoy's term.)

The main anti-intellectual attack comes in Part II, Canto III, as "Sidrophel the Rosy-crucian" enters to "chop logick" with Hudibras "About the Science Astrologick." Some confusion results from Butler's use of Hudibras as occasional satiric spokesman in this Canto. Otherwise, this is a straightforward, uniformitarian, anti-intellectual attack, utilizing avalanches of abstruse jargon and the common deflationary devices, such as obscenity. Even here the satire is sometimes hard to pin down, as in the case of Sidrophel's "under-conjurer," Whachum:

> He could an Elegie compose
> On Maggots squeez'd out of his Nose. . . .
> And when imprison'd Aire escap'd her [his mistress]
> It puft him with Poetick Rapture. [p. 163]

What is being satirized: pride, self-delusion, hypocrisy? Clearly, Butler is ridiculing Whachum's falsification of the Real (the Real deflates his "high" falsification through its very "lowness"), but what is Whachum's motive, or does Butler care?

Generally, Butler's conventional, uniformitarian norm of "common sense" leads him to ridicule Sidrophel's abstruse reasoning as vain, impractical, and irreverent--the same complaints lodged against Hudibras

in Part I. But the Canto ends with "An Heroical Epistle of Hudibras to Sidrophel" which shifts the emphasis from Sidrophel's pride to his hypocrisy. It turns out he was just pretending all along, merely feigning the knowledge that was so gloriously debunked, for which hypocrisy hypocritical Hudibras now debunks him, undermining much of the previous satire.

In conclusion and exasperation: Hudibras is a shifting, elusive satire, occasionally Menippean but normally conventional, best remembered, perhaps, for its deflationary devices. Barth (in The SWF) seems to have remembered it for these devices, as did the Augustans--devices such as the Swiftian speculation in the Sidrophel Canto that wind going downward in the body breaks in the usual fashion, but, going upward, breaks into "new Light and Prophecy" (p. 174).

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I will step back one more century to glance at Montaigne before proceeding to Swift and the 18th century. Montaigne's skepticism sometimes seems conventional--aimed at exposing hypocrisy, for example: "Supercelestial thoughts and subterrestrial conduct are two things, let me tell you, that I have always found to agree very well together."[40] Yet his self-skepticism or self-effacement has a Menippean flavor, perhaps epitomized by his chapter "On Democritus and Heraclitus," in which he admits that his "predominant quality" is "ignorance" (p. 131). Like Lucian and Burton, he opts for Democritus, the "laughing philosopher," believing that laughter implies more contempt than weeping. His (mildly hyperbolic) contention that man is "worthless" has a Christian foundation but Menippean overtones. His Democritean contempt is mixed with a Heraclitean vision of reality as flux: "The worst thing

I find about our state is its instability, and that our laws are no more capable than our clothes of settling into a fixed shape" (p. 217, "On Presumption"). Somewhat like Henry Burlingame, he sees that "There is no quality so universal in the appearance of things as their diversity and variety" (p. 344). Aware of his own weakness, he sees "That it is folly to measure truth and error by our own capacity" (Bk. I, title of Chapter 27). His Essays are mere essais: trials, mere attempts to approach an infinitely elusive Truth or Reality (see p. 235). Montaigne's Menippean lesson is summed up in the last few pages of his final chapter:

> . . . the charge enjoined [by God] upon man [is] to live his life according to his condition. . . . People try to get out of themselves and to escape from the man. This is folly; instead of transforming themselves into angels, they turn themselves into beasts; instead of lifting, they degrade themselves. [pp. 404, 405]

Lucian conveys a similar message; so does Voltaire, in Candide, and Barth, in Giles Goat-Boy.

A Menippean tendency also emerges in Montaigne's attitude toward schoolmen, rhetoricians, and philosophers:

> Those people who bestraddle the epicycle of Mercury and see so far into the heavens make me grind my teeth. For in my studies, the subject of which is man, I find an extreme variety of opinions, an intricate labyrinth of difficulties, one on top of another, and a very great uncertainty and diversity in the school of wisdom itself. Seeing therefore that these people have been unable to agree on their knowledge of themselves and of their condition, which is constantly before their eyes, and is within themselves; seeing that they do not know how these things move that they themselves set in motion, nor how to describe and explain to us the springs that they themselves hold and manage, you may judge how little I can believe them when they set out the causes of the rise and fall of the Nile. The curiosity to know things has been given to man for a scourge, says Holy Writ. [pp. 193-194, "On Presumption"]

Montaigne regards himself as "common" except insofar as he acknowledges his own commonness. He values himself for nothing except that he knows his own value (p. 194). Because the universe is immense and largely unknowable, he assumes that knowledge begins with acknowledgment of one's ignorance (i.e., with self-knowledge) and proceeds to knowledge of how to live virtuously, neither of which requires abstruse and futile speculation. Thus

> The least contemptible sort of man seems to me to be one who, because of his simplicity, stands on the lowest rung; with him, I think, equable relations are most possible. I generally find the behaviour and conversation of peasants more accordant with the rules of true philosophy than those of philosophers. [p. 223]

Or, similarly: "I would rather my son learnt to speak in the taverns than in the talking-schools" (p. 291).

Montaigne's aversion to "curiosity," conceived as an "unnatural" effort to go beyond man's capacities (see p. 330), is, paradoxically, almost anti-Menippean at times. Recognition that reality frustrates our attempts to systematize or control it can lead to a condition of quietude, a closing of the mind to external experience. Montaigne ultimately sheds this tendency. As J. M. Cohen says, Montaigne passes "from a mood of scepticism to a final and lively acceptance of all experience, even the most painful."[41] Thus curiosity becomes "natural" in the final chapter, significantly titled "On Experience":

> It is nothing but our personal weakness that makes us content with what others, or we ourselves, have discovered in this hunt for knowledge. . . . It is a sign of failing powers or of weariness when the mind is content. No generous spirit stays within itself; it constantly aspires and rises above its own strength. It leaps beyond its attainments. . . . Its pursuits have no bounds or rules; its food is wonder, search, and ambiguity. [p. 348]

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Pope's Dunciad is a conventional satire in most respects, as indicated by its unambiguous mock-heroic structure (at least if we ignore the pedantic prose apparatus, which is usually low burlesque).[42] The heroic, "ideal" past mocks the puny present; the epic and theological, "heroic" side of the burlesque simile is not deflated, as in low burlesque. However, the anti-intellectualism of The Dunciad has a distinctly Menippean, Montaigne-like tone, and anti-intellectualism is a significant part of The Dunciad, reflected in the derivation of "dunce" from the medieval schoolman, Duns Scotus.[43] Aubrey Williams says "What gave the greatest impetus to much of the satire written by Pope and Swift was their awareness of the failure of the human mind to realize that human reason is limited and fallible. This stimulated their attacks on school divines, deists, Cartesians, textual critics, and minute philosophers."[44]

In his study of The Dunciad, Williams reviews the ancient humanist-vs.-schoolman controversy corresponding to Pope's literary battle. This was and is a contest between "humane wisdom" and "proud scientism," the former emphasizing (as in Montaigne) the ideal of a useful, moral citizen, the latter emphasizing (in the opinion of its antagonists) "useless" speculative reasoning and "irrelevant facts." The basis of "humane wisdom," in Pope as in Montaigne, is "self-knowledge," consisting largely of humility before God and "Nature." Pope's dunces learn not humility but, rather, "Pride" and "Arrogance" from their knowledge--knowledge which is either irrelevant (to action, virtue, etc.) or irreverent: now "Philosophy, that lean'd on Heav'n before,"[45] forgets God and glorifies "reason" or Man himself, says Pope. Whereas "plain Experience," "common sense," and "common knowledge" should teach us

to see Nature as a reflection of God.

Sometimes Pope's attack on arrogant thinkers who ingeniously and irreverently elaborate on God's "Nature" seems to imply a uniformitarian norm. Nature in this context would seem to be conceived as whole, obvious, or even simple. However, it is generally man's subsidiary and humble relation to God or to Nature that is "simple," not Nature itself. Nature remains inscrutable, which is as it should be. This idea informs the Essay on Man, epitomized by the notion that "Whatever is, is right." Still, Pope's skepticism retains a certain "uniformitarian" smugness and confidence--not due to the simplicity of reality conceived as Nature, but due to the simplicity of reality conceived as man's relation to God and Nature. There is a God, after all, and Nature is "simple" to Him if not to us. Pope's skepticism is non-Menippean at least to this degree, while The Dunciad as a whole remains an essentially "conventional" satire.

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The Memoirs of The Dunciad's fictional editor, Martinus Scriblerus, published by Pope in 1741 but written during the previous three decades by various members of the Scriblerus Club, are less Popean, more Swiftian, more facetious, and more Menippean. Here Menippean anti-intellectualism is aided by low burlesque and a gay, rambling carelessness perhaps related to the freer vehicle of prose. In Martinus Scriblerus anti-intellectualism is not directed toward "Pride" so much as toward mad, monomaniacal system-mongering inadequately comprehended by ethical categories. The Scriblerian satirists obviously relish the systems they destroy, possibly because the systems allow the satirists to freely fantasize, deflating by inflating, derogating by

exaggerating (notable examples are Crambe's tour de force of punning in Chapter 8 and the elaboration of the mechanistic principles at work in "Martinus's Uncommon Practice of Physick," in Chapter 10).[46] This phenomenon seems related to the loving and loathing of Romance and Anti-Romance, which I discussed in relation to Cervantes.

Unlike The Dunciad, Martinus Scriblerus links philosophic pride or madness with the Ancients rather than the Moderns. Cornelius, Martinus' father, is a quixotic monomaniac, a lover and advocate of the ancients--a Chainmail gone mad. Reality confounds his monomaniacal theorizing: his first child, a girl, is aborted due to his dietetic eccentricities (the embryo is thence bottled); his glorious antiquarian shield is revealed to be a rusty old sconce; young Martinus breaks a leg by following his father's gymnastic theories, and almost has his spleen cauterized by his father as a result.

Young Scriblerus survives, grows in his father's grotesque mold, and becomes old enough to bear the brunt of the anti-intellectual attack, but the chapters ridiculing Martinus' pedantic literary criticism, his mechanistic theory of Physick, and his similarly ridiculous attempt to "find out the Seat of the Soul" pale in comparison to the "Double Mistress" episode, a brilliant, miniature Anti-Romance only vaguely related to anti-intellectualism. The siamese twin, love-triangle plot of this episode resembles Barth's siamese twin "Petition" in Lost in the Funhouse, as well as Giles Goat-Boy (cf. "Manteger," the beastly would-be-rapist of Indamora, and Barth's Croaker). The pitifully sexual and bathetically incongruous tone of the episode resembles Joyce's Nausicaa chapter in Ulysses: both episodes (among other things) mock sentimental Romances. The Double Mistress episode also contains

a grand mock-heroic-hudibrastic battle between Martinus and Manteger, and a prodigiously abstruse and obscene legal battle between Doctors Leatherhead and Penny-Feather, pivoting on the question of whether the "organ of generation" can be the "seat of the soul." Ultimate verdict: the squabble, the Marriage of Martinus to one of the twins, and the Double Mistress episode are dissolved, "as proceeding upon a natural, as well as legal Absurdity" (p. 163).

The final chapters, largely lists of other Scriblerus (both the club and Martinus) projects, ridicule once more the impractical, non-beneficial system-mongering of the "philosopher of ultimate causes."

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Swift's Tale of a Tub resembles Martinus Scriblerus, and, of course, Gulliver's Travels was originally conceived as a Scriblerus Club project. My brief discussion of these two complex works by Swift will emphasize two major tendencies of Menippean anti-intellectualism: (1) the pleasure of system-mangling (it resembles system-mongering), and (2) the pain of lucidity, which is a function of the bleakness of "reality" or the Real. Here I am indebted to Swift and the Satirist's Art, by Edward W. Rosenheim, Jr.[47]

Rosenheim defines satire as "an attack by means of a manifest fiction upon discernible historic particulars" (p. 31). He introduces the "manifest fiction" in order to distinguish satire from rhetoric, satire's "persuasive" neighbor, and he introduces "discernible historic particulars" in order to distinguish satire from comedy, satire's "punitive" neighbor. Persuasive satire has the "power to convince"--the audience, that is, not the victim; Rosenheim's somewhat misleading term does not mean "moral persuasion," although an implicit or explicit moral norm

may be involved in the process of "convincing." Punitive satire has the "power to delight"; again the term is somewhat misleading; the assumption in punitive satire is that there is no need to "convince" anyone of the rightness of the attack; the audience is attracted and held by the sheer artfulness--the vehicle--of the attack. I dislike Rosenheim's definition and his sandwiching of satire between rhetoric and comedy. I find the conventional sandwiching of satire between comedy and tragedy (as in Frye, Highet, Kernan, and others) more useful. However, Rosenheim's system yields access to the phenomenon of anti-intellectual loving and loathing of systems. Rosenheim notes that, in his burlesques, Swift often "seems to succumb to the spirit of playfulness, malicious or otherwise, in relative indifference to the persuasiveness of what he writes" (p. 136). The Isaac Bickerstaff fiction is an example. So is the Coat-Brother allegory of Tale of a Tub, the madly comic-satiric Aeolist Section (VIII), the Digression concerning Madness, the appendant "Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit," and, for that matter, the entire "manifest fiction" of Tale of a Tub.

The Tale's satirization of "learning" is rooted in the skepticism I have already traced in Montaigne, Pope, and Martinus Scriblerus. Rosenheim believes Swift's proverbial title is mainly directed at the preface to Roger L'Estrange's edition of Aesop's Fables.

> The arrogance and silliness of L'Estrange's addresses to Posterity, the ineffectual disorder and vulgarity of his style, and, quite possibly, the insistence that learning without 'emblems' and accompanying 'keys' is merely 'a tale of a tub' are the aspects of L'Estrange to which Swift addresses his scornful attention. [p. 66]

One cannot reduce experience to "keys"--at least without paying a large

price (I am paraphrasing Barth's Jacob Horner as well as Swift here). Thus, says Rosenheim, "the majority of Swift's assaults upon particular victims proceed from a deep aversion to certain kinds of false claims to knowledge and the fraudulent modes of discourse by which they are advanced. . . . The conception of truth as readily mastered, neatly formulated, and delightfully communicated is the error with which this section . . . recurrently taxes its satiric victims" (p. 88).

All the deflationary devices Swift uses to attack the pride, hypocrisy, ignorance, absurdity, and irreverence of "learning" are susceptible to "comic" expansion--aimed at "delight." In the Aeolist section, as well as the "Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit," Swift expands a "learned" and mechanical "system" to absurd and delightful limits. In the more controlled Aeolist section Inspiration is reduced (but also inflated, in a way) to the mechanical, physical level of belching. The mechanistic deflation-expansion is accompanied by sexual and scatological deflation-expansion. The "tub" metaphor is also grotesquely expanded as we see the tubes leading from the inspirationists' wind-filled tubs to the "posteriors" of a preacher, who is thus inflated to the size of a barrel, with correspondent increase of his belch. A subtle psychological observation underlies the ensuing shift from scatological to sexual deflation as Swift notes the preference among ancients for female oracles: for, he says, the female

> Organs were understood to be better disposed for the Admission of those oracular Gusts, as entring and passing up thro' a Receptacle of greater Capacity, and causing also a Pruriency by the Way, such as with due Management, hath been refined from a Carnal, into a Spiritual Extasie.[48]

A similar principle is at work in the mechanical "Discourse": "I am

apt to imagine, that the Seed or Principle, which has ever put Men upon Visions in Things Invisible, is of a Corporeal Nature. . . . thus much is certain, that however Spiritual Intrigues begin, they generally conclude like all others; they may branch upwards towards Heaven, but the Root is in the Earth" (pp. 287-288).

Mechanistic, scatological, and sexual deflation also predominate in the Digression on Madness, which is in some ways a continuation or sequel to the Aeolist section preceding it. Here Swift attacks "innovation" for leading to "conquests" and "systems" in "Empire," "Philosophy," and "Religion." In a profound sense he works himself into a logical corner in this chapter--at least in the context of his later work, Gulliver's Travels. Or so Rosenheim persuasively argues. Without the Gulliver context, one is likely to miss the potential mad pain underlying the following, crucial, superficially uniformitarian manifesto:

> IN the Proportion that Credulity is a more peaceful Possession of the Mind, than Curiosity, so far preferable is that Wisdom, which converses about the Surface, to that pretended Philosophy which enters into the Depth of Things, and then comes gravely back with Informations and Discoveries, that in the inside they are good for nothing. The two Senses, to which all Objects first address themselves, are the Sight and the Touch; These never examine farther than the Colour, the Shape, the Size, and whatever other Qualities dwell, or are drawn by Art upon the Outward of Bodies; and then comes Reason officiously, with Tools for cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing, offering to demonstrate, that they are not of the same consistence quite thro'. Now, I take all this to be the last Degree of perverting Nature: one of whose Eternal Laws it is, to put her best Furniture forward. . . . I justly formed this Conclusion to my self; That whatever Philosopher or Projector can find out an Art to sodder and patch up the Flaws and Imperfections of Nature, will deserve much better of Mankind, and teach us a more useful Science, than that so much in present Esteem, of widening and exposing them. . . . And he, whose Fortunes and Dispositions have placed him in a convenient Station to enjoy the Fruits of this

> noble Art; He that can with Epicurus content his Ideas with the Films and Images that fly off upon his Senses from the Superficies of Things; Such a Man truly wise, creams off Nature, leaving the Sower and the Dregs, for Philosophy and Reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined Point of Felicity, called, the Possession of being well deceived; The Serene Peaceful State of being a Fool among Knaves. [pp. 173-174]

In this passage Swift reverses the relation between Philosophy (or, in general terms, system-mongers) and "reality"--the relation I have hitherto taken for granted. "Philosophers" delve into the "Depth of Things," "perverting" (which is not quite the same as distorting) Nature, while the common, sensible man stops at the relatively pleasant surface, viewing only the "best furniture" of Nature. Common sense dictates wise "Credulity" rather than pseudo-Philosophical "Curiosity." In fact, the best Philosopher, which Swift would like to equate with the real Philosopher, would "sodder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of nature"--this is the philosopher (and also romanticist) I have hitherto described. Swift seems to see no need to ge beyond the uniformitarian surface of Nature, which is accessible to all men.

Or does he? Clearly, a seed of doubt has been planted. Swift seems uncomfortably aware that there is a chaotic "reality" beneath the surface of Nature. Nature, after all, seems to require soddering and patching at this inner level. And, most importantly, he equivocates, or, rather, displays his discomfort, by calling the credulous, happy, common man a Fool among the curious, agitated Knaves who would delve beyond the surface of Nature. Rosenheim's point is that in Gulliver's Travels Swift goes beyond equivocation or discomfort and decides that he prefers lucidity to felicity.

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Like the Tale of a Tub, Gulliver's Travels spills over into non-satiric fantasy: more so, since its narrative travel-adventure base offers more room for invention, especially in the first two books (as the reading history of Gulliver's Travels indicates). Gulliver's Travels is an Anti-Romance, displaying Gulliver's progression from innocence to experience or disillusionment--but only in a schematic, limited sense, for Gulliver's degree of gullibility, like his ironic, narrative role (Gulliver is sometimes normative, sometimes culpable), fluctuates throughout the book. Romance and fantasy similarly fluctuate. The strange adventures and perspectives of books I and II are intended to "shake up" the reader,[49] but also to entertain him. The pleasure of fantasy seems to account for the occasional use of the Lilliputian language (discounting a minimal amount of travel-book satire), or for the enumeration of the contents of Gulliver's pockets from a Lilliputian point of view. The Lilliputian fire obscenely extinguished by Gulliver is started by a careless maid of honor who falls asleep while reading a romance: a detail not aimed so much toward anti-romance as toward the pleasure of romance or delightful invention. Gulliver's nearly disastrous encounters with cow-dung, flies, wasps, the Queen's dwarf, lice, falling apples, hail, dogs, snails, frogs, and monkeys in Book II have a satiric rationale, but also yield the pleasures of fabulation. Even Gulliver's enumeration of the Balnibarbi Academy of Projectors' experiments yields comic, as well as satiric, laughter--as does the oldest ancestor of this episode, Aristophanes' Clouds.

Book III is the main vehicle of anti-intellectualism in Gulliver's Travels. Here, again, anti-intellectualism is based on skepticism, Christian doctrine, and an ethical, though not necessarily therefore

"conventional" perspective. Paulson calls the various episodes of Book III "unvarnished descendants of the Lucianic dialogues."[50] The "cosmic" view Gulliver obtains in Glubbdubdrib has numerous Lucianic equivalents. The main difference is that Lucian (or Menippus) tends to be unthinkingly elated by having seen dismal "reality"; Swift (or, sometimes, Gulliver) is more dismayed.

Dismay becomes mad misanthropy in Book IV, as Gulliver sees the black and ultimate "Depth of Things"--a veritable heart of darkness. Rosenheim believes that in Book IV,

> aware that Happiness, as commonly conceived, is "a perpetual Possession of being well Deceived," [Swift] refuse[s] to allow happiness to serve as his goal, devoting himself to the austere and often painful pursuit of the truth which only reason can uncover. Security, comfort, and the common forms of benevolence play no part in the moral universe of such a man. . . . For those who seek and find true knowledge, there is no promise of mundane power or pleasure but only the prospect of spiritual alienation for their fellows. . . . This is, I suspect, the curious heroism which we discover in Kurtz. . . . [pp. 206-207]

One of Rosenheim's major desires is to dispel the notion that the satirist, and especially Swift, always has an affirmative "ideal" underlying his attack: "if we assume that Swift's 'ideals' in some way embody a life led according to reason, he has represented such a life . . . in contexts which stress its inaccessibility, its temporal dissatisfactions, and its grotesque incompatibility with most of the values from which man derives dignity and solace. The 'ideal' indeed plays little part in Swift's rhetoric throughout his writings" (p. 219). "The representation of what is exemplary, the advocacy of what is 'right' or noble, the paradigm of our own salvation are not germane to Swift's persuasive mission within the Fourth Book" (p. 216).[51] Swift's

indignation, says Rosenheim, is not elicited by man's failure to live up to an "ideal," but by man's prideful failure to admit his failure, or his innate fallibility.[52] Swift directs his rage at "false knowledge," or "the slick and sanguine aphorisms and arguments and systems by which man finds life supportable in the face of his meager endowments and his corruption even of them" (p. 220). Furthermore, "pride, at least in Gulliver's outraged conception of it, cannot be countered with benign counsels of humility, nor, since it is totally irrational, can it be reasoned away. Man's myopic complacency can be fought only by devastating attacks on the very foundations of his self-esteem" (p. 229).

And what is the reward for honesty or lucidity? Madness; maybe destruction. Paulson picks up this theme and, paradoxically, pushes it in the direction of Romanticism, indicating that another possible reward is "heroism": "physical defeat and spiritual victory,"[53] glorification of "honesty" as a kind of Ideal, embraced heroically to the bitter end. Actually it would be more accurate to say that the Real is what has been embraced to the bitter end.

Rosenheim's closing remarks bear repeating:

> The final truth, as Swift seems to have expressed it, is both so simple and so devastating that it is disclosed only once or twice in the course of a literary lifetime. Beyond this, it takes no direct literary form. But because it is the truth for Swift, it dictates the austere path which all of his literary undertakings must follow. It is a path which allows him little chance to appear lovable, affirmatively dedicated, or constructive. Yet it offers, nonetheless, a particular kind of freedom. For it liberates him from the claims of false benevolence, false eloquence, false hope, false wisdom. Thus free, he can preach, with total conviction, the doctrine of duty to those for whom duty is the necessary substitute for understanding [cf. credulity and curiosity]. He can wage exuberant warfare against bogus prophets and savants. He can devote his greatest

> powers to the practice of that savage but useful art whose glory is not to proclaim truth but to destroy falsehood. [p. 238]

This passage eloquently describes the Menippean satirist's "negative" approach, even though it does not show to what degree "destroying falsehood" is "proclaiming truth."

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Voltaire's Candide resembles Gulliver's Travels (as well as The Sot-Weed Factor) in several respects. Candid Candide, like Gullible Gulliver, undergoes a process of disillusionment requiring travel, adventure, and encounters with violence, obscenity, suffering, sex, and system-mongers. Although Candide seems slightly better adjusted than Gulliver at the end, Voltaire's Menippean satire contains the same paradox of lucidity.

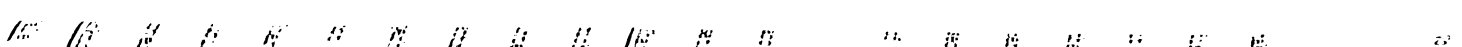
Candide is more easily termed an Anti-Romance, perhaps because it is not so digressive and inventive as Gulliver's Travels. It repeats the same pattern over and over: naive optimism ("Whatever is, is right"; "All works for the best in the long run") is confounded by chaotic, "illogical, unsystematic, fantastic, and (in the existentialist sense) absurd"[54] reality; subsides; and rises to be confounded again. The miraculous recoveries or escapes of Pangloss, Cunégonde, Baron Thunder-ten-tronckh, Paquette, the Baron again, Pangloss again, and Candide constantly, mock Romance by their exaggerated glibness, and also maintain a steady supply of subjects for deflation or liquidation. Glib escapes are matched by glib horrors: the Bulgarian war, Lisbon earthquake and fire, inquisition, New World treachery, tales of rape, candid killings, assorted beatings, cases of torture, cannibalism, cutting off of buttocks--but, as the old woman of Lisbon tells Candide, "'let's get

on; these are things so common that they are not worth speaking of.'"[55]

Voltaire's anti-intellectualism follows the usual patterns. Lord Pococurante, who, like Martin, is a kind of spokesman for Voltaire, tells Candide that in all the volumes of the Academy of Science "there is nothing but empty systems and not a single useful thing" (p. 86). Earlier, Candide left one of his Eldorado sheep with the "Bordeaux Academy of Science, which proposed, as the subject of that year's competition, to find out why this sheep's wool was red [correct answer: it simply, inscrutably is]; and the prize was awarded to a scholar from the north, who proved by A plus B, minus C, divided by Z, that the sheep must be red and die of sheep pox" (p. 68). The main target of anti-intellectualism is chain-of-being optimism, or, perhaps, intellectual innocence--a kind of blindness to reality. Sophistication, disillusionment, lucidity, acknowledgment of the Real: these are Voltaire's goals. At the end, disillusioned, Candide learns the lesson of Menippus. He ignores the mad last-ditch system-mongering of Pangloss and abides by the pragmatic knowledge that "we must cultivate our garden." Or as Martin elaborates: "Let us work without reasoning, . . . it is the only way to make life endurable" (p. 101).

There is a certain desperation in this pragmatic quietude; certainly there is no "heroic" self-congratulation on having finally seen the "truth" or "reality." This attitude is foreshadowed earlier, when Martin and naive Candide discuss the satirist, Pococurante.

> Candide said to Martin: "Well now, you will agree that there is the happiest of all men; for he is above everything he possesses."
>
> "Don't you see," said Martin, "that he is disgusted with everything he possesses? Plato said a long time ago that the best stomachs are not those which refuse all food."



> "But," said Candide, "isn't there pleasure in criticizing everything, in sensing defects where other men think they see beauties?"
> "That is to say," retorted Martin, "that there is pleasure in taking no pleasure?" [p. 87]

Voltaire, like Swift, senses the agony of being a lucid Knave among Fools.

****

"If thou are not too busy with CANDID and Miss CUNEGUND'S affairs,--take Tristram Shandy's under thy protection also."[56] I will insert my discussion of Tristram Shandy here, although I could as easily insert it in any other section of this chapter, associating Sterne's opus with the Menippean catalogue, or comic vitality, or Romance-Anti-Romance. Here, however, this rich work will serve as a door to my last two sections, and shift our attention from the agony of lucidity to a kind of lucid alternative.

Tristram Shandy is even more ambivalent, or, rather, even more accommodating to antithetic attitudes toward "systems," than those Augustan satires discussed above. In the introduction to his edition of Tristram Shandy, James Work says Sterne "himself delighted in quaint lore and much enjoyed, as long as it was not taken seriously, the very sort of intellectual humbuggery he ridicules in Shandy" (p. lxv). This Work attributes to the "triviality" of Sterne's "scrap-book" mind. Work perhaps underestimates the importance of the phrase "as long as it was not taken seriously," which implies a fair degree of sophistication. Sterne seems to have reached a skeptical, anti-intellectual state of lucidity, only to realize that in order to face "reality" one must cover, patch and "sodder" it with systems--but systems consciously acknowledged as such (this seems to distinguish Sterne from Swift in Tale of a Tub). As John Traugott says: "Evil for Sterne is not the

wearing of a mask, but the assumption that Your Worship alone of all men is not wearing a mask. . . . Sterne enjoyed pulling down masks, but only so that the wearer might not forget the accouterment."[57]

And as Tristram Shandy says:

> my hobby-horse, if you recollect a little, is no way a vicious beast; he has scarce one hair or lineament of the ass about him--'Tis the sporting little filly-folly which carries you out for the present hour--a maggot, a butterfly, a picture, a fiddle-stick--an uncle Toby's siege--or an any thing, which a man makes a shift to get a stride on, to canter it away from the cares and solicitudes of life--'Tis as useful a beast as is in the whole creation--nor do I really see how the world could do without it-- [p. 584]

D. W. Jefferson points out a related complication: the disordered "reality" with which Sterne confounds ordered systems has its own "systematic" pattern:

> Sterne had a curious feeling for order which expressed itself in a number of ways. In one of its manifestations it is accompanied by what would appear to be its opposite, a delight in confusion; but in Sterne these things are not opposites. To dwell upon disorder, reducing it to its particulars and bringing out its perversely twisted pattern, involves the introduction of an element of order. . . . Sterne took pleasure in destroying the normal order of things and in creating an exaggerated appearance of disorder, but only to link up the pieces in another and more interesting way.[58]

The elaborate explications of how Walter Shandy's theories are punctured by "reality" provide numerous examples. This anti-intellectual phenomenon, like most discussed in this section, is pertinent to Barth.

I will not try to review the deflationary (and simultaneously inflationary) devices used by Sterne, but only note that his catalogues, double entendres, verbal and structural extravagance, and sexual gaiety (or at least lubricity) link him with the exuberantly blithe Rabelais rather than the exuberantly melancholy Swift. As Traugott says,

Sterne is in the "skeptical tradition, but he also wrote a comedy which is as salutary to the life force as it is deadly to the reason."[59]

> True Shandeism . . . opens the heart and lungs, and like all those affections which partake of its nature, it forces the blood and other vital fluids of the body to run freely thro' its channels, and makes the wheel of life run long and chearfully round. [Tristram Shandy, pp. 337-338]

True Shandeism complicates Sterne's anti-intellectualism: hobby-horses help to make the wheel of life run round. It also complicates what might be called Sterne's anti-romanticism, "innocence" in this case replacing "intellectualism" as supposed target. Witness the following miniature Romance-Anti-Romance, wherein Trim tells Toby how the young Beguine rubbed his wounded knee:

> The more she rubb'd, and the longer strokes she took--the more the fire kindled in my veins--till at length, by two or three strokes longer than the rest--my passion rose to the highest pitch--I seiz'd her hand--
>
> --And then, thou clapped'st it to thy lips, Trim, said my uncle Toby--and madest a speech.
>
> Whether the corporal's amour terminated precisely in the way my uncle Toby described it, is not material; it is enough that it contain'd in it the essence of all the love-romances which ever have been wrote since the beginning of the world. [pp. 574-575]

Both Toby and Trim, innocence and experience, Romance and Reality, are "affirmed" here, while being sympathetically mocked. Sterne is militantly insistent about neither the Ideal nor Real; indeed, the terms are meaningless in this context, for they merge. I think the same holds true in the case of Sterne's anti-intellectualism or skepticism. Sterne avoids the painful paradox of lucidity; he does not have to choose between curiosity and credulity or lucidity and felicity, because he combines the two. I think his felicity is not the result of failing

to look far enough into the Depth of Things, but, rather, the result of an ability to enjoy both the primal, vital "disorder" he sees in the Depth of Things, and the hobby-horses he sees himself and others using to escape from or order those disordered Depths.

4. Burton and the Menippean Catalogue (Burton, Rabelais, Nathanael West, Joyce, and others)

Robert Burton's analysis of Religious Melancholy or Madness (3rd Partition, Anatomy of Melancholy) resembles Swift's satire on the "abuses of religion" in the Tale of a Tub. In a chapter title Burton lists the following

> Symptoms General: Love to Their Own Sect, Hate of All Other Religions, Obstinacy, Peevishness, Ready to Undergo Any Danger or Cross for It; Martyrs, Blind Zeal, Blind Obedience, Fastings, Vows, Belief of Incredibilities, Impossibilities; Particular of Gentiles, Mahometans, Jews, Christians; And in Them, Heretics Old and New, Schismatics, Schoolmen, Prophets, Enthusiasts, Etc.[60]

Burton's anti-intellectual attack on Catholic Schoolmen in this chapter also resembles Swift's satire on "learning" in Tale of a Tub. He lodges the usual complaints, but in the typical Burton style, a style epitomizing the "fullness" of satire in general and Menippean satire in particular. The schoolmen, he says,

> have coined a thousand idle questions, nice distinctions, subtleties, obs and sols, such tropological, allegorical expositions to salve all appearances, objections; such quirks and quiddities, quodlibetaries (as Bale saith of Ferribrigge and Strode), instances, ampliations, decrees, glosses, canons, that instead of sound commentaries, good preachers, are come in a company of mad sophisters . . . with a rabble of idle controversies and questions. . . . [pp. 353-354]

Like Swift and others, Burton links the "idleness" with the "arrogance" and "irreverence" of learning: "some deny God and His providence; some take His office out of His hand, will bind and loose in heaven, release, pardon, forgive, and be quartermaster with Him" (p. 183, from the "Digression of the Air," on astronomer-philosophers).

With this cataloguing style in view, Northrop Frye retitles the Menippean satire an "Anatomy," saying "The word 'anatomy' in Burton's title means a dissection or analysis, and expresses very accurately the intellectualized approach of his form" (see p. 37, above). Evidently Frye has in mind both the etymology of "anatomy" and Burton's story of how Democritus cut up several beasts to determine the causes of madness and melancholy, meanwhile laughing at the follies of mankind (see p. 34). Burton announces in his introductory "Democritus Junior to the Reader" that he is borrowing both Democritus' technique and his name. The ensuing Anatomy by "Democritus Junior" is often conventional satire, but its skeptical tone and "anatomical," digressive, extravagant style link it with Menippean satire.

There is a sense in which Burton takes intellectual "dissection or analysis" seriously: he has a true lust for knowledge, and his Anatomy is intended to be more educational than satiric (indeed, his conventional satire is largely a tool of "moral" education). Often, however, he uses the catalogue facetiously, rhetorically, comically, or satirically, often in order to "overwhelm . . . his pedantic targets with an avalanche of their own jargon." This is essentially a process of deflation through inflation or exaggeration, accompanied and complicated by the usual, ambiguous element of delight: a hunger for the erudition or lore being ridiculed. Contempt may prevail in the catalogue of quibbles

which follows the schoolman passage quoted above; but awe and glee prevail in the description of rarities and experiments performed by alchemists and "RosyCross" men in the Second Partition ("Exercise Rectified of Body and Mind"--diversions for victims of melancholy).

Frye also refers to "overwhelming [one's] targets with an avalanche of their own jargon" as an expression of "exuberance." Perhaps this "exuberance" accounts for the element of delight in ridicule, or of loving in loathing. In a discussion of what he calls "Grotesque Satire," David Worcester notes how "closeness of vision" or intimate knowledge "makes the ugly seem fascinating." Due to this intimate knowledge, "loathing" of Panurge (in his cruel moments), of Burns's Jolly Beggars, of the grotesques in Nashe, Dickens, and Lucian, of Horace's hags (Satire I, 8), and of Swift's Brobdingnagian maids of honor, becomes "liking."[61] Some such force may account for the delight contained in analytic, anatomical "exuberance." Or perhaps delight stems simply from the vitality of invention and facetious animation. This kind of pleasure is registered and evoked by Burton's own description of his method. His description applies just as well to Rabelais, Barth, and, presumably, Varro and Menippus.

> And for those other faults of barbarism, Doric dialect, extemporanean style, tautologies, apish imitation, a rhapsody of rags gathered together from several dunghills, excrements of authors, toys and fopperies confusedly tumbled out, without art, invention, judgment, wit, learning, harsh, raw, rude, fantastical, absurd, insolent, indiscreet, ill composed, indigested, vain, scurrile, idle, dull, and dry,--I confess all ('tis partly affected); thou canst not think worse of me than I do of myself. . . . All I say is this, that I have precedents for it. . . . [pp. 13-14]

****

One such precedent is Rabelais. Ronald Paulson discusses "Aristophanic exuberance" as a "corrective" to "convention-ridden, stuffy, overordered" society.[62] Rabelais displays a similar exuberance. The "central aim" of his satire is to "shake up accepted values, to surprise and shock." Thus, says Paulson, "by his endless lists he implies the similarity between all things, by their heterogeneity the messiness and complexity of things that cannot, as the scholastic believed, be categorized and separated and differentiated in an orderly manner. By his enormous vocabulary, his invented words, and the extreme particularity and thinginess of his descriptions [all spilled out in lists] he asserts that the real--the corrective--is disorder."[63] Apparently Paulson sees the Rabelaisian catalogue as a kind of imitation of "reality" (heterogeneity, disorder, chaos), intended to confound and "correct" scholastic system-mongers or rubricizers. Paulson's superficially self-contradictory statement that the endless lists imply "the similarity between all things" apparently means that all things, by being thrown together into sea-like lists, become indistinguishable drops in a huge, chaotic bucket.

All of Rabelais is a catalogue, but a brief list of isolable catalogues would have to include that of extended gestations; of strange births; of the phenomena of whiteness (not unlike Melville's dissertation on the subject); of homilies; of oaths; of games; of "begats" (a Biblical parody); of booktitles (coined and vulgar); of nonsensical law arguments; of what the author saw in Pantagruel's mouth; of Panurge's arguments in Praise of debtors; of what authors have said about dreams; of examples from the ancients concerning the divining of death--examples which "Pantagruel refused to heap up"; of "mancies" (necromancy,

botanomancy, etc.); of "cod" epithets: positive, and negative; of qualifications of "fool"; of law jargon; of suicides; of pet names; of strange deaths; of similes describing King Lent; of prophecies of victory in war; of animals who will not be harmed by Eusthenes' spittle since he is no longer hungry; of transformations into birds; of the tools on Tool Island; of the feats performed by the Royal Abstractors (as in Aristophanes, Butler, Swift, etc.); of strange, mythic, and newly coined animals; and of the animals, mythological characters, and corresponding "hearsayers" seen in the Land of Satin.[64] If these lists reflect "disorder" in their satiric aspect, they reflect intellectual animation and spiritual vitality in their "comic" aspect, a subject I will discuss in the next section. Highet sees them as a "joke" on the reader: Rabelais spills out words to see how far the poor devil will continue to read. And Frye perhaps combines Highet's notion with Paulson's "corrective disorder" idea when he talks about the "parody of form" running through satire and reflected in the etymological derivation from satura, hash. The catalogue is associated with self-consciousness and with jerky shifts and digressiveness--all of which Frye calls a "technique of disintegration."[65]

If the catalogue is a disruptive and disordered "parody of form," it is also a formal pattern in its own right, a "pattern" (albeit a kind of "anti-pattern") borrowed from satura: a "hash," hodgepodge, medley, mess, stew, potpourri, full platter, farrago, or, (quoting Juvenal) "mixed mash." The gastronomic catalogue can be used for many purposes, but one motive for using it is that one thereby invokes the satura context and "form." Rabelais' immense work is full of food lore and lists. "Gargantua" and "Grandgousier" (Gargantua's father)

mean "Great Gullett," while "Pantagruel" means "All-Athirst," and Rabelaisian vitality is rooted in lust for food and drink. The outrageous menus or feast catalogues of the first book (e.g., pp. 109-110) are partly burlesques but largely expressions of Gargantuan hunger and vitality. Significantly, satura is cognate with "satisfaction" and "satiety."[66] In the fourth book Rabelais uses food for burlesque purposes, as Pantagruel and company fight the Chitterlings, the prelude to the burlesque battle being the stuffing of the great sow or siege-engine ("even as the Greeks went into the Trojan horse") with "noble and valiant cooks": "Soursauce, Sweetmeat, Filthychops, Luggardspit, Pig-ballock," etc. (pp. 608 ff.). Needless to say, sausages do not refer merely to stomachs and intestines in this episode: "To this very day, certain university teachers hold that the serpent who tempted Eve was the Chitterling called in Greek, Ithyphallus; in Latin, Penis Erectus; and, in English, Upjohn" (and so on, in the same mock-learned tone, pp. 604-605). Sterne carries on this sausage tradition.

Gastronomic catalogues also abound as Rabelais mocks the Gastrolaters, or idolaters of the stomach (if there is self-parody here it is hard to pin down). One menu refers implicitly to satura lanx:

> Opening their baskets and pots, they offered up to their god all manner of gifts, as listed below.
>
> White hippocras or spiced wine, with toasts and sippets . . . plain white bread and bread of the snowiest dough . . . carbonados or grilled meats of six different varieties . . . Couscous, an Arabian stew . . . haslets, pluck and fry . . . fricassées of nine sorts . . . bread and dripping, bread and cheese . . .gravy soup, hotchpotch and potroast . . . shortbread and household loaf . . . cabirotado or grilled viands . . . cold loins of veal, spiced with ginger, meat pies and broths flavored with bay leaves . . . marrowbones of beef with cabbage . . . salmagundi, which is a mixed dish of chopped meat and pickled herring, with oil, vinegar, pepper and onions. [p. 657; Rabelais' ellipses]

In Book V, the author, Pantagruel, and friends have another hotchpotch meal, with Queen Quintessence, who eats only "by proxy," by having her food pre-chewed, then poured down her throat through a golden funnel; she evacuates the same way (p. 752).

Rabelais has many precedents. (He himself catalogues some classical food-lore sources, pp. 72-73.) Ennius began the tradition of satires on dinners with a poem called Hedyphagetica, or Delicatessen.[67] Horace uses food in satires 2, 4, and 7 of his second book, and ends the book (Satire 8) with a banquet mocking the extravagant Nasidienus. About one century later Petronius does the same thing to Trimalchio, gleefully cataloguing that upstart's gastronomic vulgarity. Juvenal ridicules gourmandise and lists a modest alternative menu in his 11th satire. Apuleius' Golden Ass runs on food: the "little casserole" belonging to Fotis, into which Lucius would like to poke his finger; the "gladiator's breakfast" preceding his "big fight" with her (similar metaphors abound at Upton in Tom Jones); the roses Lucius the Ass must eat in order to be transformed; and the ass's gourmet eating habits, which gain the attention of Thyasus, who runs the gladiator show that eventually leads to transformation.[68]

****

The Golden Ass's most interesting link with the satura hodgepodge is probably not its food imagery but its chaotic mixture of tales and adventures. Paulson says that "The narrative equivalent of the catalog or anatomy of satura is the journey. The only difference is that in the narrative the series of encounters on the road are stretched out in time instead of being heaped together in a kaleidoscopic few moments."[69] He sees an "interesting coincidence of effect . . . between the realist

and the satirist. The realist seeks to convey the disorganized, truncated quality of experience, while the narrative satirist of necessity lavishes all his skill on the middle--on the individual episodes--and is sometimes very perfunctory about the containing action."[70]

We must make several distinctions concerning the "narrative" catalogue. The hodepodge journey can "imitate" either life or art. Rabelais spews out a disordered quest for the oracle of the Holy Bottle in order to "correct" a too orderly romantic version of the quest. In a sense he is imitating disordered reality; but he is also imitating (and exaggerating, and burlesquing) ordered art. Lucian's True History derives its hodgepodge narrative quality from art, not life. It throws together the paraphernalia of Untrue Histories rather than the paraphernalia of True History, pointing toward the latter only obliquely, through parody. In short (and in order not to repeat earlier parts of this section and chapter), "journey" catalogues can be used for as many purposes as their static counterparts, as one notes in the following medley: Candide, Joseph Andrews, The Satyricon, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, and Tom Jones.

Related to the narrative catalogue--the avalanche of incident and adventure--is what Kernan calls the "Plot of Satire." The plot of satire is episodic, chaotic, "busy," jerky, and various, but, according to Kernan, does not "go" anywhere: it either expands to "everything" only to become "nothing," rises only to fall, or runs in circles.[71] There is little difference between what Kernan calls the "plot of satire" and what he calls the "scene of satire"; they are related in the same manner as Frye's mythos and dianoia[72]: the "plot" is the "scene" in movement, although Kernan does not seem fully aware of the similarity. He

describes the "scene of satire" as choked, chaotic, disorderly, crowded, often obscene and grotesque, with the emphasis on "the destroying ugliness and power of vice."[73] (Paulson's equivalent to the "scene of satire," derived, Paulson says, from the satura catalogue, is the "slice-of-life."[74]) In both cases (plot and scene) Kernan is talking mainly about what I call conventional satire. The "scene" of the Satyricon, Candide, and Gargantua and Pantagruel may be choked, chaotic, disorderly, crowded, obscene, and grotesque, but not in order to show the "ugliness and power of vice"; the purpose of the "scene" in these three Menippean satires is to deflate the Ideal, ridicule "innocence," and glorify the Real (in about that order: Petronius, Voltaire, Rabelais).

In The Plot of Satire Kernan detects three "major tropes" of satire. One of these, "The Mob Tendency," is the "scene of satire" with a new name. Again Kernan is talking about conventional satire and again he links it with disorder, the mob, clutter, a hodgepodge, a farrago, or fullness. He discusses West's The Day of the Locust in this context. Let us glance at West in order to show how the narrative catalogue is shared by conventional and Menippean satire, but also in order to review how conventional and Menippean satire differ.[75]

In Chapter 18 of The Day of the Locust Tod Hackett visits the Hollywood set where "Waterloo" is being filmed, supposedly in order to find Faye Greener, but actually in order to allow West to "film" a veritable hodgepodge of chaos. Tod encounters a grotesque medley of people and objects:

> He pushed his way through a tangle of briars, old flats and iron junk, skirting the skeleton of a Zeppelin, a bamboo stockade, an adobe fort, the wooden horse of Troy, a flight of baroque palace stairs that started in a bed of weeds and ended

> against the branches of an oak, part of the Fourteenth Street elevated station, a Dutch windmill, the bones of a dinosaur, the upper half of the Merrimac, a corner of a Mayan temple, until he finally reached the road.[76]

Tod's satiric trip climaxes with a blatantly schematic, well-turned miniature mock-epic. The staged battle of Waterloo turns out as disastrously as the real thing, and Tod, "thinking"--that is, speaking for the narrator in this case, repeatedly points out the glaring incongruities:

> The man in the checked cap was making a fatal error. Mont St. Jean was unfinished. The paint was not yet dry and all the struts were not in place. Because of the thickness of the cannon smoke, he had failed to see that the hill was still being worked on by property men, grips and carpenters.
>
> It was the classic mistake, Tod realized, the same one Napoleon had made. Then it had been wrong for a different reason. The Emperor had ordered the cuirassiers to charge Mont St. Jean not knowing that a deep ditch was hidden at its foot to trap his heavy cavalry. The result had been disaster for the French; the beginning of the end.
>
> This time the same mistake had a different outcome. Waterloo instead of being the end of the Grand Army, resulted in a draw. Neither side won, and it would have to be fought over again the next day. Big losses, however, were sustained by the insurance company in workmen's compensation. The man in the checked cap was sent to the dog house by Mr. Grotenstein just as Napoleon was sent to St. Helena.
>
> When the front rank of Milhaud's heavy division started up the slope of Mont St. Jean, the hill collapsed. The noise was terrific. Nails screamed with agony as they pulled out of joists. The sound of ripping canvas was like that of little children whimpering. Lath and scantling snapped as though they were brittle bones. The whole hill folded like an enormous umbrella and covered Napoleon's army with painted cloth.
>
> It turned into a rout. The victors of Bersina, Leipsic, Austerlitz, fled like schoolboys who had broken a pane of glass. "Sauve qui peut!" they cried, or, rather, "Scram!" [pp. 134-135]

West is exposing the shameful sham values of Hollywood (and America in

general). He is exposing the shameful "reality" beneath "appearance," the flimsy lathes and canvas of the present, grotesquely inadequate imitations of the "heroic" past. As in all mock-heroic burlesque, the Ideal is normative; the Real is exposed as weak or evil. Reality is infinitely chaotic, therefore bad.

In Miss Lonelyhearts the protagonist laments that "The physical world has a tropism for disorder, entropy" (p. 31). All Miss Lonelyhearts' attempts to escape and order it fail; his ultimate attempt to order it by becoming Christ self-destructs, carries the seeds of its own doom (which does not mean the battle was not "worth while"--maybe). Tod Hackett senses the same tropism for disorder, although he is more Jeremiah than Christ (p. 118). He has apparently despaired of finding order and gains his only consolation from railing and prophecying doom. He sees, scourges, catalogues, and, to some degree, participates in chaos: the people ("mob," "army") with "jaded palates" who have come to California seeking violence or death; Homer's hodgepodge Hollywood house; Harry Greener's jerky, mechanical-toy acting; the cheap Hollywood dreams of Faye Greener; the cock-fight, or, later, the corollary fight over Faye. Much of this Tod pours into his painting, "The Burning of Los Angeles," a burning pot of chaos. Sex and violence (usually sado-masochistic) are major forces of chaos, both associated with fire: embodied in Earle Shoop the cowboy, Miguel the Mexican, the cocks, Abe Kusich the dwarf, Adore Loomis (whose childish sham-sexuality is especially frightening), even in chaste and meek Homer Simpson, whose repressed sexuality and violence erupt to precipitate (ironically) the riot that ends The Day of the Locust. The jerky flashbacks,[77] impulsive shifting of satiric targets (funerals, architecture, health fadism,

etc.), convulsive bursts of imagery ("Through a slit in the blue serge sky poked a grained moon that looked like an enormous bone button"), hit-and-run characterization (Maybelle Loomis, Earle Shoop, Miguel, Abe Kusich), spasmodic eroticism and violence, and catalogues of Hollywood bric-a-brac create a multi-dimensional impression of chaos in The Day of the Locust.

Miss Lonelyhearts is more mysterious and ordered but has a similar mixed mash quality. Sex and violence are again major forces of chaos and grotesquerie, epitomized by Miss Lonelyhearts' relationship with the Doyles. Mammary, rock, Christ, phallic, and shrike imagery recur rhythmically, stirring the pot of satura stew. But the main, repetitive, cumulative device is the letter: letters are catalogues of suffering and Miss Lonelyhearts reads a literal catalogue of letters, until, at the end, quite mad, he runs down to be shot hearing a cumulative "cry for help from Desperate, Harold S. Catholic-mother, Broken-hearted, Broad-shoulders, Sick-of-it-all, Disillusioned-with-tubercular-husband. He was running to succor them with love" (pp. 57-58). Structurally, these letters are equivalent to the shallow songs lending "variety" and chaos to The Day of the Locust. They are part of the "paraphernalia of suffering" Miss Lonelyhearts catalogues in the crucial "Dismal Swamp" chapter:

> The first two days of his illness were blotted out by sleep, but on the third day, his imagination began again to work.
>
> He found himself in the window of a pawnshop full of fur coats, diamond rings, watches, shotguns, fishing tackle, mandolins. All these things were the paraphernalia of suffering. A tortured high light twisted on the blade of a gilt knife, a battered horn grunted with pain.
>
> He sat in the window thinking. Man has a tropism for order. Keys in one pocket, change in another.

> Mandolins are tuned G D A E. The physical world has a tropism for disorder, entropy. Man against Nature . . . the battle of the centuries. Keys yearn to mix with change. Mandolins strive to get out of tune. Every order has within it the germ of destruction. All order is doomed, yet the battle is worth while.
>
> A trumpet, marked to sell for $2.49, gave the call to battle and Miss Lonelyhearts plunged into the fray. First he formed a phallus of old watches and rubber boots, then a heart of umbrellas and trout flies, then a diamond of musical instruments and derby hats, after these a circle, triangle, square, swastika. But nothing proved definitive and he began to make a gigantic cross. When the cross became too large for the pawnshop, he moved it to the shore of the ocean. There every wave added to his stock faster than he could lengthen its arms. His labors were enormous. He staggered from the last wave line to his work, loaded down with marine refuse--bottles, shells, chunks of cork, fish heads, pieces of net. [pp. 30-31]

Miss Lonelyhearts inevitably loses. Order is inevitably confounded by disorder. Now Shrike cynically ridicules all modes of and attempts to escape disorder (his catalogue begins on p. 32), but he is hardly a Menippean satirist, or he certainly does not make Miss Lonelyhearts a Menippean satire. West clearly ridicules Shrike more than Miss Lonelyhearts (by making him a sexual beggar, among other things). Thus Miss Lonelyhearts, like The Day of the Locust, is a conventional, rather than a Menippean satire (insofar as these categories apply). West is all too aware that Nature confounds Art, that the Real confounds the Ideal. He does not want to disrupt Romance with Reality (although he scourges the modern age for having made Romance puerile and "escape" superficial); rather, he laments that Reality does always disrupt Romance. He rages not because Miss Lonelyhearts tries to build systems but because Miss Lonelyhearts necessarily fails. The very tone gives him away, of course. The Menippean satirist seldom rages at system

builders; he laughs--with rue or cathartic abandon--because he, too, knows that disorderly Reality always wins. As I have said before, there is a measure of loathing even in his attitude toward Reality.

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Northrop Frye calls Joyce's Ulysses an "anatomy" insofar as it has a "tendency to be encyclopaedic and exhaustive both in technique and in subject matter, and to see both in highly intellectualized terms."[78] The usefulness of this Menippean approach to Ulysses' catalogues is indicated by the degree to which the motives and characteristics described earlier in this section seem applicable to Joyce. The following discussion may not elucidate Ulysses, but it will at least allow Ulysses to elucidate and recapitulate the motives and characteristics I have catalogued in this section.

[1] Frye's description of Joyce's "encyclopaedic and exhaustive technique" is merely a new phrase to describe the intellectual "dissection or analysis" characteristic of the Burtonic anatomy. One could also utilize this phrase in defining "naturalism."

[2] The inadequacy of a "naturalistic" interpretation of Joyce's catalogues is demonstrated by passages such as the following (from the Ithaca chapter):

> What reflection concerning the irregular sequence of dates 1884, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1892, 1893, 1904 did Bloom make before their arrival at their destination?
>
> He reflected that the progressive extension of the field of individual development and experience was regressively accompanied by a restriction of the converse domain of interindividual relations.[79]

Numerous motives are at work here, one of them being an attempt to "overwhelm pedantic targets in an avalanche of their own jargon." One target

is the pseudo-scientific Bloom, although our attitude toward him at this point in Ulysses is more sympathetic than derisive. The form of this passage emphasizes its message: the pitiful, anti-climactic "inter-individual relations" between Stephen and Bloom. I think Frye goes to the heart of the Ithaca chapter when he says "the sense of lurking antagonism between the personal and intellectual aspects of the scene accounts for much of its pathos."[80]

William York Tindall calls the "grotesque" pseudo-scientific diction of this chapter "more Rabelaisian than Newtonian. As for naturalism: if naturalistic at all, the chapter is the reduction of naturalism, by parody, to absurdity."[81] Naturalism, then, is the second "pedantic target overwhelmed in an avalanche of its own jargon" in the Ithaca chapter.

[3] Tindall's Rabelais parallel points toward the "exuberance" Frye and others associate with the catalogue. And, again, Joyce's exuberance seems to be a function of the delight in "close scrutiny" or "intimate knowledge" as well as a function of loving while loathing his targets, national, religious, literary, and personal.

[4] One could also say that Menippean "exuberance" is used as a "corrective" in Ulysses. Joyce spins out page after page, often in "catalogue" form, in order to "correct" simple, "romantic," or, he might say, "realistic" versions of Reality. This aspect of Ulysses highlights the connection between the Novel and Menippean satire discussed in Chapter I. The Joycean catalogue can serve either the Novel or Menippean satire; either the direct, mimetic approach to Reality, or the "negative," indirect, parodic approach to Reality. In the latter case, it can be a kind of "joke" on the reader, or it can be, in Frye's terms, a

"parody of form," a reflection of satura hash.

[5] The Nausicaa and Oxen-of-the-Sun chapters and the overall mock-Homeric pattern (high burlesque with perhaps an admixture of low burlesque or of inflationary parallelism) are the main examples of "parody of form." Is there also a way in which Ulysses is an imitation of the satura "form": hash, stew, hodgepodge, etc., whose gastronomic tendencies I reviewed above? Perhaps not. On the other hand, one can find almost anything one wants in Ulysses, not only Bloom with his potato and eating "with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls" (see pp. 55, 59), but also passages such as this, in the Cyclops chapter:

> And there rises a shining palace [Dublin's meat and vegetable market] whose crystal glittering roof is seen by mariners who traverse the extensive sea in barks built expressly for that purpose and thither come all herds and fatlings and first fruits of that land for O'Connel Fitzsimon takes toll of them, a chieftain descended from chieftains. Thither the extremely large wains bring foison of the fields, flaskets of cauliflowers, floats of spinach, pineapple chunks, Rangoon beans, strikes of tomatoes, drums of figs, drills of Swedes, spherical pearls of the earth, and punnets of mushrooms and custard marrows and fat vetches and bere and rape and red green yellow brown russet sweet big bitter ripe pomellated apples and chips of strawberries and sieves of gooseberries, pulpy and pelurious, and strawberries fit for princes and raspberries from their canes. [p. 294]

[6] Finally, there is the "narrative catalogue" I discussed above in relation to the journey, the flood of incident and adventure, the "slice-of-life," and the "plot" and "scene" of satire. If the static catalogue is associated with naturalism in Ulysses, the narrative catalogue is associated with the interior monologue. The physical journey, incidents, "plot" and "scene" of Ulysses are physically limited in time and space, but comprise a long and complex catalogue when sifted through the

minds of Joyce's characters. Meandering, shifting gears, speeds, dimensions, this moving, fluid, narrative catalogue reaches a climax in Molly's soliloquy:

> and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

5. Rabelais and Comic Vitality (Rabelais, Erasmus, Byron)

Molly's soliloquy leads quite naturally to the last section of this chapter. "Comic vitality" seems directly related to a primal, sexual pleasure in living. I do not have in mind ethically "displaced" comedy of any kind, but, rather, primitive comedy, or those primitive comic remnants linked with ancient rituals celebrating spring, fertility, and the amoral forces of nature. "Comic vitality" accepts, affirms, and celebrates disordered, chaotic, amoral "reality." If and when there is a "positive" element, an affirmation of experience in Menippean satire, it resembles Molly's "yes," or Barth's "cosmophilism," or Rabelais' "drink."

The "affirmation" involved in comic vitality resembles and is definitely related to the "exuberance" described in section 4, above,

but one must distinguish between delight or loving for intellectual systems and delight or loving for unsystematic experience. In Rabelais (as in Barth) these two kinds of delight mix. Sometimes the delight in systems is a function of a residual loathing of the Real. Sometimes, paradoxically, delight in systems stems from the systems' resemblance to the Real, to vital, chaotic life itself. Near the end of Gargantua and Pantagruel, Rabelais gets carried away with a ridiculous catalogue of real and unreal animals in the Land of Satin:

> I saw some two-backed beasts, marvellously happy and extraordinarily prolific at arseclicking; their dual rumps wagged more riotously than ever the most tail-wagging wagtail.
>
> I also saw crawfish being milked, after which they paraded home in drill formation. You, too, would have watched them with delight. [p. 798]

This delight in fantasy clearly has little to do with the loathing of "reality"; rather, it seems to stem from exaggerating or elaborating upon, from magnifying the delight in, the chaotic variety of "reality" itself. Rabelais invariably leans in this direction: whatever the object of his delight, the immediate cause is usually the object's chaotic variety and vitality.

"What are the sole theme and subject of these books of mine?" he asks: "Comedy and gay fooling, short of offending God and king" (p. 491). And "Do you ask what Pantagruelism is? Good heavens, you know as well as I! Pantagruelism is a certain gaiety of spirit produced by a contempt of the incidentals of fate; it is a healthy, cheerful spirit, one ever ready to drink, if it will" (p. 495).

> And never fear that the wine run short, as it did at the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. As much as you draw forth at the tap, I shall drain in at the bung, so our barrel will prove inexhaustible, lively at the source and of perpetual flow. . . .

> Ay, my barrel is a veritable cornucopia of merriment and mockery. [pp. 298-299]

"Merriment and Mockery" are more or less comparable to "positive" and "negative" exuberance in Rabelais. Merriment is comic vitality and Mockery is the same thing upside down or by implication. Let us look at three Rabelaisian poems as examples.

The "Inscription Engraved on the Main Gate at [the Abbey of] Thélème" mocks and rails at drab, dry clerics (associated with various evils) and celebrates freedom and vitality:

> Here enter not, smug hypocrites or holy loons,
> Bigots, sham-Abrahams, impostors of the cloth,
> Mealy-mouthed humbugs, holier-than-thou baboons,
> Lip-service lubbers, smell-feast picaroons. . . .
>
> Here enter not, defenders of dishonest pleas,
> Clerks, barristers, attorneys who make freemen slaves,
> Canon Law pettifoggers, censors, Pharisees,
> Judges, assessors, arbitrators, referees
> Who blithely doom good people to untimely graves,
> The gibbet is your destination, legal knaves!
> Be off: indict the rope if you should find it short,
> Here there is no abuse; we do not need your court.
>
> Tangle, wrangle, brangle
> We loathe, from any angle.
> Our aim is joy and sport,
> Time's swift, youth's fleet, life's short.
> You, go and disentangle
> Tangle, wrangle, brangle!
> [pp. 147-148, italicized in the text]

This indictment of "tangle, wrangle, brangle" is based on a belief in man's innate goodness. The only rule at Thélème is "DO AS THOU WILT because men that are free, of gentle birth, well-bred and at home in civilized company possess a natural instinct that inclines them to virtue and saves them from vice" (p. 154). This poem seems to be a conventional satire insofar as it attacks hypocrisy and implies that life should be "simple" rather than a "tangle"; but the "simple" life

advocated is really just a free one; the tangles, wrangles and brangles can also be seen as systems interfering with a life that is really complex, liberated, "free," "vital," not reducible to rules. The free, merry life is really "simple" only in the sense that it is, in Rabelais' opinion, "good." Obviously, this "romantic" belief in man's innate goodness (which is a gross over-simplification of Man, after all) tends to elude my categories. Nevertheless, it can exist within and hence complicate the Menippean norm of experience or "reality." One factor is Rabelais' tendency to equate the amorally vital with the "moral." (See my discussion of Frye and the "ideal," p. 32, above.) Man should be freed because he is innately "good"; but he is also "good" because or when he is "free"--that is, drinking and making merry.

A less perplexing example of Merriment and Mockery appears in Book II, when Pantagruel writes a paean to perpetuate the "heroic" exploits of his men. His poem ends:

> Let tyrants storm, rogues rage and bullies brawl,
> We know he conquers who is bravely shod
> In faith, and clad with hope; though he be small,
> His hand is armed with the Almighty's rod.
> [p. 260, italicized in the text]

Panurge detects the note of fatuous self-congratulation and writes a burlesque "imitation" of Pantagruel's paean; Panurge's version ends with a completely different kind of rod:

> Hail, meat! Praise, sauce! And long live wine, withal!
> Tumbrils of shit for the abstemious clod!
> Septembral juices grace our bacchanal
> To fill the paunch and elevate the cod.
> [p. 261, italicized in the text]

Cod, wine and bacchanal are not merely "low" burlesque devices used to deflate Pantagruel's "high"-flying self-delusion; they are also normative in the sense of "good." They are the means of Merriment as well as

of Mockery, an alternative as well as a corrective.

A third poem appears in Book V, Chapter 46, at the conclusion of the quest for the Holy Bottle, and sums up the dual thrust of Rabelais' satire. The burlesque journey has finally led to the oracle's single "word," trinc. Bacbuc, the oracle's "lady-in-waiting," threatens to make Panurge and friends "drink" the massive "gloss" on the oracle, contained in her massive silver book, then relieves the suspense by opening the book to reveal not words and "trismegistian" systems but a flask of wine. Trinc "means simply: Drink!" (pp. 833-834). Panurge's ensuing poem describes both this minor event and the Romantic "quest" that has dominated the second half of Rabelais' book:

> "Trinc! Drink up, by goodman Bacchus!
> Let no ponderous problem rack us!
> All our quest was one long farce. . . .
>
> Hail, the hymeneal urge
> Of the perfect groom, Panurge!
> Sing Io paean! Victory!
> Hail, to Bacchus! Hail, to me!
> Hail, to marital relations!
> Hail, to joyous copulations!
> Friar John, I swear that Bottle
> Spoke the truth; and I will throttle
> Any oaf who dares deny
> I'll be married, by and by."
> [pp. 834-835, italicized in the text]

The burlesque Romantic quest for the Holy Bottle and the answer to Panurge's marital dilemma has led not to a magnificent revelation, but, anti-climactically, to a tiny drip: the "word," trinc. Simultaneously, trinc is a revelation. As in the case of the cod, wine, and bacchanal, it is the tool of Menippean merriment as well as the tool of mockery. Chaotic "reality" operates in the same way; it can act positively as well as negatively, at least potentially, and its positive quality is freedom, vitality, or sexual energy, all summed up (literally,

for Panurge) by Rabelais' "drink," the drip from his Holy Bottle.

****

Erasmus' Praise of Folly is more sober and ambiguous in some ways, but it is animated by a similar Renaissance delight in the complexity and vitality of experience. Folly was begotten by Riches upon Youth and suckled by Drunkenness and Ignorance. Her companions and followers include Pleasure, Madness, Wantonness and Intemperance.[82] Folly claims (and convinces us) that she is the vital spark of life itself:

> For first, what is more sweet or more precious than life? And yet from whom can it more properly be said to come than from me? For neither the crab-favoured Pallas' spear nor the cloud-gathering Jupiter's shield either beget or propagate mankind; but even he himself, the father of gods and king of men at whose beck the heavens shake, must lay by his forked thunder and those looks wherewith he conquered the giants and with which at pleasure he frightens the rest of the gods, and like a common stage player put on a disguise as often as he goes about that, which now and then he does, that is to say the getting of children. . . . In fine, that wise man whoever he be, if he intends to have children, must have recourse to me. [pp. 15-16]

Folly is associated with sex and propagation and also with pleasure, which makes life worth living (p. 17), with youth and innocence (pp. 18 ff.), which yield the most pleasure, and with Nature itself:

> As therefore those arts are best that have the nearest affinity with folly, so are they most happy of all others that have least commerce with sciences and follow the guidance of Nature, who is in no wise imperfect, unless perhaps we endeavor to leap over those bounds she has appointed to us. Nature hates all false coloring and is ever best where she is least adulterated with art.
>
> Go to then, don't you find among the several kinds of living creatures that they thrive best that understand no more than what Nature taught them? [p. 54]

"Science" or "Art" is associated with "wisdom" and "reason" and opposed to Nature, folly, and passion. The Stoic without passions is a kind

of super-Houyhnhnm, the mere "stony semblance of a man, void of all sense and common feeling of humanity." And "who would not shun and startle at such a man, as at some unnatural accident or spirit?" (pp. 46, 47).

In the first half of The Praise of Folly gay facetiousness and witty, topsy-turvy, intellectual playfulness prevail. In the second half, Erasmus often reverts to conventional invective or satire, but at the end he switches back, as he again associates Folly with nature, life, and innocence; and "wisdom" with art, death, and "malice." Thus Christ "chiefly delighted in little children, women, and fishers"--that is, fools (p. 140). Christ even became a fool of sorts by taking the shape of a man in order to heal sinners.

> Nor did he work this cure any other way than by the foolishness of the cross and a company of fat apostles, not much better, to whom also he carefully recommended folly but gave them a caution against wisdom and drew them together by the example of little children, lilies, mustard-seed, and sparrows, things senseless and inconsiderable, living only by the dictates of nature and without either craft or care. [p. 141]

As in Rabelais, there is a tendency to link amoral, "natural" or spontaneous action with innocence, which is good. Yet this affirmation of vital, spontaneous actions and experience is essentially an escape from strictly ethical (at least conventionally ethical) categories. Hence Erasmus avoids the serious, moral tone of conventional satire; he ends with a Menippean flourish, mocking his own satire by having Folly say "you are mistaken if you think I remember anything of what I have said, having foolishly bolted out such a hodgepodge of words. . . . Wherefore farewell, clap your hands, live and drink lustily, my most excellent disciples of Folly" (p. 152).

****

Erasmus' cheerful lust for life resurfaces in Byron's Don Juan:

> The best of Life is but intoxication:
> Glory, the Grape, Love, Gold [all Folly], in these are sunk
> The hopes of all men, and of every nation;
> Without their sap, how branchless were the trunk
> Of Life's strange tree, so fruitful on occasion!
> [II, clxxix][83]

In The Plot of Satire Alvin Kernan describes Don Juan as a "romantic satire," which seems equivalent to what I (and others) call Menippean satire: Byron's "crammed, various creation renders the Romantic view of a world too large in all directions and too complex in its workings to be captured and arranged in any neat system of thought or formal pattern. Throughout Don Juan, traditional forms and systems are reduced to nonsense by showing their inability to take the measure of man and his world" (p. 174). Kernan lists the systems mocked:

> Religion, metaphysics, psychology, social custom, law, all received systems of thought, are sieves through which existence pours in the fluid, shifting world of Don Juan. Even poetry is mocked for its pretensions to tell the truth about the strange creature man. After testing many systems against the reality of life as his poem presents it, the narrator can only exclaim,
>
> Oh! ye immortal Gods! what is Theogony?
> Oh! thou, too, mortal man! what is Philanthropy?
> Oh! World, which was and is, what is Cosmogony? (IX,20)
>
> Since all systems and forms are by their nature inadequate to life, then only by being unsystematic can the poet hope to describe things as they are, for
>
> if a writer should be quite consistent,
> How could he possibly show things existent? (XV,87)
> [Plot of Satire, p. 175]

Kernan sees Byron attempting to "reveal the shabby truths underlying the pretenses with which men cover themselves. . . . The point of these attacks is not that man is 'a carnivorous production,' but that he tries so ridiculously to pretend that he is not" (pp. 203, 204).

Byron mocks Don Juan's mother, Donna Inez, for her hypocrisy--for her attempts to disguise her own "natural," sensual drives--and he glorifies the father, Don José, for being a "careless" and free "lineal son of Eve" (I, xviii, xix). Byron's own attitude toward these drives varies: in Canto II he often tries to sublimate "love" into a totally idealized, "Romantic" vision of innocence, sometimes but not always catching himself in time, mocking his own Romance, or at least the conventions of Romance in general.[84] Sometimes he values the primal, sensual drives only in the sense that they are "real," better acknowledged than unhealthily disguised and suppressed. This attitude easily and often shifts to one of outright glorification: "Let us have Wine and Woman, Mirth and Laughter, / Sermons and soda-water the day after" (II, clxxviii). Sermons, moralizing, hypocritical masks, and, sometimes, Romantic idealization-falsification: all these are somewhat carelessly heaped together as attempts to deny or suppress "reality," which is ultimately irrepressible, fluid, free, and "natural."

Byron's "reality" is "process," or "flux," says Kernan, reflected by the "but then" plot, the "wave" pattern, and the "master symbols of [Don Juan], fire and ocean" (pp. 177-181). Kernan sees Byron's attitude toward this "reality" resolving into three "senses of life, [1] comic, [2] satiric, and [3] tragic" (p. 184).

> [1] In comedy, the focus is on the excitement and goodness of the long sweep of life; and the hero is the man who naturally knows the way of the world and commits himself to the zestful experience, while avoiding the traps laid for him by the fools who attempt to deny nature. [2] In satire, nature is viewed in a more neutral manner, simply as the way things are; and the plot follows the workings of the dunces who for one reason or another attempt to deny nature but succeed only in perverting life. [3] In tragedy, nature is viewed from the perspective of the isolated,

> solitary individual who grows old and dies ["process" is a "burning up," a "process" of "life" which leads to death]; and the plot traces his fearful struggles with a nature toward which he feels kinship and revulsion simultaneously. [p. 221]

I think Kernan's three categories sum up the main attitudes of Don Juan and of Menippean satire, if not of literature in general. His scheme accounts for Menippean "comic vitality"; for anti-intellectualism, anti-romanticism, and a normative Real; and also for the necessary ambivalence of these attitudes. The Menippean satirist's characteristic loving-and-loathing does indeed seem to resolve into a tension between "comic" and "tragic" views of the "reality" which is his ultimate (although oblique) concern. Honoring the Real, he cannot have the Ideal; embracing protean Becoming he gains a sense of life or vitality, but he loses a sense of Being, security, or freedom from the death toward which life moves; the price of experience is the loss of innocence, and once he has left the garden there is no way to return.

Barth would gain partial but not total satisfaction by deflating this melancholy, Byronic analysis of his situation, saying "In other senses, of course, I don't believe this at all."[85]

NOTES

[1] Barth describes The Floating Opera this way in the John Enck interview, p. 7.

[2] Carolyn Weingarten, a graduate student at MSU, 1970-1971, first pointed out to me the similarity between the floating opera of "The Anonymiad" and that of The Floating Opera.

[3] Notably by Scholes and Kellogg; see note 34, Chapter I.

[4] Aristophanes, Complete Plays, ed. Moses Hadas, Bantam ed. (N.Y., 1962), p. 103.

[5] Matthew Hodgart, Satire, p. 30. Much of Hodgart's book is derived from Elliott, whose main source for this kind of lore is Francis M. Cornford's The Origin of Attic Comedy (London, 1914).

[6] Ibid., p. 36.

[7] Anatomy of Criticism, p. 168. More of this in my discussion of Cervantes.

[8] Trans. W. H. D. Rouse, Loeb Classical Library ed. (London, 1969 [first printed in 1913]).

[9] See Van Rooy, p. 155, and Arrowsmith's introduction to his Mentor edition, p. vii.

[10] Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, 1953), pp. 38, 31, 47. The chapter is entitled "Fortunata."

[11] Ibid., p. 38.

[12] See note 67, Chapter I, reference to Paulson's anthology and comparison of Comedy and Satire.

[13] Much parody is ignored or suppressed in Robert Graves's translation (N.Y., 1951). The "effect of oddness" in the style, says Graves, "is best achieved in convulsed times like the present by writing in as easy and sedate an English as possible" (p. x). The "oddness," perhaps, but not the parody: Graves's easy and sedate English sometimes accentuates the "odd," amoral lust for violence in the book, but it skips over parodic passages to get on with the stories that invariably follow. The suppression of parody distorts but also reflects, I think, Apuleius' real interest in the book--raw and sometimes ribald fabulation.

[14] Apuleius probably borrowed the theme for his Golden Ass from Lucian's Lucius, or the Ass. Lucian, in turn, got the story from Lucius of Patra's The Ass. See Graves's introduction, p. xvii, and his Appendix, pp. 289-293, which quotes (and condemns) Lucian's version.

[15] The Fictions of Satire (Baltimore, 1967), pp. 39, 40.

[16] ER, p. 138.

[17] As in "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism," MP, XXIX (1932).

[18] In Cervantes Across the Centuries, ed. Flores and Benardete (N.Y., 1947), p. 18.

[19] All references to Don Quixote are to the Modern Library Edition, translated by Samuel Putnam (N.Y., 1949). In his notes, p. 995, Putnam quotes John Ormsby, a late 19th century translator of Cervantes: "'The pieces of verse introduced in the Second Part are more or less burlesques. . . . The verses in the First Part (except, of course, the

commendatory verses, and those at the end of the last chapter) are serious efforts, and evidently regarded by Cervantes with some complacency. The difference is significant.'"

[20] This complexity is incarnated, I believe, in Americo Castro's "Incarnation in Don Quixote" (in Cervantes Across the Centuries, pp. 136-178). It seems to me that Castro, dazzled by this "vital," "realistic" ambivalence, lets appreciation interfere with logical analysis (which is suspiciously, destructively non-"vital" in Castro's opinion). He refuses to stoop to dualistic categorization: "Don Quixote was neither written against books of chivalry nor was it not written against them. In formulating the question this way, we are focusing upon the work from a logical, rational category that does not fit it at all." The trouble is that Castro's non-rational approach does not prevent him from slipping into an unconscious (or unacknowledged) reliance on a similar set of categories; he finally glorifies the Romance (cf. "vital") aspect of Don Quixote at the expense of its Anti-Romance aspect.

[21] Here I am paraphrasing Paulson (Satire and the Novel) on "The Evolution of Anti-Romance." Matthew Hodgart notes the same dualism in his description of the "quixotic tradition" of the novel: "Here the essential point is that the hero should be in some respects a simpleton or a monomaniac who fails to come to grips with reality and suffers accordingly; but also that he should be spiritually superior to the rest of the world" (Satire, pp. 217-218).

[22] Satire and the Novel, p. 33.

[23] This is the phenomenon Elliott somewhat misleadingly calls "the satirist satirized."

[24] The Fictions of Satire, p. 101.

[25] "An Introduction to Cervantes," p. 13. Castro's essay (see note 20, above) expresses a similar belief, in language even less controlled.

[26] John Enck interview, p. 7. References to Joseph Andrews are to the Riverside Ed., ed. by Martin C. Battestin (Boston, 1961).

[27] Paulson sees Joseph Andrews as an "alternative" in Satire and the Novel, pp. 112 ff., as does Battestin in his introduction to the Riverside Edition.

[28] Satire and the Novel, p. 115.

[29] The Art of Satire, Chapter III, sections 1 and 2.

[30] A notable exception is Ian Jack, who sometimes stodgily, sometimes desperately, tries to transfer the inviolability of definitional boundaries to the shifting boundaries of satire: "In mock-epic a dignified genre is turned to witty use without being cheapened in any way." The Rape of the Lock is a mock-epic; therefore Pope's purpose in

this poem "is not the ridicule of a literary form but the setting of a lovers' tiff in true perspective"--with no exceptions (Augustan Satire, p. 78).

[31] Naive means "primitive or popular," whereas "'sentimental' refers to a later recreation of an earlier mode. Thus Romanticism is a 'sentimental' form of romance. . ." (p. 35, Anatomy of Crit.).

[32] Norton edition, 1964, p. 52.

[33] In The Novels of Thomas Love Peacock, ed. David Garnett (London, 1963), Vol. II.

[34] Collier paperback edition, 1962, p. 284.

[35] See Kingsley Amis' concise Afterword to the Signet paperback edition (N.Y., 1960). My references to Erewhon will be to this edition.

[36] The Fictions of Satire, p. 106. Ian Jack tries to say approximately the same thing in Augustan Satire even though he calls Hudibras "low" satire--referring to the "straightforward diminution" (of Hudibras, etc.) which is the "opposite of the mock-heroic" (p. 23).

[37] The Fictions of Satire, p. 105.

[38] The latter, it seems to me, is Sacks's method of disposing of satiric ambiguities. See note 59, Chapter I.

[39] Hudibras, ed. John Wilders (Oxford, 1967), p. 38.

[40] Essays, translated, selected, and with an introduction by J. M. Cohen, Penguin paperback edition (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1958), p. 405.

[41] Ibid., p. 13.

[42] Here and always I use "mock-heroic" as "general high burlesque." Ian Jack uses the term in a more limited sense, insisting that any straying from the mock-heroic, high-low simile disqualifies a work from being called "mock-heroic." Straying consists of straightforward invective, expressions of melancholic self-pity, etc. So that in the case of the Dunciad, Jack can say: "Pope is not prepared to undergo the willing suspension of contempt by which alone the mock-heroic poet performs his task." For our purposes, the important point is that Pope never strays from the mock-heroic to travesty. Ian Jack's discussion of The Dunciad (Chapter VII, Augustan Satire) is a weak but in some ways refreshingly negative "corrective" to Aubrey Williams' positive study.

Although I use Worcester's terms, "mock-heroic," "travesty," and "hudibrastic," I dislike his use of the term "parody" to refer to "Specific High Burlesque." I use the term "parody" in the common sense of "burlesque." Thus when I refer in Chapter I to Menippean satire's structure as that of a Romance-parody, I do not intend to imply that it

is high burlesque. Indeed, my discussion of Hudibras emphasizes that it is generally low burlesque.

[43] Aubrey L. Williams, Pope's Dunciad: A Study of its Meaning (Baton Rouge, La., 1955), p. 109.

[44] Ibid., p. 85.

[45] From The Dunciad, Book IV, l. 643, in Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pope, ed. Aubrey Williams, Riverside ed. (Boston, 1969), p. 378. Lines 453-492 of Bk. IV present a typical skeptical attack on intellectual arrogance.

[46] Memoirs Of the Extraordinary Life, Works, and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus, ed. Charles Kerby-Miller (N.Y., 1966).

[47] Swift and the Satirist's Art (Chicago, 1963).

[48] A Tale of a Tub, etc., ed. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith (Oxford, 1958 [first ed., 1920]), p. 157.

[49] Paulson's description, in The Fictions of Satire.

[50] Ibid., p. 172.

[51] This is where Sacks obtains his notion of the "satire" vs. the "apologue."

[52] In "The Gloom of the Tory Satirists," reprinted in Eighteenth Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. James L. Clifford (N.Y., 1959), pp. 3-20, Louis I. Bredvold emphasizes that the intensity of the Tory gloom was due not to realization of "cosmic" forces but to the old Christian view of man's innate original sin. This he calls a "tough-minded" gloom and "classical naturalism" and "the astringent and penetrating observation of the realist" (rather than "lyrical melancholia"--whatever that is). The essay resembles Rosenheim's discussion in some ways, but, finally, its rationale is totally different. Bredvold's main point is that there is "moral idealism" at the heart of the Tories' "righteous indignation." Therefore, their gloom is "pessimistic" but "tonic and exhilarating."

[53] The Fictions of Satire, p. 186. See Part III, "Swiftean Romanticism: The Satirist as Hero." Rosenheim mentions the "heroism" of Kurtz but does not emphasize Gulliver's "heroic" qualities.

[54] This is Highet's description of the "story" of Candide (Anatomy of Satire, p. 11). Is this "story" an imitation of reality, or a parody of art? Highet does not ask the question. I ask it but cannot answer it.

[55] Voltaire, Candide, trans. Donald M. Frame, Signet paperback ed. (N.Y., 1961), p. 37.

[56] The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, ed. James

A. Work (N.Y., 1940), p. 17.

[57] John Traugott, Tristram Shandy's World: Sterne's Philosophical Rhetoric (Berkeley, 1954), p. xiii.

[58] "Tristram Shandy and the Tradition of Learned Wit," Essays in Criticism, I, iii (July, 1951), 244, 248.

[59] Tristram Shandy's World, p. 19.

[60] References are to The Anatomy of Melancholy (A Selection), ed. Lawrence Babb (East Lansing, Mich., 1965).

[61] The Art of Satire, pp. 65-67. Cf. a passage from John Hawkes's The Lime Twig (N.Y., 1961), pp. 8-9. Hencher, the narrator of this section, describes a boy and dog he used to watch: "Each morning when the steam locomotives began shrieking out of Dreary Station the boy knelt on the stones in the leakage from the barrel and caught the puppy by its jowls and rolled its fur and rubbed its ears between his fingers. Alone with the tar doors dripping and the petrol and horse water drifting down the gutters, the boy would waggle the animal's fat head, hide its slow shocked eyes in his hands, flop it upright and listen to its heart. His fingers were always feeling the black gums or the soft wormy little legs or quickly freeing and pulling open the eyes so that he, the thin boy, could stare into them. No fields, sunlight, larks--only the stoned alley like a footpath on a quay down which a black ship might come sailing if the wind held, and down beneath the mists coming off the dead steeple-cocks the boy with the poor dog in his arms and loving his close scrutiny of the nicks in its ears, tiny channels over the dog's brain, pictures he could find on its purple tongue, pearls he could discover between the claws. Love is a long close scrutiny like that."

[62] The Fictions of Satire. See "The Central Symbol of Violence" in Chapter I.

[63] Ibid., p. 85.

[64] Rabelais, Complete Works, trans. Jacques Le Clercq, Mod. Lib. ed. (N.Y., 1936). In order, the catalogues begin on pages 12, 23, 32, 36, 52, 63, 167, 185, 205, 284, 308, 338, 369, 382, 389, 396, 433, 440, 478, 530, 555, 586, 600, 670, 694, 711, 748, 797, and 794.

[65] Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 233-234.

[66] Paulson, Satire and the Novel, p. 21.

[67] Highet, Anatomy of Satire, p. 39.

[68] See The Golden Ass, pp. 30, 37 ff., 243 ff.

[69] Satire and the Novel, p. 21.

[70] Ibid., p. 22.

[71] See Chapter I in The Cankered Muse and Chapters VII-X in The Plot of Satire. Kernan discusses the three "patterns" of the plot of satire in relation to (1) Pope's Dunciad, (2) Jonson's Volpone, and (3) the novels of Evelyn Waugh.

[72] "The word narrative or mythos conveys the sense of movement caught by the ear, and the word meaning or dianoia conveys, or at least preserves, the sense of simultaneity caught by the eye." "The mythos is the dianoia in movement; the dianoia is the mythos in stasis" (Anat. of Crit., pp. 77, 83).

[73] From The Cankered Muse, Paulson anthology, p. 256.

[74] Satire and the Novel, pp. 40-41.

[75] The following discussion was initiated by Chapter 5 of The Plot of Satire but makes no attempt to follow Kernan's analysis closely or accurately.

[76] Nathanael West, Miss Lonelyhearts and The Day of the Locust, New Directions paperbook ed. (N.Y., 1962), p. 131.

[77] Cf. Frye's description of "jerky cinematic changes" as part of the Menippean "technique of disintegration," Anat. of Crit., p. 234.

[78] Anatomy of Criticism, p. 313.

[79] Ulysses, Mod. Lib. ed. (N.Y., 1961), p. 667.

[80] Anatomy of Criticism, p. 314.

[81] A Reader's Guide to James Joyce (N.Y., 1959), p. 227.

[82] The Praise of Folly, trans. John Wilson [1669], Ann Arbor paperback ed. (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1958). See pp. 12-15 for Folly's ancestry.

[83] I will refer in the text to the canto and stanza numbers and quote from the Riverside ed., ed. by Leslie A. Marchand (Cambridge, Mass., 1958).

[84] For example, Haidee's "pity" for the naked, half-drowned Don Juan:

> But being naked, she was shocked, you know,
> Yet deemed herself in common pity bound,
> As far as in her lay, 'to take him in,
> A stranger' dying--with so white a skin
> [II, cxxix]

There is some anti-romance here, but also a large amount of sympathetic, pseudo-"romantic" relishing of Haidee's quaint naivety.

[85] ER, p. 119.

CHAPTER III. BARTH'S MINOR WORKS

The Sot-Weed Factor and _Giles Goat-Boy_ become clearer--without loss of complexity--when placed in the Menippean context of (1) a normative Real, conflicting with a sometimes normative Ideal, (2) Anti-Romance, conflicting with Romance, (3) Anti-Intellectualism and Lucidity, with attendant ambiguities, (4) the catalogue, and (5) comic vitality. However, before turning to Barth's two great Menippean satires, I must deal with his first, second, and fifth books, all of which have Menippean but also novelistic and other tendencies. _The Floating Opera_ and _The End of the Road_ may be viewed as experimental works in which Barth's literary and philosophical predilections jostle, pointing quite logically, in retrospect, toward _The Sot-Weed Factor_ and _Giles Goat-Boy_. _Lost in the Funhouse_ may be viewed as Barth's ultimate comment on Menippean satire in some respects ("ultimacy" is one of his favorite terms), as a literary labyrinth, or fragmented, exploded Menippean universe reflecting some of the violent tensions of Menippean satire. More importantly, for our purposes, it may be viewed and used as an introduction to Barth's peculiar concerns.

All three of these lesser works are concerned with existential philosophy, pro and con--a philosophy resembling that of "Menippus" in some respects, involving, among other things, a "cosmic" view similar to that of Lucian, distrust of complacent intellectual systems (thanks

largely to connections with Husserlian phenomenology), esteem for "lucidity" (as in Camus, for example), and a "leap" into life not unlike Rabelais' embracing of chaotic "reality." Often, however, Barth ridicules existentialism, either in Menippean fashion, as just another philosophical "system," or, in an almost opposite fashion, as a self-destructive, self-contradictory system which does not distort, order, or "reduce" experience enough. Needless to say, Barth's attitude toward existential philosophy in his first, second, and fifth books is ambivalent, as is his attitude toward "art," existentialism's philosophical mate.

1. Lost in the Funhouse

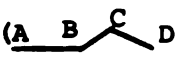
Lost in the Funhouse is Barth's most recent book (1968), but some of its stories were published separately and as early as 1963. Its introductory "Frame-Tale" reads: "ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A STORY THAT BEGAN ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A STORY THAT BEGAN . . ." etc.: the "tale" trails and turns endlessly on a Moebius strip and establishes a circular pattern which, I think, justifies my beginning with Barth's last book.[1] I begin here because Lost in the Funhouse consciously--self-consciously--grapples with the aesthetic and existential questions central to the two early works I will discuss in this chapter. It also articulates Barth's doctrine of "ultimacy" or "exhaustion," the notion that the end of one literary road--specifically, that of the Novel--can be the beginning of another, a doctrine resembling, although perhaps reversing, Levin's notion of the cyclic relation between mimetic and parodic literature. Finally, Lost in the Funhouse, subtitled "Fiction

for Print, Tape, Live Voice," represents a culmination of Barth's "experimental" interest in aural or oral literature, an interest first apparent in the "reels" and "tapes" of Giles Goat-Boy, evidently related historically to Barth's move from Penn State to Buffalo in 1965, where he "took over" the electronics lab;[2] according to Alfred Appel, Jr., "Doubleday initially planned to issue a long-playing record with" Lost in the Funhouse.[3] Yes, Barth's "avant-garde" interest in cross-channel stereo recording, tapes, and so forth, is truly circular, a reactionary return to the oral forms of ancient minstrelsy, the forms of Homer and oriental storytellers, but also of Menippus and Lucian.

Three short pieces near the middle of the Funhouse are thematically central: "Lost in the Funhouse," "Life Story," and "Title." I will categorize the themes shared by these pieces of fiction as (1) self-consciousness, (2) reactions to being "lost" in art and/or life, and (3) associated rationales for art.

In "Lost in the Funhouse," Ambrose, occasional protagonist of Lost in the Funhouse, and projected protagonist of Barth's abandoned work, The Seeker (to which "J.B." refers in Giles's "Cover-letter"[4]), visits the Ocean City funhouse. "For whom is the funhouse fun? Perhaps for lovers. For Ambrose it is a place of fear and confusion" (p. 69). So the story begins. The funhouse is a metaphor for life or existence; it frightens and confuses Ambrose largely because it is incomprehensible, grotesque, labyrinthine, and perhaps because it is mysteriously sexual. The funhouse is simultaneously a metaphor for art, signified by the narrator-author's running comments on his story--such as the following reference to the italicized place of fear and confusion:

> A single straight underline is the manuscript mark for italic type, which in turn is the printed equivalent to oral emphasis of words and phrases as well as the customary type for titles of complete works, not to mention. Italics are also employed, in fiction stories especially, for "outside," intrusive, or artificial voices, such as radio announcements, the texts of telegrams and newspaper articles, et cetera. They should be used sparingly. If passages originally in roman type are italicized by someone repeating them, it's customary to acknowledge the fact. Italics mine. [p. 69]

And so on. Through a constant, frenzied self-consciousness, epitomized by the drawing of a Shandean diagram of the "action of conventional dramatic narrative" ( , p. 91), the narrator metaphorically equates himself with Ambrose; as Ambrose becomes lost in the funhouse the narrator becomes lost in the story:

> A long time ago we should have passed the apex of Freitag's Triangle and made brief work of the dénoument; the plot doesn't rise by meaningful steps but winds upon itself, digresses, retreats, hesitates, sighs, collapses, expires. The climax of the story must be its protagonist's discovery of a way to get through the funhouse. But he has found none, may have ceased to search. [p. 92]

The "existential" funhouse metaphor is confused or mixed with this aesthetic metaphor partly because of an epistemological anomaly: Ambrose and the narrator are both "lost" because they can (and, especially in the case of the narrator, they know they can) only see life in terms of art:

> Ambrose wandered, languished, dozed. Now and then he fell into his habit of rehearsing to himself the unadventurous story of his life, narrated from the third-person point of view, from his earliest memory parenthesis of maple leaves stirring in the summer breath of tidewater Maryland end of parenthesis to the present moment. Its principal events, on this telling, would appear to have been A, B, C, and D [as in the modified Freitag triangle on the previous page]. [p. 92]

Transforming his entire life-history into art, Ambrose, clearly equated with the narrator, even decides or "pretends" that "it is not so bad after all in the funhouse." "He dreams of a funhouse vaster by far than any yet constructed" (even though "by then they may be out of fashion, like steamboats and excursion trains. . .").

> He envisions a truly astonishing funhouse, incredibly complex yet utterly controlled from a great central switchboard like the console of a pipe organ. Nobody had enough imagination. He could design such a place himself, wiring and all, and he's only thirteen years old. He would be its operator: panel lights would show what was up in every cranny of its cunning of its multifarious vastness; a switch-flick would ease this fellow's way, complicate that's, to balance things out; if anyone seemed lost or frightened, all the operator had to do was.
>
> He wishes he had never entered the funhouse. But he has. Then he wishes he were dead. But he's not. Therefore he will construct funhouses for others and be their secret operator--though he would rather be among the lovers for whom funhouses are designed. [pp. 93-94]

This ending of "Lost in the Funhouse" is frustratingly complex in context, but it can be viewed in terms of the conflicts I discussed in relation to Menippean satire. There is clearly a conflict here between lucidity and felicity, curiosity and credulity. Such an interpretation holds whether the funhouse is existence--viewed as the Depth of Things--or whether the funhouse is art--which reveals the Depth of Things insofar as it is acknowledged to be a mask, patching and "soddering" reality. Ambrose and the narrator seem drawn to "funhouse" art insofar as it is successful in patching reality; yet they are terrified insofar as it fails, or insofar as they realize it is a mere mask: hence the startling break ("all the operator had to do was.") leading to the final paragraph. Ambrose and the narrator are simultaneously attracted and repelled by the funhouse, whether the funhouse

is reality or art. Insofar as the funhouse is art (as in the last paragraph), the artist's pleasure and pain stem from his lucidity, his inability to play in the funhouses he operates for others. Operating funhouses has a therapeutic value, but also aggravates the psychic wound of lucidity.

"Life Story" deals with the same themes. It, too, is a "story" about the process of writing a "story." Again Barth presents a kind of therapeutic rationale for art; it is double-edged in this case:

> Am I [a "fictional personage" in a world which is a novel] being strung out in this ad libitum fashion I wondered merely to keep my author from the pistol? What sort of story is it whose drama lies always in the next frame out? If Sinbad sinks it's Schehera-zade who drowns; whose neck one wonders is on her line? [p. 117]

Again the narrator--this time on the eve of his thirty-sixth birthday--ponders being "lost" in life (fears of "schizophrenia, impotence creative and sexual, suicide" [p. 121]) and/or art. And, again, the latter, lost-in-art theme focuses on literary self-consciousness:

> What a dreary way to begin a story he said to himself upon reviewing his long introduction. . . . Another story about a writer writing a story! Another regressus in infinitum! Who doesn't prefer art that at least overtly imitates something other than its own processes? That doesn't continually proclaim "Don't forget I'm an artifice!"? That takes for granted its mimetic nature instead of asserting it in order (not so slyly after all) to deny it, or vice-versa? Though his critics sympathetic and otherwise described his own work as avant-garde, in his heart of hearts he disliked literature of an experimental, self-despising, or overtly metaphysical character, like Samuel Beckett's, Marian Cutler's, Jorge Borges's. The logical fantasies of Lewis Carroll pleased him less than straightforward tales of adventure, subtly sentimental romances, even densely circumstantial realisms like Tolstoy's. [p. 114]

At the end of this meandering "Life Story," the narrator resists the

credulity, felicity, and Romance attracting him in this paragraph; he reaffirms the "boundary between life and art, reality and dream," and, somewhat equivocally, asserts that "fiction must acknowledge its fictitiousness and metaphoric invalidity" (p. 125).

"Title" asserts the same thing more emphatically. Pondering the plight of the novel, which has become an "exhausted parody of itself," the narrator considers and rejects two possibilities: rejuvenation and replacement. He sees a third choice:

> The final possibility is to turn ultimacy, exhaustion, paralyzing self-consciousness and the adjective weight of accumulated history. . . . Go on. Go on. To turn ultimacy against itself to make something new and valid, the essence whereof would be the impossibility of making something new. [p. 106; author's elipsis]

He demands "Historicity and self-awareness": "to acknowledge what I'm doing while I'm doing it is exactly the point. Self-defeat implies a victor, and who do you suppose it is, if not blank? That's the only victory left. Right? Forward! Eyes open" (pp. 106, 107). The "blanks," the listener's comments, the spelled-out punctuation comma and the grammatical directions or programming ("One still wants a woman spirited, spacious of heart, loyal, gentle, adjective, adjective") register discomfort and equivocation, or, perhaps, "exhaustion," but they are also the author's vehicle of self-consciousness or self-awareness.

Barth is dealing here with the parody versus imitation problem I discussed in relation to Shroder and Levin. In a review-article on Jorge Luis Borges, written about the same time as "Title" (late 1967), entitled "The Literature of Exhaustion," Barth reiterates: The Sot-Weed Factor and Giles Goat-Boy are "novels which imitate the form of the Novel, by an author who imitates the role of Author."

> If this sort of thing sounds unpleasantly decadent, nevertheless it's about where the genre began, with Quixote imitating Amadis of Gaul, Cervantes pretending to be the Cid Hamete Benengeli (and Alonso Quijano pretending to be Don Quixote), or Fielding parodying Richardson. "History repeats itself as farce"--meaning, of course, in the form or mode of farce, not that history is farcical. The imitation . . . is something new and may be quite serious and passionate despite its farcical aspect. This is the important difference between a proper novel and a deliberate imitation of a novel, or a novel imitative of other sorts of documents.[5]

This doctrine of "farce" or parody may justify "self-consciousness," but it does not completely soothe John Barth. When the narrator of "Title" says "Oh God comma I abhor self-consciousness" he is mocking his own "loathing" of self-consciousness, of "our time our situation, our loathsome art, this ditto necessary story," but he is registering real discomfort as well. The discomfort is again linked to lucidity: Barth would like to give himself credulously and happily to the telling of old-fashioned stories, but he cannot. He is literally "lost" in art, in self-awareness, a phenomenon dramatized in the following, mad, climactic progression, which begins with a call for a self-conscious, pseudo-existential "leap" back to conventional novelistic concerns and forms:

> the fact is that people still lead lives, mean and bleak and brief as they are, briefer than you think, and people have characters and motives that we divine more or less inaccurately from their appearance, speech, behavior, and the rest, you aren't listening, go on then, what do you think I'm doing, people still fall in love, and out, yes, in and out, and out and in, and they please each other, and hurt each other, isn't that the truth, and they do these things in more or less conventionally dramatic fashion, unfashionable or not, go on, I'm going, and what goes on between them is still not only the most interesting but the most important thing in the bloody murderous world, pardon the adjectives. And that my dear is what writers have got to find ways to write about

> in this adjective adjective hour of the ditto ditto same noun as above, or their, that is to say our, accursed self-consciousness will lead them, that is to say us, to here it comes, say it straight out, I'm going to, say it in plain English for once, that's what I'm leading up to, me and my bloody anti-climactic noun, we're pushing each other to fill in the blank.
>
> Goodbye. Is it over? Can't you read between the lines? One more step. Goodbye suspense goodbye. Blank. [pp. 109-110][6]

It is easy enough to see in what sense the narrator of "Title" is "lost" in art. The existential corollary has a new twist in "Title," as the narrator warns of confusing the aesthetic and existential dilemmas: "The fact is, the narrator has narrated himself into a corner, a state of affairs more tsk-tsk than boo-hoo, and because his position is absurd he calls the world absurd" (p. 108). Later in the same paragraph the narrator hints that this essentially optimistic statement may be a mere rationalization, aimed at proving that "Where there's life there's hope." Nevertheless, Barth seems to give the idea serious consideration. The problem may not be a confusion between aesthetic and existential dilemmas so much as confusion between personal dilemmas (which are in the case of an author both aesthetic and existential) and universal dilemmas. In his "Seven Additional Author's Notes," Barth says the "triply schizoid monologue entitled 'Title'" addresses itself to "the 'Author's' . . . difficulties with the story he's in process of composing, and the not dissimilar straits in which, <u>I think mistakenly</u>, he imagines his culture and its literature to be" (pp. x-xi; italics mine). Unfortunately, these "notes" are equivocal, parodic, and infinitely self-conscious; furthermore, the "authors" of the notes and of "Title" seem to be one and the same. In short, and in conclusion, "Title" seems to equate rather than distinguish between or among personal, universal,

aesthetic, and existential dilemmas. Indeed, the rationale for art presented in "Title" resembles the existential rationale for living. Lucidity and self-awareness lend value to a "leap" into old-fashioned art just as they lend value to a leap into "absurd" life.

However, I do not want to explain away all the agitation and discomfort with art and life registered in "Title," "Life Story," and "Lost in the Funhouse." Barth's affection for "straightforward tales of adventure, subtly sentimental romances," et cetera, is not all "existentially" courageous (an attitude which smacks of deflatable sentimentality, by the way); his affection also stems from a straightforward desire to escape reality, as on an endless Moebius strip reading "ONCE UPON A TIME. . . ." He says in his "Seven Additional Notes" that "the discovery of an enormous complexity beneath a simple surface may well be more dismaying than delightful. E.g.: the maze of termite-tunnels in your joist, the intricate cancer in her perfect breast, the psycho-pathology of everyday life, the Auschwitz in an anthill casually DDT'd by a child, the rage of atoms in a drop of ink--in short, anything examined curiously enough" (p. xi). Or as he says in the John Enck interview: "What the hell, reality is a nice place to visit but you wouldn't want to live there, and literature never did, very long. . . . Reality is a drag."[7] In a gleeful afterword to the Signet edition of Smollett's Roderick Random, Barth, as though rewriting that crucial passage from Swift's Tale of a Tub (see pp. 90-91, above), shouts, "hurrah for the literal skin of things!" "And what refreshment, for an age when self-knowledge is always bad news [this is one of Max's Maxims in Giles] and self-despisal perforce a staple of our fiction, to holiday briefly in a world free from the curse of insight." Near

the end of his Afterword he even hints that there is "a renaissance of this same spirit" in some "recent novels," presumably his.[8] This is the kind of evidence "fabulator" enthusiasts can cite in picturing Barth as a neo-romanticist or mythotherapist.

Nevertheless, "reality" constantly impinges upon and confounds Barth's attempted escapes, turning his romances into anti-romances. In his latest published work, Barth is, after all, "lost" in art; he has not simply escaped to art, become happily lost in story; more importantly, he has become "lost" in the "bad news" of "self-knowledge," the "curse of insight," whose main symptoms are extreme self-consciousness and recognition that lucidity prevents the "operator" of funhouses from enjoying what he runs for others. He laughs at himself for being "lost," laughs with an almost Lucianic glee at the ridiculousness of his self-inflationary desperation; yet his laughter is not quite happy; it seems to stem more from despair than from delight; involves cathartic release from frustration more than spontaneous expression of joy.

****

I have said that one rationale for art in "Title" resembles the existential rationale for living: lucidity and self-awareness lend value to a "leap" into old-fashioned art just as they lend value to a leap into "absurd" life. Existentialism is the philosophy of the twentieth century and thus the philosophy one would expect a twentieth century Menippean satirist to ridicule. Barth ridicules existentialism in Lost in the Funhouse, as in several other works. However, as I noted in the introduction to this chapter, existentialism itself resembles the Menippean "philosophy" in certain respects. Barth seems to take

the existential philosophy "seriously" at times; thus his ridicule of existentialism often seems to be Menippean self-parody rather than haughty satiric attack. "Night-Sea Journey," the allegorical, schematically "existential" first story in the Funhouse is a case in point.

Allegorically, swimming equals living in the "Night-Sea Journey," and the swimmer-narrator summarizes the existential position thus:

> The thoughtful swimmer's choices, then, they say, are two: give over thrashing and go under for good, or embrace the absurdity; affirm in and for itself the night-sea journey; swim on with neither motive nor destination, for the sake of swimming, and compassionate moreover with your fellow swimmer, we being all at sea and equally in the dark. I find neither course acceptable. If not even the hypothetical Shore can justify a seafull of drowned comrades, to speak of the swim-in-itself as somehow doing so strikes me as obscene. I continue to swim--but only because blind habit, blind instinct, blind fear of drowning are still more strong than the horror of our journey. [p. 5]

Later the swimmer equivocates, indicating that he still hopes for some pseudo-theological "destination," only describable "in abstractions: consummation, transfiguration, union of contraries, transcension of categories" (p. 10). This "destination" he views as a "Her," associated with "Love" (pp. 11-12). And the swimmer, like the story, ends here, desiring this "consummation" over which he has no control, yet resisting it, because he desires freedom even more.

The allegory is very witty, because the swimmer-narrator is a spermatazoan: millions of his cohorts dead, he churns on alone in "the warm sea white with joy of swimming"; with "the recent sea-change," the "sweetening and calming of the sea," he senses he is nearer the climax or "consummation" of his journey; he senses he "may be the Hero destined to complete the night-sea journey and be one with Her" (pp. 9-10).

Ironic, theological hypotheses concerning the "Maker" or "Makers" are very witty in context: for example, the possibility that the Maker "wanted desperately to prevent our reaching that happy place and fulfilling our destiny. Our 'Father,' in short, was our adversary and would-be killer!" (pp. 6-7).

Barth does Laurence Sterne one better and begins not ab ovum but before that, with the spermatazoan's journey ad ovum. Thus "Night-Sea Journey," and thence Lost in the Funhouse as a whole, like Tristram Shandy, mock literature as well as philosophy. However, the "existential" theme of "Night-Sea Journey" seems quite serious in some respects, establishing the "lost" theme which is both serious and ridiculous in the rest of the book. Clearly, the spermatazoan's sense of being "lost," controlled by external forces, thrashing toward the egg out of sheer instinct, reflects Ambrose's sense of being "lost," in "Lost in the Funhouse" and "Water-Message." The "author" feels "lost" in the same way, "art," perhaps, being his inescapable "egg." Also "lost" are the "story" who speaks (through the "author's" voice, calling the author "Father" and the tape machine "Mother") in "Autobiography," Menelaus in the "Menelaiad," and the minstrel in the "Anonymiad."

Indeed, Lost in the Funhouse, despite its labyrinthine complexity, which I cannot hope to untangle fully here, is as symmetrical as a round egg or a moebius strip. The initial "Night-Sea Journey" introduces an "existential" theme, which merges with an "aesthetic" theme in the ensuing stories (e.g., "Lost in the Funhouse," "Life Story," and "Title"), and the latter theme precipitates in the final story, the "Anonymiad," even as that story's anonymous minstrel-narrator is washed up on his lonely shore, his isolated, egg-like "destination." Water, or a similar

fluid, is the vehicle of symmetry, uniting not only the first and last stories of Lost in the Funhouse, but also uniting these two with the intermediate "Water-Message" (a semi-parodic initiation story, wherein young Ambrose finds a bottled message--"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN. . . . YOURS TRULY"--resembling those opera bottled by the "Anonymiad" narrator), "Two Meditations" (on water pollution), and the "Menelaiad" (a fluid, Protean narrative employing a fathomless frame of quotes within quotes). The "Anonymiad" sums up the tone of Lost in the Funhouse, caps the aesthetic theme with some Menippean lore, and launches us into the murky water occupied by The Floating Opera.

The narrator of the "Anonymiad" is a country minstrel; left at home by Agamemnon to watch Clytemnestra, tricked by Aegisthus and Clytemnestra and his girl-friend, Merope, he is stranded on a pastoral isle with only goats and wine jugs for company. There he invents fiction and runs through the gamut of narrative ("religious narrative, ribald tale-cycles, verse-dramas, comedies of manners," etc.), sending his goat-skin opera out to sea in his wine jugs or "amphorae." The "Anonymiad" is, among other things, a Tale of a Jug:

> Stranded by my foes,
> Nowadays I write in prose,
> Forsaking measure, rhyme, and honeyed diction;
>
> Amphora's my muse:
> When I finish off the booze,
> I hump the jug and fill her up with fiction.
> [p. 164]

Eventually, the supply of narrative forms, of goats (hence skins), and of wine jugs (hence inspiration and transportation) is nearly exhausted. The minstrel-narrator discovers a final narrative form, writes the "Anonymiad" on the hide of his last goat (named Helen) and sends his

final opus out to sea in his last jug (named Calliope): "one old goat, one old jug, one old minstrel, we'd expend ourselves in one new song, and then an end to us!" (p. 190).

Of all the Funhouse pieces, the "Anonymiad" is the most Menippean, and not just due to its verse-prose mixture and its low burlesque structure. At one point, the minstrel-narrator describes his "new" genre of narrative. This description, near the end of Barth's last published book, comes close to being a critical definition of Menippean satire:

> Tragedy and satire both deriving, in the lexicon of my inventions, from goat [see Giles and Chapter V, below], like the horns from Helen's head, I came to understand that the new work would combine the two, which I had so to speak kept thitherto in their separate amphorae. For when I reviewed in my imagination the goings-on in Mycenae, Lacedemon, Troy, the circumstances of my life and what they had disclosed to me of capacity and defect, I saw too much of pity and terror merely to laugh; yet about the largest hero, gravest catastrophe, sordidest deed there was too much comic, one way or another, to sustain the epical strut or tragic frown. In the same way, the piece must be no Orphic celebration of the unknowable; time had taught me too much respect for men's intelligence and resourcefulness, not least my own, and too much doubt of things transcendent, to make a mystic hymnist of me. Yet neither would it be a mere discourse or logic preachment; I was too sensible of the great shadow that surrounds our little lights, like the sea my island shore. Whimsic fantasy, grub fact, pure senseless music--none in itself would do; to embody all and rise above each, in a work neither longfaced nor idiotly grinning, but adventuresome, passionately humored, merry with the pain of insight, wise and smiling in the terror of our life--that was my calm ambition. . . . My "Anonymiad" . . . I would reflect then (so I began to think of it, as lacking a subject and thus a name), was probably impossible, or, what was worse, beyond my talent. Perhaps, I'd tell myself bitterly, it had been written already, even more than once; for all I knew the waters were clogged with its like, a menace to navigation and obstruction on the wide world's littoral [see Chapter II, above].
>
> I myself may already have written it [see

> Chapters IV and V, below]; cast it forth, put it out of mind, and then picked it up where it washed back to me, having circuited Earth's countries or my mere island. [pp. 191-192]

While writing the "Anonymiad," the minstrel-narrator learns to swim, and he vows that, should he hear his beloved Merope recall him "by a new name," he will "commit" himself to the water, "paddling and resting, drifting like [his] amphorae, to attain ["her"] or to drown" (p. 193). This passage in the "Tailpiece" of the "Anonymiad" points back to the "Night-Sea Journey" and reflects the Moebian continuity and symmetry of Lost in the Funhouse. The "anonymous" narrator's interest in his own name is intimately connected with his interest in the name for his "story" or new genre of "fiction." As he pushes his "tale" out into the ocean, he imagines it drifting in space and time as though he swims beside it: "Then it too must perish, with all things deciphered and undeciphered: men and women, stars and sky. / Will anyone have learnt its name? Will everyone?" he asks.

I hereby name the "Anonymiad" a Menippean satire, due to its complex tone, its mixture of verse and prose, its parodic structure, its verbal extravagance, its obscenity, its literary self-consciousness, and its ideological orientation. This is the name, the Her, the destination, the egg, the shore at the end of Barth's Funhouse and at the end of his five published works. The "Anonymiad," thus "named," may help us out of Barth's perplexing, self-conscious, parodic, involuted Funhouse; or, if the Menippean context is not the thread that will lead us out, it at least allows us to recognize the labyrinth.

2. The Floating Opera

The "Anonymiad" points back to the "Night-Sea Journey"; it also, like Lost in the Funhouse as a whole, points back to Barth's first work, The Floating Opera. The "funhouse," floating, water, minstrelsy: this motif appears in both Barth's first and last books, recalling the ancient Roman satura or variety show, or perhaps the ship-car which Thespis, founder of tragedy, brought to Attica each spring, a car shaped like a ship, carrying Dionysus "in company with his flute-playing satyrs and drawn perhaps by men dressed as satyrs"; this ship-car ultimately evolved into the carnival "float."[9] Barth originally conceived of The Floating Opera as a "philosophical minstrel show."[10] It is of course aboard the "Floating Opera," the showboat, that Todd Andrews' philosophical, existential, suicidal adventure climaxes (preceded by T. Wallace Whittaker's recitation of Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy, a constant undercurrent, or even rudder, of the book[11]).

But the showboat is only the largest of several "boats" in The Floating Opera. Todd's boat-building is an important motif, displaying Todd's philosophy (e.g., his recognition of the conflict between romance and reality, as in his first ludicrous attempt to build a boat, or his existential delight in systematic, non-pragmatic construction-for-its-own-sake) and also displaying his psychology: Todd associates boat-building with childhood, innocence, escape, and his father. A related psychological need or dream may account for Todd's association of Jane Mack with sailboats:

> That night she kept reminding me of sailboats, and has ever since. I think of her as perched on the windward washboard of a racing sailboat, a Hampton

> or a Star. . . . and the smell of her in my head never failed for five years to give me that same giddy exhilaration which as a boy I always felt when I approached Ocean City on a family excursion, and the first heady spume of Atlantic in the air made my senses reel. [pp. 24-25]

In Chapter XII ("A chorus of oysters") Todd relishes the peaceful "hoary music" of old men talking about boats. A related and more ominous peace is associated with boats as Betty June Gunter attacks Todd with a broken bottle in a Baltimore whorehouse:

> I had the strongest impulse to say, "Let's be friends," and go to sleep on her poor thin arm, there on the floor. Why isn't the whole thing a sailboat? I remember wondering through the pain that was crucifying me; then I could let go of everything, tiller and sheets, and the boat would luff up into the wind and hang in stays, and I could sleep. [p. 135]

Boats, water, and floating are associated with the form as well as the philosophical and psychological content of The Floating Opera, of course. Todd's book is his "opera" and it resembles the showboat, "Adam's Original & Unparalleled Floating Opera":

> It always seemed a fine idea to me to build a show-boat with just one big flat open deck on it, and to keep a play going continuously. The boat wouldn't be moored, but would drift up and down the river on the tide, and the audience would sit along both banks. They could catch whatever part of the plot happened to unfold as the boat floated past. . . . Most times they wouldn't understand what was going on at all, or they'd think they knew, when actually they didn't. . . . that's how much of life works. . . . And that's how this book will work, I'm sure. It's a floating opera, friend, fraught with curiosities, melodrama, spectacle, instruction, and entertainment, but it floats willy-nilly on the tide of my vagrant prose: you'll catch sight of it, lose it, spy it again; and it may require the best efforts of your attention and imagination--together with some patience, if you're an average fellow--to keep track of the plot as it sails in and out of view. [pp. 7-8]

The Floating Opera is an "untethered showboat," a "meandering stream of . . . story" (pp. 17, 2), self-consciously acknowledged as such by its author-protagonist, Todd Andrews. As in Lost in the Funhouse, this Menippean self-consciousness stems largely from the "author's" awareness of the world's labyrinthine complexity and of the inadequacy and arbitrariness of art's attempts to rubricize it: "there is no will-o'-the-wisp so elusive as is the cause of any human act" (p. 218). Todd's literary self-consciousness sometimes partakes of Lost in the Funhousean desperation but often has a gleeful, Shandean tone:

> Good Lord! The last half of this book, I'm afraid, will be nothing but all these explanations I've promised and postponed. Let's forget all this for the moment and get Capt. Osborn his glass of rye, which I've been holding all this time [during a chapter-long digression], before he dies of thirst and old age. [p. 43]

The context of meandering minstrelsy also accommodates other Menippean patterns. Todd compiles a Menippean catalogue as he lists the Macks's motives in the sex-triangle plot, their Ante Coitum Felix and their Post Coitum Triste (pp. 37-38). Todd's description of Colonel Morton's party, told "in broken sequences" since Todd was drunk that night, has the same chaotic, cumulative bent. The law is a major source of catalogues: "never did there exist such an unparalleled floating opera as the law in its less efficient moments" (p. 173). The law is a hodgepodge; Todd, "the legal equivalent of a general practitioner in medicine," has handled "criminal cases, torts, wills, deeds, titles, bonds, articles of incorporation--everything that a lawyer can get his fingers into" (p. 73). The two extended narrative catalogues of the book are, first, the Harrison Mack, Sr. law case, involving seventeen contested wills, 129 pickle jars of Mr. Mack's excrement, and Todd's

discovery that the way to win the case is to find "something diverting, something tenuous and intricate, that [he can] go on complicating indefinitely," and, second, the Morton v. Butler automobile suit, a "curious bump on the knotty log of [Todd's] story," spilled out in a chapter called "Calliope music"; the infinitely complicated case comes to an end, and Todd, blushing (at the heavy-handed symbolism), replaces the "bulky brief of Morton v. Butler" in its file just as the Floating Opera calliope down at the wharf breaks into "Out of the Wilderness" (p. 181). The Floating Opera is an extended "catalogue" in itself (see the hodgepodge handbill advertisement, pp. 78-82). The climactic evening minstrel show aboard the Floating Opera begins with a cymbal crash and the band playing "a potpourri of martial airs, ragtime, a touch of some sentimental love ballad, a flourish of buck-and-wing, and a military finale," proceeds to the tumultuous performances of T. Wallace Whittaker and Sweet Sally Starbuck, the helter-skelter comedy of Tambo and Bones, Burley Joe's medley of toots, peeps, screams and explosions, and ends (anti-climactically, ironically enough, since the boat has not exploded) with the Wonderful Panithiopliconica, which,

> it turned out, was not more nor less than a grand old-fashioned minstrel walk-around--bones, tambourines, banjos, guitars. The minstrels danced, sang, leaped, cartwheeled. "Lucy Long" metamorphosed into "The Essence of Old Virginny"; faster and faster the minstrels cavorted, to a final, almost savage breakdown. The cymbals crashed, the performers bowed low, Tambo and Bones tumbled into the orchestra pit, and our wild applause saluted the curtains of the Original & Unparalleled Floating Opera. [p. 268]

Menippean obscenity also abounds, bound, for example, to the contested will: inspired by his staid secretary's indecorous breaking of wind, Todd realizes he can complicate, delay, and thus win the case

by proving that Mr. Mack's would-be beneficiaries have been tampering with his offal pickle jars. The Floating Opera gives equal time to the sexual and scatological components of obscenity. Sex and excrement provide Todd with "two unforgettable demonstrations of [his] own animality"; first, sex, as he witnesses himself at age seventeen mating with Betty June Gunter (Chapter XIII, "A mirror up to life") and, second, excrement, as he is overcome by bowel-loosing terror in the Argonne forest (pp. 61 ff.). These crucial events teach Todd "mirth" and "fear," respectively (p. 224), two emotions responsible for his peculiar inconsistency or capriciousness. His "mirth" and "fear" are complex and related, as indicated by Todd's pseudo-Lucianic description of "screamingly funny" mating humans:

> even as I write this now, thirty-seven years later, though my heart goes out to pitiful Betty, generous Betty, nevertheless I can't expunge that mirror from my mind; I think of it and must smile. To see a pair of crabs, of dogs, of people--even lovely, graceful Jane--I can't finish, reader, can't hold my pen fast to the line: I am convulsed; I am weeping tears of laughter on the very page! [p. 124, to be exact]

****

The mirror in the Betty June Gunter episode is a mask remover, a deflator of romantic self-delusion, a Lucianic device, a means of confronting illusion with reality, of exposing man's ridiculousness. The existential equivalent of "ridiculous" is "absurd," and existential absurdity, inducing existential despair, is supposedly the prime cause of Todd's "philosophical" decision to commit suicide. Arguing with Mr. Haecker, who has tried to hide his despair beneath a "mask" of "content," Todd (like Camus[12]) insists that "the question of whether or not to commit suicide is the very first question [a man] has to answer

before he can work things out for himself. This applies only to people who want to live rationally, of course" (p. 168). Todd, trying to live "rationally," works out an existential ethic which, ironically, hilariously in some respects, leads only to dying:

> I. Nothing has intrinsic value.
> II. The reasons for which people attribute value to things are always ultimately irrational.
> III. There is, therefore, no ultimate "reason" for valuing anything.
> IV. Living is action. There's no final reason for action.
> V. There's no final reason for living. [pp. 223, 228]

However, after his attempted suicide is thwarted by some unknown cause, Todd adds a "parenthesis," and changes the final item to:

> V. There's no final reason for living (or for suicide). [p. 250]

Todd's second syllogistic step ("The reasons for which people attribute value to things are always ultimately irrational") is not unlike Tristram Shandy's dictum, "--the height of our wit and the depth of our judgment . . . are exactly proportioned to the length and breadth of our necessities,"[13] and in some respects The Floating Opera is a Shandean satire on the rationalistic hobby-horse of existential philosophy. Barth himself has linked his first book with Tristram Shandy by saying, somewhat curiously, that Todd is "characterized mainly by his opinions, like Tristram Shandy." Todd "reasons himself out of suicide as he reasoned himself into it."[14] A perplexing problem in The Floating Opera is that one cannot easily distinguish between psychological rationalization and "philosophical" system-mongering: should we view Todd as a psychologically complex mimetic character or as a philosophus gloriosus, as Frye describes the maddened pedant of Menippean satire? And, if the latter, how seriously should we view Todd's philosophy?

This problem is complicated by the fact that there are two versions of The Floating Opera. Before Appleton-Crofts would publish Barth's first book, they made him provide a happier, less "nihilistic" ending: in the "original" (actually, revised) 1956 edition, Todd only tries to kill himself, not blow up the entire Floating Opera; he is prevented from committing suicide by a deus ex machina--shiphands who discover him in the gas-filled galley; then he suffers a stroke of cosmoptic paralysis (since "There's no final reason for action"), but is saved by an "irrational" concern--maybe even love--for Jane Mack's stricken daughter; and afterwards he shifts to a glibly cosmophilistic (and partially ridiculed) position: he finds himself "confronted with a new and unsuspected world," and this is "the essence of it: if there are no absolutes, then a value is no less authentic, no less genuine, no less compelling, no less 'real,' for its being relative! It is one thing to say 'Values are only relative'; quite another, and more thrilling, to remove the pejorative adverb and assert 'There are relative values! . . . I laughed uneasily; everything was wide open again; I was back in the game!" (Avon, i.e., 1956 ed., p. 271[15]). In the 1956 edition, Todd learns of Mr. Haecker's attempted suicide before instead of after his own attempted suicide aboard the Floating Opera. In short, the 1967 "revised" edition is much less "affirmative." It is actually Barth's "original" version of The Floating Opera, although some of the 1967 changes are obviously post facto revisions--reworking of the prose which sometimes comprises a subtle reworking of the story. Insofar as The Floating Opera is "Menippean," the 1956 version shows Todd shifting ("irrationally"--which is psychologically unjustified in some respects, but epistemologically justified if one understands that

"there is no will-o'-the-wisp so elusive as is the cause of any human act") from cosmopsis (paralysis of the will) and mythotherapy (rationalistic rubricizing) to cosmophilism. The 1967 version is simpler in some respects; it is more clearly a "philosophical minstrel show," aimed at dramatizing the existential philosophy, ridiculing this philosophy to some degree but also affirming it to some degree. If there is a "shift" at the end of the 1967 version, it is very much understated, emphasizing the meagerness rather than the desperate "affirmation" of the "existential" argument against suicide; at the end Todd is passively drifting (cf. "swimming" in the "Night-Sea Journey"); not so much living as not dying. The 1956 version, in contrast, depicts a kind of positive, existential "leap" into life.

The problem of philosophical (or thematic) versus psychological (or mimetic) interpretation in The Floating Opera is related to the distinction in Lost in the Funhouse between aesthetic and existential, and between personal and universal dilemmas. Both the 1956 and 1967 versions reveal that Todd does not simply "reason himself out of suicide as he reasoned himself into it" (Barth's description; see p. 153, above). Todd is quite aware that the parenthetical addition to item five of his philosophical system is a rationalization after the fact. He calls his philosophical ideas "rationalizings . . . the post facto justification, on logical grounds, of what had been an entirely personal, unlogical resolve. Such, you remember, had been the case with all my major mind-changes. My masks were each first assumed, then justified" (p. 223; Avon ed., p. 238, where "logical" and "unlogical" are replaced by "philosophical" and "unphilosophical"). His "masks" are poses, roles he plays in an attempt to cope with his problems: learning

of his heart problem, he becomes a rake; attacked by Betty June Gunter and discovering he has an infected prostate, he becomes a saint; confronted by his father's suicide, he turns cynic; and, finally, startled by Jane Mack's reference to his knobby fingers and disgusted with his sexual impotence, he becomes suicidal, realizing that his masks have been futile attempts to master "the fact with which [he has] to live," dictated by irrational necessity, by his "heart," rather than by his rational "will" (p. 226; Avon ed., p. 241). Psychologically, a major motive for his decision to commit suicide is his sense of frustration, his inability to "master" the facts with which he has to live, his desire for "freedom" from necessity, his desire to assert his "will" and his "freedom" by, paradoxically, killing himself: "There was no mastering the fact with which I lived; but I could master the fact of my living with it by destroying myself, and the result was the same--I was the master. I choked back a snicker" (p. 227; Avon ed., p. 243, where the second "master" is replaced by "dictator"). In context, the "snicker" is one of triumph but also of self-parody: Todd (at least as retrospective "author," writing many years later) realizes the sheer madness of this rationalization.

Obviously, given Todd's curious personality, philosophical and psychological interpretations of his suicidal actions tend to mix. One might say that he decides to commit suicide for philosophical reasons which are psychologically motivated.[16] As he says (but only in the 1956 version): "it is my bad luck that I tend to attribute to abstract ideas a life-or-death significance" (Avon ed., p. 241). When he turns on the gas aboard the Floating Opera in the 1956 version, he says "I was without emotion--entirely so, because just then my whole self was the

subject of my rationality" (Avon ed., p. 262), but his "rationality" in this case seems more a function of his psychological confusion than of his philosophical conviction, as he himself realizes, or at least confusingly reveals:

> It made me smile when some part of myself observed to some other part, "Todd Andrews is killing himself." Smile, because this observation (which thinly veiled the question, "Do you <u>really</u> want to do this? All this philosophical crap aside, boy, do you <u>really</u> want to kill yourself?") died in the womb, itself asphyxiated by the demon "Why not?"--that overwhelming genie I'd released from his bottle earlier in the evening [thanks to Jeannine Mack's childish, constant question, "Why?"], having struggled unknowingly with the cork for most of my life, and who now filled my mind as completely and lethally as the gas was filling the room. There was no escaping this genie; my suicide could be called many things, perhaps, but no man could call it unreasonable. . . . there was piquancy in a lawyer's dying, as he had lived, by sophistry. [Avon ed., pp. 262-263]

Todd seems to realize--at least vaguely, through veils of coyness--that his suicide <u>is</u> "unreasonable," because it is motivated by his mad desire to <u>be</u> "reasonable" at all costs. The problem is aggravated by one's awareness that it may be John Barth, or the "author" of <u>The Floating Opera</u> (Todd in this context conceived as the "narrator") who is "smiling" in this scene, attempting to disguise his confusion, recognizing the incongruity between his mimetic character's suicidal motives and his own, philosophical, existential theme, and doubly perplexed by the need to add this new "stern" to his first "novel."[17]

In his "Interview" with Barth, John Enck asks: "Do you ever, in the heat of writing, find yourself adopting a position you wouldn't consciously agree with? To what extent do your characters take charge?" Barth replies: "You know, I suspect that's a lot of baloney. You hear respectable writers, sensible people like Katherine Anne Porter, say

the characters just take over. I'm not going to let those scoundrels take over. I am in charge. . . . No, sir, my characters are going to do what I tell them."[18] I think Barth may have nevertheless lost control in The Floating Opera. A difficulty (and a blessing in some respects) is that even his controlling philosophical "theme" demands a character who is capricious, "inconsistent," "realistic" in the sense of eluding facile categories. Barth's Menippean epistemology ("there is no will-o'-the-wisp so elusive as is the cause of any human act") is intimately related to his existential theme ("Nothing has intrinsic value. . . . There is, therefore . . . no final reason for living, or for suicide"), but it also frustrates a simplistic, philosophical, "existential," thematic interpretation. Perhaps this phenomenon simply reflects the connection (discussed in Chapters I and II) between Menippean satire and the realistic Novel: both literary genres assert and affirm life's complexity, but Menippean satire does so only obliquely and ideologically; Menippean satire's "mimetic" portrayal of "reality" is actually "ideological," used for purposes of "correction," deflation, or epistemological preachment, rather than for "mimetic" purposes as such.

Because Menippean satire's interest in human complexity is oblique, I will slight the psychological dimensions of The Floating Opera by merely noting several basic patterns. Todd's analysis of the Macks's motives (pp. 37-38; Avon ed., pp. 45-46) is quite perceptive, I think, even though Barth presents this interpretational "system" partly in order to confound it with "reality" later. Todd's lie about being a virgin, his somewhat contemptuous references to "saint" Harrison, the Dorothy Miner trick (pretending he has had sexual relations with a Negro girl in order to frighten Harrison), his willingness to let

Jane Mack think she is responsible for his occasional impotence--all these reactions to the Macks reveal a certain vindictiveness, which the Macks (in the 1956 version only) call a "mean streak" (Avon ed., p. 165), and which is inadequately explained in terms of Todd's "mask" of "cynicism." This "mean streak" seems related to Todd's desire for "mastering the fact with which" he lives, the inability to fulfill this desire being the final cause of his suicidal "despair." His desire to master both others (the Macks) and the (cardiac) "fact" with which he lives, is a function of his desire for "freedom"--conceived as escape from the control of others (Todd, like the Macks, is very sensitive to "obligation") and also as an opportunity to assert his own "will." His "will," in turn, is related to his "rationality," but also, curiously, to his recognition of the limits of "rationality": sometimes he sees himself triumphantly in the know, something like Lucian at his most heavy-handed moments, aligned with chaotic, capricious, ineffable reality. For example, a few hours before Todd plans to commit suicide, the Macks tell him they plan to leave for Italy. Todd is at first "gripped" by an "unexpected emotion" and second thoughts: "The reason was simply that my suicide would be interpreted by the Macks as evidence that their move had crushed me; that I was unable to endure life after their rebuff. And this interpretation would fill them with a deplorable proud pity [Avon ed.: "a proud pity that I loathed"]. Happily, the faltering lasted only a moment. By the time I'd washed my hands, I had come to my senses; my new premises reasserted themselves with a force. What difference did it make to me how they interpreted my death? Nothing, absolutely, made any difference. And, sane again, I was able to see a nice attraction in the idea that, <u>at least partly by my own</u>

choosing, that last act would be robbed of its [Avon ed. adds "real"] significance, would be interpreted in every way but the way I intended" (p. 213; Avon ed., p. 227, with several other changes; my italics). The passage is psychologically complex, complicated by one's recognition that the "author" ("Barth," or possibly even Todd himself) is laughing at Todd here--his mad rationalization of suicide, his "happiness" at quelling his second thoughts, his discovery of "new premises" to justify his desire to die. Indeed, in some respects, the "psychological" complexity of the passage seems motivated by the author's Menippean desire to ridicule Todd's or Man's infinite and ridiculous powers of rationalization or rubricizing--all of which indicates the similarity between the "psychological" and "philosophical" forms of mythotherapy; how does one distinguish between psychological "rationalization" and philosophical "reductionism"?

Todd and/or "Barth" come(s) to grips with the problem of "psychological" versus "philosophical" interpretation in Chapter XXVII of the 1956 version ("Will you smile at my rowboat?") Not surprisingly, the passage can be interpreted to defend either interpretation, the "philosophical" if one focuses on what Todd is saying, the "psychological" if one focuses on why Todd is saying it. "Let me say this," Todd begins:

> For a man's actions, particularly his important ones, there are always, doubtless, a complexity of reasons, some conscious and some unconscious. And so with my decision to end my life. Smile if you will at the notion that a man can commit suicide on philosophical grounds--I've no objection to anyone's smiling at a floating opera! Point, if you've a psychoanalytic bent, to my motherless boyhood, my murder of the German sergeant, my father's hanging himself, my isolated adulthood, my ailing heart, my growing sexual impotency, injured vanity, frustrated ambition, boredom--the analyst always has causes aplenty!--and say, "These (or some

> combination thereof) are the real causes." They're all there; take your pick. Even I began by deciding to destroy myself as a last means of coming to terms with my heart, and I shan't deny that any one of the items in that shabby catalogue above may have played its special little secret role. But by the time I closed my Inquiry, I was interested in only one reason for dying, and that was the philosophical one; other reasons, even my heart, were by that time no longer conscious reasons.
>
> "So what?" smiles the analyst. "Nonetheless they're the real ones." [Avon ed., pp. 244-245]

One definitely feels that "Barth" or Todd the author, rather than Todd the character, is speaking, as the passage continues. Todd argues that

> a man's conscious reasons, the causes he thinks lie behind his acts, are not without importance, and I don't mean symptomatic importance. In fact, when you begin to speak of what a man should or shouldn't do, they're the only ones that count. Ethics can necessarily concern itself only with conscious motivation. . . . And because since my conversation with Mr. Haecker I was interested only in whether a man (in this case myself) should or shouldn't commit suicide, not whether he would or wouldn't (an analyst's interest), I was interested only in the abstract ideas involved, not in any more [sic] personal, biographical considerations.
>
> So while it may be foolish to assert that anyone, even Socrates, ever killed himself for purely philosophical reasons. . . , nevertheless, I should call it equally foolish to deny that man's interest in his own suicide can be purely philosophical. . . . Psychoanalyze a man as you will, but don't hold it against him if he is merely bored by your analysis. And tell him, smiling, that his philosophy is no more than a rationalization of the truth; he can reply, with equal claim to God's ear, that your psychoanalysis is no less a rationalization of the truth. The truth is multiform. [Avon ed., p. 245]

All this can be viewed as a complex rationalization consistent with Todd's character, which allows him to escape the "irrational," "unconscious," psychologically unpleasant, or "real" reasons for his suicidal "despair." Todd's clever anticipation of this argument does not destroy it and may be viewed as part of his rationalization. His

mad, mythotherapeutic rationalizing could be interpreted "thematically," as a dramatization of man's capacity for reducing life to cerebral rubrics, or it could be interpreted "thematically" as Barth's own statement of intentions: he is more interested in Todd's philosophical "motives" than in his psychological motives. It seems likely that Barth "lost control" of his mimetic character here, or perhaps of his literary intentions: literally "lost" in his funhouse, or showboat, faced with a psychological, philosophical, and literary Gordian Knot, Barth lopped off this passage in the 1967 "revised" (supposedly "original") version. The 1967 version also omits other psychological complications, some of which I have noted in passing. For example, why does Barth change "a proud pity that I loathed" to "a deplorable proud pity" (see p. 159, above)? It is as though he wants to disguise the fact that it is, specifically, Todd, the character, who dislikes the Macks's pity; Todd's apparently vindictive, revealingly emotional motive interferes with the "philosophical" theme in this case. Barth is apparently trying to reduce the psychological dimensions of his character by discreetly changing "that I loathed" to "deplorable."

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I believe the problem of psychological (or mimetic) versus philosophical (or thematic) interpretation in The Floating Opera is unsolvable. As Barth himself says in his Prefatory Note to the 1967 edition, "The Floating Opera remains the very first novel of a very young man" (twenty-four years old), and it is probably a waste of critical energy to analyze as psychological or philosophical complexity what may be merely literary confusion, or an uncontrolled mixture of intentions, some Menippean, some "novelistic," some "serious," some

satiric, and some self-defensively, amateurishly "ironic." I have expended a small amount of energy in analyzing or at least unveiling this confusion or complexity in The Floating Opera largely in order to prepare the way for The End of the Road, which involves the same problem, but is more important for our purposes, since it also introduces the concepts of cosmopsis and mythotherapy--concepts crucial to Barth's two great Menippean satires.

3. The End of the Road

The End of the Road is thematically related to The Floating Opera, as all critics, including Barth himself, have emphasized. In a 1956 letter to the Library Journal Barth called The Floating Opera a "nihilistic comedy," The End of the Road a "nihilistic tragedy." Both "nihilistic" works involve a sexual triangle, a capricious bachelor-protagonist, and an "existential" theme. The Floating Opera was written during the first three months of 1955, The End of the Road during the last three months of 1955.[19]

Todd Andrews' capriciousness and lack (or apparent lack) of "emotion" are related to a kind of existential oscillation between "cynicism" and "faith":

> So, I begin each day with a gesture of cynicism [paying for his hotel room one day at a time], and close it with a gesture of faith [working on his Inquiry, a long-range project]; or, if you prefer, begin it by reminding myself that, for me at least, goals and objectives are without value, and close it by demonstrating that the fact is irrelevant. A gesture of temporality, a gesture of eternity. It is in the tension between these two gestures that I have lived my adult life. [p. 51]

Due to his heart condition, Todd constantly wavers, wondering whether, having heard tick, he will hear tock, whether, having served, he will volley, whether, having sugared, he will cream, whether, having hemmed, he will haw (FO, p. 50).

This dialectical "tension" also ticks and tocks at the heart of The End of the Road. Jacob Horner represents the terminal state of "suspension," a state epitomized by Jake's rocking chair, his "weather-less" moods, the "test pattern of [his] consciousness, Pepsi-Cola hits the spot" (p. 74), his bust of Laocoon, a grimacing figure "bound . . . by the serpents Knowledge and Imagination" (p. 196), and his eternal awareness of "the Janusian ambivalence of the universe," the "world's charming equipoise, its ubiquitous polarity" (pp. 136-137). Jake says

> it was never very much of a chore for me, at various times, to maintain with perfectly equal unenthusiasm contradictory, or at least polarized, opinions at once on a given subject. I did so too easily, perhaps, for my own ultimate mobility. Thus it seemed to me that the Doctor was insane, and that he was profound; that Joe was brilliant and also absurd; that Rennie was strong and weak; and that Jacob Horner--owl, peacock, chameleon, donkey, and popinjay, fugitive from a medieval bestiary--was at the same time giant and dwarf, plenum and vacuum, and admirable and contemptible. [p. 120]

Rennie says "You cancel yourself out. . . . You're not strong [like Joe] and you're not weak [like Rennie]. You're nothing" (p. 67). The Doctor says "You're like the donkey between two piles of straw!" (p. 77). Jake casts himself as "neither a major nor a minor character," but, rather, as "no character at all" (p. 89). He is "held static like the rope marker in a tug-o'-war where the opposing teams are perfectly matched" (p. 5). Clearly, he is suspended and paralyzed between two poles. The question is: what poles? What is the cause of his

cosmoptic paralysis? Correspondingly, what is the relation between cosmopsis and "mythotherapy," the "cure" recommended by the Doctor and practiced by various characters in The End of the Road? In answering these questions I will again have to distinguish between psychological and philosophical, or epistemological-existential interpretations. I will first discuss cosmopsis and mythotherapy, then the theoretical problems of interpretation.

Jake defines cosmopsis as he describes the "birthday despondency" that overcame him on March 16, 1951. Unable to see any "self-convincing reason for continuing" to act as before, Jake hailed a taxi and rode to Pennsylvania Station, only to discover he had no reason to choose one destination over another:

> I simply ran out of motives, as a car runs out of gas. There was no reason to go to Cincinnati, Ohio. There was no reason to go to Crestline, Ohio. . . . There was no reason, either to go back to the apartment hotel, or for that matter to go anywhere. There was no reason to do anything. My eyes, as Winckelmann said inaccurately of the eyes of the Greek statues, were sightless, gazing on eternity, fixed on ultimacy, and when that is the case there is no reason to do anything--even to change the focus of one's eyes. Which is perhaps why the statues stand still. It is the malady cosmopsis, the cosmic view, that afflicted me. When one has it, one is frozen like the bullfrog when the hunter's light strikes him full in the eyes, only with cosmopsis there is no hunger, and no quick hand to terminate the moment--there's only the light. [p. 74]

Jake's inability to act is, specifically, an inability to choose. The Negro Doctor, a "super-pragmatist" (p. 84), says "Choosing is existence: to the extent that you don't choose, you don't exist. Now, everything we do must be oriented toward choice and action" (p. 83). Jake, eyes "fixed on ultimacy," cannot choose because he, like Todd Andrews, sees that all choices are ultimately arbitrary or irrational.

His eyes are also fixed on ultimacy in an epistemological sense. "Action" or "choosing" is the equivalent of "naming," which is "necessarily a distortion" of reality (p. 142). Furthermore, "Assigning names to things is like assigning roles to people" (p. 142). "Existence not only precedes essence; in the case of human beings it rather defies essence" (p. 128). Thus "the mystery of people is not to be explained by keys" (p. 131). Jake's acknowledgment of ambiguity is generally acknowledgment of "Janusian ambivalence" (p. 137), rather than true "pluralism" (p. 143).

The Doctor links the existential and epistemological strands of cosmopsis when he describes the cure of Mythotherapy, a process of romantic rubricizing and wish-fulfillment:

> "role-assigning is myth-making, and when it's done consciously or unconsciously for the purpose of aggrandizing or protecting your ego--and it's probably done for this purpose all the time--it becomes Mythotherapy. Here's the point: an immobility such as you experienced that time in Penn Station is possible only to a person who for some reason or other has ceased to participate in Mythotherapy." [p. 89]

Mythotherapy is self-delusion, the wearing of "masks," self-protective, self-aggrandizing myth-making, and, according to the Doctor, "a man's integrity consists in being faithful to the script he's written for himself" (p. 90). "Action," that is "choosing," that is "existence," is dependent on Mythotherapy.

Although Jake's problem is, as the Doctor says, an inability to assign himself a "role" or "character," Jake nevertheless recognizes the need or usefulness of mythotherapy. "Assigning names to things is like assigning roles to people: it is necessarily a distortion, but it is a necessary distortion if one would get on with the plot, and to

the connoisseur it's good clean fun" (p. 142). This pseudo-Shandean position is anticipated early in the book when Jake self-aggrandizingly contemplates his assigning of "the role of Forty-Year-Old Pickup" to Peggy Rankin: "he is wise who realizes that his role-assigning is at best an arbitrary distortion of the actors' personalities; but he is even wiser who sees in addition that his arbitrariness is probably inevitable, and at any rate is apparently necessary if one would reach the ends he desires" (p. 28). Jake's ultimate, complex comment on Mythotherapy appears, significantly and typically, just before the Menippean manifesto describing his "contradictory" and "polarized" opinions on every "given subject" (the "medieval bestiary" passage, quoted above, p. 164):

> Articulation! There, by Joe [the pun is rich and intended], was my absolute, if I could be said to have one. At any rate, it is the only thing I can think of about which I ever had, with any frequency at all, the feelings one usually has for one's absolutes. To turn experience into speech--that is, to classify, to categorize, to conceptualize, to grammarize, to syntactify it--is always a betrayal of experience, a falsification of it; but only so betrayed can it be dealt with at all, and only in so dealing with it did I ever feel a man, alive and kicking. It is therefore that, when I had cause to think about it at all, I responded to this precise falsification, this adroit, careful myth-making, with all the upsetting exhilaration of any artist at his work. When my mythoplastic razors were sharply honed, it was unparalleled sport to lay about with them, to have at reality.
>
> In other senses, of course, I don't believe this at all.[20] [p. 119]

This passage indicates that Jake is suspended between two poles resembling the Menippean dialectic of lucidity and felicity, or "reality" and the "mythoplastic" "falsification" of reality, which has a mythotherapeutic usefulness. He is also suspended between alternative

"choices," because his eyes are fixed on ultimacy (at least insofar as he opts for lucidity and "reality"), and he cannot "act" because he recognizes that any "role" he plays or "mask" he employs is, likewise, arbitrary. He is all too aware that "existence" is a mere game or work of "fiction."

Cosmopsis has other, complicating dimensions. Cosmopsis may reflect (as on Jake's birthday) "despondency," but it may also reflect "weatherlessness"--the absence of or one's withdrawal from, emotions (e.g., pp. 35-37). In this sense, Jake's emblematic Laocoon reflects not "anguish" but emptiness (p. 12); it has a "blank-eyed grimace" (p. 11); it is "contorted," but "noncommittally" (p. 34), and its "agony" is "abstract and unsuggestive" (p. 127), suggesting a void rather than a mystery. Cosmopsis may reflect "comfortable torpidity" rather than weatherlessness or "Penn Station-type immobility"; this torpidity is "mildly euphoric" and "disengaged" rather than "empty," "still," or despondent (p. 102). There is a kind of Lucianic triumph or glee associated with this state of "all-pervasive, cosmic awareness, almost palpable and audible," which Jake likens to what one obtains by listening "to the atmospheric rustle on a radio receiver when the volume is turned on full" (p. 102).

The Doctor describes two more kinds of paralysis or immobility. He says Jake's predicament with the pregnant Rennie is not a case of being unable to "choose" but of "running yourself into a blind alley" (p. 179). The Doctor equates this running into a blind alley with choosing the wrong mythotherapeutic role (p. 180). His equation is a tautology: Jake's role of "penitent" (that is, paradoxically, his role of "responsible," committed man-of-action, practicer of Mythotherapy)

is "wrong" because it does run into a blind alley. This paradox or tautology indicates, among other things, that the Doctor is a quack and that the "cure" of Mythotherapy contains the seed of its own destruction.

The second cause of paralysis described by the Doctor involves a similar paradox and also introduces the problem of interpretation I promised to consider, which is perhaps the crux and possibly the critical dead-end of the Road. The Doctor, preaching Mythotherapy, having described "integrity" as "being faithful to the script" one has written for oneself, warns Jake:

> "It's extremely important that you learn to assume these masks wholeheartedly. Don't think there's anything behind them: ego means I, and I means ego, and the ego by definition is a mask. Where there's no ego--this is you on the [Penn Station] bench--there's no I. If you sometimes have the feeling that your mask is insincere--impossible word!--it's only because one of your masks is incompatible with another. You mustn't put on two at a time. There's a source of conflict, and conflict between masks, like absence of masks, is a source of immobility." [p. 90]

From a thematic, Menippean, epistemological-existential perspective, Jake's cosmoptic paralysis stems from his lucidity--the fact that his eyes are fixed on "ultimacy." I have hitherto glorified lucidity as a kind of "sincerity." As Rosenheim and Paulson indicate, lucidity may be self-destructive, or self-paralyzing, but it is potentially heroic and honest (e.g., see pp. 93-94, above). Jake's paralysis of the will is "honest" to the extent that it reflects refusal to rubricize. Paralysis of the will is inversely proportional to paralysis of the mind, if paralysis of the mind is defined as the tendency to distort, mask, or rubricize reality, that is, as romantic self-delusion or "mythoplastic" perception. From the Menippean, epistemological-existential

perspective, "insincere" is not an "impossible word." A mask can be "insincere," because it distorts or disguises an "ego" or human self which is ineffable: an elusive will-o'-the-wisp not reducible to "keys," which, in fact, "defies essence"--but which nevertheless does, presumably, exist.

The Doctor's mythotherapeutic advice is not so much paradoxical as self-contradictory. A man's "integrity" consists in being faithful to the script he's written for himself and "It's extremely important that you learn to assume these masks wholeheartedly," yet you must always remember that they are mere masks, that you have no such thing as a "sincere" I, ego, or self: this may be the Doctor's version of the existential "leap," or of the existential paradox of lucidity and commitment, but it sounds more like 1984 double-think. The Doctor is a quack. Barth is ridiculing the existential "paradox" by showing that it is ultimately, as Giles would say, a "flunked contradiction" (see Chapter V, below). Putting on two masks at a time can be a source of conflict and hence of immobility only if and when a person uses one or both of the masks "wholeheartedly," only if and when one is "faithful" to the script one has written for oneself. Thus Mythotherapy, practiced "wholeheartedly," can be as dangerous as the cosmoptic malady it tries to cure. Paralysis of the mind replaces paralysis of the will. The dangers of self-delusion replace the dangers of lucidity. Mythotherapeutic "integrity" replaces cosmoptic "sincerity." Joe comes to the same sad end as Jake.

Joe Morgan is the main practitioner of Mythotherapy in The End of the Road. He is, in Rennie's, and also his own opinion, the "quintessence" of "reason, intelligence, and civilization" (p. 123). Jake is probably

more accurate when he says Joe is "'fixed in the delusion that intelligence will solve all problems'"; he "'uses logic and . . . childish honesty as a club and a shield'" (p. 123). Joe's insistence on the importance of relative values reiterates the Doctor's doctrine of "action" and "choice"; Joe, like the Doctor, is a "super-pragmatist." "'[N]othing is ultimately defensible,'" he admits. "'But a man can act coherently; he can act in ways that he can explain, if he wants to. This is important to me'" (p. 47). Indeed, it is an obsession. Joe is above all "faithful to the script he's written for himself." Jake may consider "articulation, by Joe," a game, but "philosophizing is no game to Mr. Morgan; . . . he live[s] his conclusions down to the fine print" (p. 48), until his "relative values" take on the nature of "absolutes"--albeit "personal" absolutes. He claims that "the most important thing in the world" to him--one of his "absolutes"--is his relationship with Rennie (p. 113), which he thinks is equal, honest, and total. Rennie understands their relationship better when she refers to her husband's "strength" and her own "weakness"; using the Doctor's categories, Joe is a "major" character; Rennie is a "minor" one (pp. 67, 88-89).

Joe's "absolute" is, in short, power, and Rennie is his main source of satisfaction. She, characterized by "weakness" and an "unusual self-effacement" (pp. 66-67), faces an impossible dilemma: she says she would "'rather be a lousy Joe Morgan than a first-rate Rennie MacMahon. To hell with pride. This unique-personality business is another thing that's no absolute'" (p. 63). But Joe, madly rationalizing, <u>thinks</u> he wants her to be "strong" and, especially, rational, like him, even while continually forcing her to submit to his own ideas and personality.

When Jake, with Menippean glee, "uncloaks" Joe, proving to Rennie that he is "ridiculous," not "authentic," a "chimpanzee," a wearer of masks like everyone else; when Jake, who earlier performed his own "sweet manic" before a mirror (p. 21), discloses Joe cavorting before the living-room mirror, masturbating, oscillating between nose-picking self-mortification and martial self-glorification; and when Rennie subsequently commits adultery and ultimately reports to Joe, Joe, mortified, but wrenching his rational powers into action, sends her back to Jake, partly in order to "punish" her, partly in order to gain revenge on Jake by revealing her dependence on and intimacy with him, her husband, and, above all, in order to master the situation rationally--in order to "explain" and "analyze" this incredible phenomenon, this affront to his own power. Rennie is caught in another dilemma; as Jake explains: "she had to choose between going to bed with me, which was repugnant to her, and lying to Joe, which was also repugnant to her, since the third alternative--asserting her own opinion by simply refusing to comply with his policy decisions at all--was apparently beyond her strength" (p. 125).

Joe's "absolute" of power and his mythotherapeutic absolutism generate a peculiar, two-part "God" motif in The End of the Road. First, Jake often likens Joe to God in order to emphasize and ridicule his vain desire for total mastery, as when he pointedly tells Rennie that "God is a bachelor" (p. 65) or ambiguously refers to the "crown of horns" he and Rennie have "placed on Joe's brow" (p. 102) or asks Rennie if she has been "excommunicated" (p. 120). The second aspect of the motif is more ambiguous: Joe, Rennie, and Jake constantly use "God" and "Christ" as expletives which also serve as epithets. Joe asks, "'Why

in the name of Christ did you fuck Rennie?'" and Jake, humiliated on this occasion, replies "'Lord, Joe--'" (p. 109). Later Joe insists, "'for God's sake, drop all the acting and be straight with me!'" (p. 115), and near the end of the Road, Jake says "'God, Joe--I don't know where to start or what to do!'" (p. 197). Jake's "by Joe" in the "articulation" passage (p. 119; see p. 167, above) sums up this aspect of the Joe-God equation.

On one occasion, just after noting that existence "defies essence," Jake engages in Mythotherapy and "dramatizes" the sexual triangle as "a romantic contest between symbols."

> Joe was The Reason, or Being (I was using Rennie's cosmos); I was The Unreason, or Not-Being; and the two of us were fighting without quarter for possession of Rennie, like God and Satan for the soul of man. This pretty ontological Manichaeism would certainly stand no close examination, but it had the triple virtue of excusing me from having to assign to Rennie any essence more specific than The Human Personality, further of allowing me to fornicate with a Mephistophelean relish, and finally of making it possible for me not to question my motives, since what I was doing was of the essence of my essence. Does one look for introspection from Satan? [p. 129]

This interpretation cannot stand "close examination," although several critics have tried to apply the formula to The End of the Road, with varying success.[21] I, too, have used the formula to some extent, by describing the contest or conflict between Joe and Jake or between Mythotherapy and Cosmopsis as a conflict between romantic self-delusion and Menippean lucidity, both of which lead to a dead end--specifically, the death of Rennie, who might indeed be viewed in this context as The Human Personality.

However, the passage implicitly condemns mythotherapeutic

reductionism; therefore my twisted version of the formula may not stand "close examination" any better than Jake's (or is it Rennie's?) "pretty ontological Manichaeism." I may be overingeniously, or, conversely, overingenuously upsetting my own Menippean (in this context, epistemological-existential) interpretation of the book by referring to what is, after all, a "Menippean" argument against reductive rubricizing. However, one reaches the same upsetting conclusion by focusing on why Jake presents this formula instead of on what he explicitly or implicitly says therein. First, even he admits that the formula may be a rationalization aimed at aggrandizing or protecting himself; second, he displays here a potential fear or curious reverence for Joe's "God" quality; he is not simply ridiculing Joe's Reason or mythotherapeutic "energy," that is, Joe's ability to "act," "choose," "exist," or "be."

One could explain the latter reaction in terms of Menippean ambivalence: Jake loves Joe, Mythotherapy, "romance," "articulation," systems, and so forth, even as he loathes them--largely because he realizes they are necessary if one would "get on with the plot." However, one could also explain Jake's reaction in psychological terms: he simultaneously admires, envies, and fears Joe's Godly absolutism or power. He would like to be Joe, and, thereby, Be, in the absolute and perhaps only sense of the term. One way to "be" Joe, that is, to be "absolute," powerful, God-like, is to beat Joe--to cuckold him, prove he is "ridiculous," or confound his attempts to control and rationalize experience. Jake rationalizes this motive by assuming the role of mask-hater, Menippean truth-seer. Reverting to the Doctor's critical statement about "masks" and immobility: Jake's malady is not due to the "absence of masks," but due to "conflict between masks" or due to the

particular mask he wears; and his mask is, specifically, that of truth-seer and reality-promoter--a combination of Menippus and Laocoon. This mask dictates against trying to understand human actions and thus allows him to avoid acknowledgment of his own motives; he insists that the cuckolding defies explanation in order to confound Joe's rationalistic vanity and also in order to escape his own vindictive, power-mad "essence." His "mask" both aggrandizes and protects his "ego"; it serves his needs for both power and withdrawal. Even Barth says he called his protagonist Jake Horner in order to signify a "Horner," who "puts horns on," cuckolds, and who thence sits "in a corner and rationalizes" like "Little Jack Horner"--in a rocking chair, no less![22]

To continue this psychological interpretation: Jake's "cosmoptic" withdrawal seems due to conflict between rather than absence of, "masks." However, his "Menippean" mask does not conflict with his "Joe" mask so much as it protects him from a different conflict. Jake schematically displays his Joe-drives in the "Dance of Sex" Chapter (pp. 93 ff.), wherein he treats or mistreats Peggy Rankin exactly as Joe has mistreated Rennie, even hits her in the jaw and brutally, hilariously rationalizes the blow in terms of "honesty"--"'No lies, no myths, no allowances, no hypocrisy,'" he says . (Psychological interpretation aside, the episode is clearly satiric, aimed at ridiculing the general strategy of Mythotherapy.) This, then, is the crucial question a psychological interpretation of Jake must answer--at least if one assumes that Jake's cosmopsis is a form of withdrawal: what is the conflict that frightens Jake, forces him to retreat? What conflicts with his Joe-drives?

The "perfect equilateral triangle" (p. 148) formed by Joe, Jake,

and Rennie tempts one to see Jake suspended between the "major," "strong" Morgan and the "minor," "weak" one. Rennie diagnoses Jake's dilemma in this fashion when she says he is neither strong nor weak, but "nothing"; he cancels himself out (p. 67). Jake's fear of his Joe-drives is proportionate to his esteem for Rennie's feminine submissiveness, and vice versa. His Joe tendencies conflict with his Rennie tendencies, forcing him to withdraw to his rocking chair.

It seems that a stronger force conflicting with Jake's Joe-drives is, simply, "reality." Jake is unable to remain "faithful" to a mytho-therapeutic Joe-script; he is too aware that reality may confound his attempts to rationally control it; he seems more aware than Joe of his "real" capacities (or more neurotically obsessed with his incapacities, one could argue). Cosmoptic withdrawal is in one sense Jake's acknowledgment of "reality," but in another sense, his means of escaping it. Unable to act, choose, exist, or master his surroundings, as Joe apparently does, Jake rationalizes, sticks in his thumb and pulls out a protective "Menippean" epistemology and philosophy. My thematic (epistemological-existential) interpretation views Mythotherapy as a destructive cure for Cosmopsis, while this psychological interpretation views Cosmopsis as a destructive "cure" for Mythotherapy, or at least for the disillusionments inevitably accompanying Mythotherapy. In both cases, the initial "malady" may be viewed as a reaction to "existence." And in both cases, the cure is as destructive as the malady.

However, at least from an epistemological-existential perspective, the malady of Cosmopsis is potentially healthier than the cure of Mythotherapy. From this perspective, one can view Jake's "play for responsibility"[23] near the end of the Road as a lucid, conscious

application of Mythotherapy, or even as latent cosmophilism. Jake, unlike Joe, free of mind-paralyzing Mythotherapy, can see the triangular problem--specifically, Rennie's dilemma--as something other than a puzzle to be rationally analyzed and mastered. Joe's Mythotherapy paralyzes him as Rennie jumps for the gun at the center of their "equilateral triangle," while Jake's cosmoptic mental openness allows "irrational" forces to take over: Jake acts, dives headlong from his rocker for the gun (paraphrasing p. 152). Typically, he falls short, but at least tips over the stand holding the gun and prevents Rennie from shooting herself.

Jake's ensuing "play for responsibility" smacks of Mythotherapy: he has chosen the "role" of "penitent," that is, the role of man-of-action. However, his "play for responsibility" also smacks of cosmophilism. Cosmopsis--the cosmic view--may have paralyzed Jake's will, but at least it has not blinded him, as Mythotherapy has blinded Joe. Jake sees and knows even if he does not act. And when he does finally act, he seems to have shifted from knowing to acknowledging, maybe even from seeing to loving. He can accept and even "love" both Morgans in a primitive fashion, even though and possibly because they are part chimpanzee, ridiculous, lost, like him. Unfortunately, Jake's "play for responsibility" aborts, quite literally--doomed, paradoxically, by its own chemistry. His "play" mixes with the Morgans' mythotherapeutic role-playing (Joe's power-mad rationalizing and intellectual subjugation of Rennie; Rennie's self-effacement, guilt, and mad, casual insistence on sticking with her suicidal guns), and the chemical reaction kills Rennie as surely as the mixture of hotdogs and sauerkraut she eats just before the attempted abortion.

Chaos ensues, and Jake reverts to cosmoptic paralysis. The night before departing for the Greyhound "terminal" and the Doctor's care, Jake sits "still and anguished in his rocking chair," and sums up the "existential" theme of The End of the Road:

> The terrific incompleteness made me volatile; my muscles screamed to act; but my limbs were bound like Laocoön's--by the serpents Knowledge and Imagination, which, grown great in the fullness of time, no longer tempt but annihilate.
>
> Presently I undressed and lay on the bed in the dark, though sleep was unthinkable, and commenced a silent colloquy with my friend.
>
> "We've come too far," I said to Laocoön. "Who can live any longer in the world?"
>
> There was no reply. [pp. 196-197]

Laocoon's grotesque and comic silence is complex; here the coy, self-conscious author is perhaps ridiculing his own "existential" theme, or Jake's "existential" rationalization. However, ridicule of the "existential" theme, like ridicule of Mythotherapy, can be interpreted "thematically" as Menippean parody: distrust of all systems, categories, or philosophies, even those resembling the skeptic "philosophy" of Menippus. The undeniable "psychological" element in The End of the Road can also be interpreted (or rationalized, one could of course argue) in Menippean terms: the "real," hence psychologically manipulable aspects of characterization may serve the epistemological-existential theme (existence defies essence) as well as the mimetic tendency of the book.

In some respects, my thematic interpretation of The End of the Road is a psychological interpretation, at least to the degree that Mythotherapy, rubricizing, or romanticizing resembles the psychological process of rationalization. However, this resemblance does not really solve the problem; it probably muddles more than it solves the riddle of The End of the Road. Is Jake's Cosmopsis caused by conflict between masks or

the absence of masks? Is he unable to choose between the particular neurotic strategies of Joe and Rennie or unwilling to resort to their general strategy of Mythotherapy? Is Cosmopsis the destructive cure for Mythotherapy or Mythotherapy the destructive cure for Cosmopsis? Is Jake dramatizing neurotic withdrawal or an epistemological-existential dilemma?

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The End of the Road seems to defy essence. Therefore, in order to "act," in order to continue my discussion, I must arbitrarily "choose" the thematic interpretation (which, by the way, protects and aggrandizes my Menippean thesis). My thesis is well-served in this case by Jake's "terminal" position: his limbs "bound like Laocoön's--by the serpents Knowledge and Imagination, which, grown great in the fullness of time, no longer tempt but annihilate." The Menippean lesson of The End of the Road is this: just as the "serpents Knowledge and Imagination" tempted Adam (Jake is using a mixed metaphor) and led to the paradox of the fortunate fall, so these serpents, "grown great in the fullness of time," lead to the paradox of a "fortunate" cosmopsis. Jake may be paralyzed by knowledge, but at least he is not blind, like Joe. His knowledge can potentially shift to acknowledgment and affirmation, and, in fact, does, by literary proxy, in The Sot-Weed Factor and Giles Goat-Boy. In the context of these later works, Jake's terminal "terminal" (p. 198) is radically ambiguous; it connotes not just a terminal disease, not just an end, but also a beginning.[24] Or, turning back to the beginning of this chapter, to "Title," in Lost in the Funhouse: "The end of one road might be the beginning of another" (p. 106). We will find, especially in The Sot-Weed Factor, that Barth has another use for the

word "terminal." Reaching the existential end of the road necessarily precedes the discovery of "terminal" values. It is this paradox that accounts for a shift from cosmopsis to cosmophilism, at least in Barth's two, large, later works.

NOTES

[1] Cf. Douglas M. Davis, "The End Is a Beginning for Barth's 'Funhouse,'" National Observer, September 16, 1968, p. 19.

[2] According to David Morrell. The latest manifestation of this interest is Barth's "Help! A Stereophonic Narrative for Authorial Voice," Esquire, September, 1969, pp. 108-109. This hysterical semi-musical score could be interpreted as a formal means of obtaining cathartic relief; more likely, it is simply a joke on "existential" wailers. Barth's favorite mode of oral presentation is to have himself, as "interlocutor," argue or exchange quips with his own voice, coming from stereo speakers on either side. See note 6, below.

[3] Alfred Appel, Jr., "The Art of Artifice," Nation, CCVII (October 28, 1968), 441.

[4] According to Morrell, my source for all such biographical or obscure information. Of course it does not really matter whether The Seeker, or, for that matter, "J.B," is or was real or fictitious.

[5] "The Literature of Exhaustion," The Atlantic, August, 1967, p. 33. See also "Muse, spare me." Barth hints at the same ideas in almost all of his interviews.

[6] In his "Seven Additional Author's Notes" (added to the Bantam paperback edition), Barth explains how "Title" is performed: "In the stereophonic performance version of the story, the two 'sides' debate--in identical authorial voice, as it is after all a monologue interieur--across the twin channels of stereo tape, while the live author, like Mr. Interlocutor between Tambo and Bones in the old showboat-shows, supplies such self-interrupting and self-censoring passages as "Title" and "fill in the blank"--relinquishing his role to the auditor at the" (p. xi).

[7] Enck interview, p. 11.

[8] Roderick Random, Signet paperback ed. (N.Y., 1964), pp. 471, 477, 479.

[9] Margarete Bieber, The History of The Greek and Roman Theater, Rev. ed. (Princeton, 1961 [first published in 1939]), p. 19.

[10] Enck interview, p. 7.

[11] Especially in regard to Mr. Haecker, who, in fact, leaves his Shakespeare open to the appropriate page when he tries to commit suicide, or when Todd finds him in Chapter XXVIII. References in parentheses to The Floating Opera are to the Revised, Doubleday edition (1967). Confusion concerning original and revised editions will be discussed below.

[12] See, for example, "An Absurd Reasoning," in The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays, Vintage paperback ed. (N.Y., 1955), which begins: "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide."

[13] Tristram Shandy, p. 197.

[14] Judith Golwyn, "New Creative Writers," Library Journal, LXXXI (June 1, 1956), 1497. In the Enck interview, Barth says he "could never finish Tristram Shandy" (p. 4), and he seems more excited about Machado de Assis, the 19th century Brazilian writer who "writes like the Sterne of Tristram Shandy, only solider than Sterne." Machado de Assis' Dom Casmurro (1900) resembles both Tristram Shandy and The Floating Opera. Barth probably read Helen Caldwell's translation (N.Y.: The Noonday Press, Inc., 1953). Dom Casmurro is an excellent and ambiguous novel--better than The Floating Opera, in my opinion. De Assis uses short, shifting, Shandeish chapters and a Tristram-Todd-like self-conscious narrator. The sea-theme recurs here, as does the notion of life as an "opera." The Brazilian novel involves a love triangle somewhat like that in FO--culminating in a disruptive mystery of paternity. Othello plays the same structural role in Dom Casmurro that Hamlet plays in FO. The narrator-protagonist is a lawyer, though he is the husband rather than the lover in the triangle. He considers suicide but, for ambiguous reasons, does not carry out his plan. Despite these similarities and obvious parallels, the tone of the Brazilian novel is considerably different from that of Barth's first work.

[15] The Avon edition is the only version of the 1956 FO readily available. Unfortunately, the revised version has not been issued in paperback.

[16] Tatham seems aware of this problem, and attempts to go beyond the conventional "existential" interpretation, without much success. For a typical existential, thematic interpretation, see Jerry H. Bryant's discussion in The Open Decision (N.Y., 1970). Bryant's over-simplification is perhaps excessive, indicated by his willful use of the glibly positive 1956 version rather than the 1967 version, simply because it fits "his purposes."

[17] Barth refers to his ending thus in the Prefatory Note to his 1967 version.

[18] Enck interview, p. 9. Cf. Barth's comment in a recent interview (1972 Writer's Yearbook, p. 121): "But, there is an interesting balance . . . between theorizing about what you're doing and doing it. As you compose, particularly if you have a theoretical turn of mind, you're likely to be interested in working out any theoretical notions that you might at the time be afflicted with about the medium you're working in. But you also know--and everybody knows who writes fiction or poetry, or paints pictures, or what have you--that you also work to a large degree by hunch and intuition, and inspiration, as they say." This seems more honest than the tongue-in-cheek comment in the Enck interview.

[19] According to the Prefatory Note in the 1967 revised edition of FO. See note 14, above, for reference to Library Journal.

[20] This paragraph is Tatham's manifesto, the heart of his theory about Barth's "aesthetic," which pretty much follows the Fabulator pattern. He somewhat clumsily sidesteps the equivocal final line. Bryant (Open Decision) likes this speech too, and also sidesteps Jake's pitiful, shattering, deflationary retreat.

[21] Herbert F. Smith ("Barth's Endless Road," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, VI, ii [1963], 68-76) accepts the Reason-Unreason formula more or less at face value, ignoring Jake's warning. David Kerner ("Psychodrama in Eden," Chicago Review, XIII [1959], 59-67) expands the Reason-Unreason, God-Satan idea to include "Self against Non-Self, Identity against Protoplasm, The Real against Vacuum, The contest of body and soul, shadow and substance, chaos and order. . ." (p. 62), none of which Barth takes very "seriously." Kerner sees ER dramatizing the failure of both "pragmatism" (Joe) and "nihilism" (Jake) and believes that Jake's "nihilism may only rationalize an inability to feel" (p. 64); both of these ideas resemble my own. Bryant (Open Decision) also sees the Joe-Jake conflict as one between (approximately) pragmatism and nihilism, or mythotherapy and cosmopsis, with Rennie as the victim of the conflict.

[22] Enck interview, p. 12.

[23] In the letter to Judith Golwyn and Library Journal (see note 14), Barth says ER is a "nihilistic tragedy" about a bachelor who "makes a desperate play for responsibility, but too late, and loses." The term "responsibility" recurs often near the end of the Road. It is interesting to compare Barth's comments ten years later, in the Enck interview. Enck asks: "After the death of Rennie in The End of the Road, you imply that Jacob and Joe should feel responsibility. Is this possible in a world without absolute values?" Barth replies: "I don't know. I used to burn with that particular question, but you must understand that although I enjoy those first two novels, The Floating Opera and The End of the Road, there is a sense in which everybody who isn't just standing still is decently embarrassed by everything he's ever done before in his work. It means that you're changing. Not necessarily that you're getting better. I would feel foolish trying to answer a question like that now, so I won't. Pity you didn't check with me when I was twenty-five; I could've straightened you out."

Barth's embarrassment about his 1955 concern with "responsibility" is sobering, and presents a healthy perspective on these early works, I think. This perspective makes my "cosmophilistic" interpretation of Jake's "play for responsibility" seem embarrassingly glib: a bit too neat and "affirmative." I feel safer in the case of The Sot-Weed Factor.

If Barth's embarrassment about "responsibility" in the Enck interview is refreshingly jaded, his Afterword to Roderick Random goes one step further. Defending Smollett's "epical resentment" as a "legitimate" reaction "to the human condition," he says, "one failing of the Love-boys in our current literature is that they're inclined to understand the phrase Love or perish as an ultimatum instead of a fair statement of alternatives." He considers Roderick Random "a healthy, hard-nosed counteragent to the cult of Love." In his Menippean satires, if not in The End of the Road, Barth's "cosmophilistic" doctrine of "love" (an inadequate term) is complex and tormented enough to escape the charge of being easy or cultish, I think.

[24] Tatham also sees the end of ER as a "beginning," but he sees it leading in the general direction of "fabulation."

CHAPTER IV. THE SOT-WEED FACTOR

1. The Sot-Weed Factor as Menippean Satire

In The Open Decision, Jerry Bryant discusses John Barth as a central figure in what he calls the American tradition of "Ambiguity and Affirmation."[1] Bryant says Barth's first three "novels" are directed against "repudiation" of the world: Todd Andrews tries to repudiate the world through suicide, Jacob Horner through "retirement," and Ebenezer Cooke through "idealization." Bryant's subsequent discussion of The Sot-Weed Factor in terms of Eben's progression from Innocence to Experience is (necessarily) over-simplified, but it depicts the essential Menippean or anti-romance pattern. Eben's "idealization" resembles Candide's optimism and Don Quixote's chivalric Idealism and is the archetypal form of deflatable romanticizing or vulnerable innocence. "'In my first three novels,'" says Barth, "'it was my intention to speak about nihilism, which innocently I felt to be my own discovery; I ended by speaking instead of innocence, which had discovered me.'"[2] "What happened was, I had thought I was writing about values and it turned out I was writing about innocence, which I found to be a more agreeable subject anyway."[3]

"Innocence," then, allied with "idealization," is the "system" or means of simplifying experience mocked in The Sot-Weed Factor. In his

first chapter, the author-narrator "differentiates" Ebenezer "from His Fellows" in terms of his "taciturnity" or "withdrawal," which, says the narrator, is not simply a symptom of "contempt," "modesty," "shyness," or "artistic or philosophical detachment," but of "something much more complicated, which warrants recounting his childhood, his adventures, and his ultimate demise" (p. 5). Thus, to recapitulate my definition of Menippean satire: The Sot-Weed Factor represents Eben's progressive disillusionment with innocence or "withdrawal" from experience. Eben, like the reader, undergoes a kind of intellectual odyssey, a movement away from myth and wish-fulfillment and toward reality. Numerous "systems" are attacked: intellectual, philosophical, historical, and literary--specifically, those literary forms associated with the romance. Structurally, The SWF is a romance-parody or anti-romance, and it destroys its targets--intellectual, philosophical, historical, and literary--in an avalanche of their own jargon. It contains an admixture of verse (notably Eben's "Marylandiad" and "Sot-Weed Factor," but other verse as well), stylized or "humor" characters (the gold-hearted whore, earthy vilain, treacherous pirates, and so forth), argumentative dialogues (usually involving Eben and Henry Burlingame), facetious self-consciousness and self-parody, a lack of "seriousness" (of which Barth's negative critics are all too aware), catalogues of erudition (epitomized by Burlingame's pandect of geminology), and a satura lanx-ious taste in food (epitomized by the Burlingame-Ahatchwhoop episode, Ahatchwhoop signifying "that foule aire, that riseth on a mans stomacke, after he hath eate a surfitt of food" [p. 602]). Like all satire, The SWF is "various," digressive (about 800 pages worth), coarse, obscene, and attack-oriented. However, it differs from

conventional satire in its norm, which is not the Good or the Ideal, but the Real. Lucidity--perception of "reality"--"knowledge," is its goal, and the delusory Ideal (or Eben's "idealization") is viewed as a manifestation of Romance, rubricizing, or system-building.

If The SWF fits my Chapter I definition, it also follows my Chapter II patterns. Allegiance to the Real tends to mix with allegiance to the Ideal, creating a complex emotion of loving and loathing. Romance and Anti-Romance also mix, and Ebenezer Cooke becomes as ambiguous as his Menippean prototype, Don Quixote. Anti-Intellectualism or system-mangling often serves as justification for system-mongering: Barth enjoys the erudite jargon he ridicules. Barth, like Swift and Voltaire, is frustrated by Menippean lucidity--as reflected in Henry Burlingame's ambivalence regarding the Depth of Things. I have already noted that Robert Burton's stylistic self-description applies also to Barth: Barth approaches Joycean dimensions through use of the catalogue. Finally, his new "cure" for cosmopsis, cosmophilism, signifies a comic vitality, a Rabelaisian lust for life--with dark, Byronic overtones.

2. Techniques of Anti-Romance

In section three of this chapter, I will discuss Ebenezer Cooke's Menippean disillusionment, his progression from innocence to experience, in terms of dialectical systems. The parodic, anti-romance structure of The Sot-Weed Factor creates one such system, which runs parallel to the dialectical system composed of Ebenezer Cooke's proposed, idealistic, "romantic" epic-poem, "The Marylandiad," and his final product, his "Hudibrastic exposé" (p. 815), "The Sot-Weed Factor."[4] The

structural equivalents of these poetic expressions of innocence and skepticism are, of course, Barth's own The Sot-Weed Factor (his elaboration of Eben Cooke's "The Sot-Weed Factor") and the hypothetical historical-epic-mythic "romance" which The Sot-Weed Factor parodies. This hypothetical romance is a reductive "system" which rubricizes and simplifies experience, remolding experience to fit the patterns of wish-fulfillment. Barth parodies and deflates it in many ways.

His most notorious parodic pin pricks the inflated balloon of idealized legend-history-romance: the John Smith-Pocahontas story, as set down in John Smith's Generall Historie (quoted and set up for the kill, p. 162).[5] "' 'Tis a marvelous romance,'" says Henry Burlingame III, "romance" signifying "myth" or Untrue History; the fact is, the Smith-Pocahontas story "'was not so wondrous heroic after all'" (p. 162). The "truth," that is, the deflation of the Pocahontas romance, is contained in the "Privie Journall of Sir Henry Burlingame" (pp. 162-169, 791-799); indeed, John Smith's Generall Historie is a "farce" and a "travestie" of Burlingame's own "true accounting" (p. 795)!

John Smith helps Burlingame and Barth deflate the myth in his own "Secret Historie of the Voiage Up the Bay of Chesapeake" (pp. 275-282, 398-403, 601-611). The Pocahontas story is only one of three episodes related in Burlingame's "Privie Journall" and Smith's "Secret Historie." Throughout, sex and excrement are the primary deflators: sex in the Pocahontas episode, wherein Captain John Smith secures his own freedom and that of his archenemy, Henry Burlingame I, by bribing his captors with pornographic devices and by penetrating Pocahontas' hitherto impenetrable maidenhead with the help of the "Sacred Eggplant"; excrement in the Ahatchwhoop episode, wherein Henry Burlingame empties

his bowels upon Smith's head as the English party is again captured by "salvages." The anatomical connection between sex and excrement is neatly (so to speak) dramatized in the intermediate episode, wherein Captain Smith again gains freedom for himself and Burlingame, this time by teaching the salvages the pleasures of sodomy.

This brief summary of Barth's deflationary method makes it sound as obscene as Burlingame's excremental blunder (the reader taking the place of John Smith's head). The obscenity is delightful, however, accompanied and mollified as it is by Barth's parodic rhetoric. All the subtleties of the "moral" historical tale are parodied. Barth constantly, ironically reveals Sir Burlingame's prurient motives, the ultimate (although not very subtle) example being Burlingame's concluding remarks:

> Now albeit this spectacle [Smith's spectacular, Petronius-like victory over Pocahontas' maidenhead] was far from edifying, to a man of good conscience & morall virtue, I yet must own, I took greate interest in it, both by reason of naturall curiositie, as well as to gage for my selfe the depths of my Captains depravitie. For it is still pleasing, to a Christian man, to suffer him selfe the studie of wickednesse, that he may content him selfe (without sinful pride) upon the contrast thereof with his owne rectitude. To say naught of that truth, whereto Augustine and other Fathers beare witnesse: that true virtue lieth not in innocence, but in full knowledge of the Devils subtile arts. . . . [p. 799]

The real subtlety and delight of this passage consists of the secondary reference, not to Burlingame's audience--which immediately sees through Burlingame's transparent motives--but to Barth's "audience"--particularly to the audience of critics which Barth, which we all, know, will be accusing Barth of having the same prurient motives as Burlingame. At this level, the passage is a mixture of Aristophanic or Rabelaisian

irreverence, critic-baiting, and Menippean self-parody. Insofar as self-parody prevails, one might describe the passage as an attempt to deflate the dialectical "system" consisting of Barth's anti-romance and the hypothetical romance his anti-romance mocks. Everything is turned on end.

Barth parodies numerous conventions of the Pocahontas type romance. We all know, for example, that the white man must bribe and astonish the savages with his compass (consult any modern movie epic for this convention, and cf. the watch episode in Erewhon, Chapter II, pp. 74-75, above): Barth deflates the convention by turning Captain Smith's compass into a pornographic peep-hole theatre (p. 164). We all know that there is pleasure in "recognizing" the English significance of Indian names: Barth deflates the convention by having Burlingame write--

> By this name [Pocahontas] is signify'd, in their tongue, the smalle one, or she of the smallnesse and impenetrabilitie, and this, it seem'd, referr'd not to the maidens stature, wch was in sooth but slight, nor to her mind, wch one cd penetrate with passing ease. Rather it reflected, albeit grosslie, a singular physickal shortcoming in the childe, to witt: her privitie was that nice, and the tympanum therin so surpassing stowt, as to render it infrangible. [p. 168]

The deflation of these conventions of plot and rhetoric is closely associated with the deflation of conceptual "conventions," such as that of the noble savage, or, conversely, of the noble white man. Both kinds of conventions are restrictive, reductive, and must be toppled.

The Burlingame-Smith journals are Barth's most notorious deflators. However, The SWF as a whole parodies the hypothetical, historical-epic-mythic romance which can be labelled "the 18th century novel" in the same way that these journals parody Smith's Generall Historie. The

SWF, like the 18th century novel, borrows its conventional plot from older forms of epic romance.[6] There is the mystery of birth (Burlingame found abandoned in a canoe); the foundling convention (Burlingame raised by gypsies); the mystery of twins (Eben and Anna), bound and eventually identified by a silver ring; the early education by a beloved teacher; the reverence for virginity; the "blocking element" of the father (rejecting Burlingame and sending Eben away); the voyage to a new land, with a servant and companion, the conventional, earthy vilain (Sancho-like Bertrand Burton); changing identities, especially between master and servant, with resulting complications; there is the attack by pirates (appropriately terrifying the lowly servant); the abandonment, the hero and his man washed ashore; their saving and befriending of a noble savage (Drakepecker, Dick Parker, Drapecca: the conventional confusion of names); the gift of an amulet which will later save the hero from death; then there are complications: obstacles preventing the hero from reaching his destination--the river to cross, storms, sinister intrigues--and auxiliary love affairs (Charley Matassin and Mary Mungummory, McEvoy and Henrietta, Anna and Billy Rumbly!); and, throughout, there are tales within the tale, told at an inn or in a coach and with manipulated "suspense"; finally, there is the resolution, the removal of blocking elements: the hero reaches his goal, finds his beloved; the minor characters are paired off; the end.

This conventional plot is, of course, turned on end by Barth. The hero's quest yields not glorious Malden and "The Marylandiad," but an opium den of thieves and whores, and "The Sot-Weed Factor." The mysteries of Burlingame's birth are revealed by John Smith's obscene secret history; the "foundling," Burlingame, is beloved by the gypsies for his

ability to "read them tales out of Boccaccio" (p. 18); the twins are bound together by latent sexual yearnings, signified by the sexually suggestive ring; the beloved teacher's main subject proves to be carnal knowledge; reverence for virginity leads to opium, pox, and disaster; and so forth, until the end, when the, by now, battered "hero" achieves his goal and consummates his marriage with his beloved: a dying, pock-marked, pox-ridden whore.

In addition to the gross conventions of plot, Barth uses and mocks subtler conventions of the 18th century novel. He mocks the use of "suspense" when he ends the first lascivious exerpt from Burlingame's privy journal just as the "carnall joust" is about to begin, then has Ebenezer ejaculate: "' 'Dslife, what a place to end it!'" (p. 169). Barth is satirizing Ebenezer's motives, his questionable curiosity about the "fall of virgins"--all this emerges in the subsequent, important, three-page discussion of virginity between Eben and Burlingame. But Barth is simultaneously mocking the 18th century novel--the motive behind "suspense." As usual, sex is the main deflator, and, as usual, the mockery is gay, ambiguous, and titillating, aimed at exposing or acknowledging erotic drives, not at denouncing them.

Barth often uses and mocks the convention of "suspense" at the ends of chapters. Conversely, he is a master mocker of chapter titles. The ultimate example is the title of Part II, Chapter 31: "The Laureate Attains Husbandhood at No expense Whatever of His Innocence" (p. 473). This chapter represents the climax of Ebenezer's disillusionment, at least in regard to the plot. Here the sinister machinations of William Smith and Captain Mitchell are revealed; ignorant, "innocent" Ebenezer is tricked into marrying the opium and pox-stricken swine maiden,

Susan Warren, which action insures the loss of Malden. The ancient home having slipped through his fingers, Ebenezer, in despair, cries: "God curse such innocence!"; and, at chapter's end, he is forced quite literally to swallow the bitter pill of disillusionment--an opium pill administered by the apparent archfiend and betrayor, his mentor and "friend," Henry Burlingame. Thus the chapter title is totally, hilariously, bitterly, frighteningly misdirected. It mocks Ebenezer's "romantic" concern with virginity, and in a complex, bitter, delightful fashion, it mocks the 18th century novel, the novel which tended to glorify virginity (consider Pamela and Clarissa), and which tended hopelessly to miss the point of what it was portraying.

Obviously, this hypothetical "18th century novel" does not include the 18th century anti-romance. When Barth parodies the "18th century novel" he is also writing a "serious"--but another kind of--"18th century novel." Often, then, he sounds very much like that 18th century "novelist" and sometime anti-romanticist, Henry Fielding. He is, for example, a master of the periodic paragraph; he hints at something, then, with an "economic" phrase such as "in short," or "in plain English," decisively, discursively, comically collapses the entire paragraph into one, pithy, mock-innocent revelation. Witness Henry Burlingame's description of his reception among the dons at Cambridge:

> "Then they asked me, What was my design? And when I told them I had hoped to attach myself [a loaded phrase] to one of their number as a serving-boy, the better to improve my mind, they made out I was come to poison the lot of 'em. So saying, they stripped me naked on the spot, despite my protestations of innocence [a loaded word] and on pretext of seeking hidden phials of vitriol they poked and probed every inch of my person, and pinched and tweaked me in alarming places. Nay, I must own they laid lecherous hands upon me, and had soon done me a violence but

> that their sport was interrupted by another don--
> an aging, saintlike gentleman, clearly their
> superior. . . ." [p. 21]

And the passage continues, starts over again, building up to the next (a similar) revelation, about the new don (Henry More!): "In short, as I soon guessed, his affection for me was Athenian as his philosophy" (p. 22).

Barth also uses 18th century italics skillfully, ostensibly to help the reader, to make sure he does not miss some important instruction: a particularly witty homily, an important moral maxim, an otherwise hard to grasp explanation (e.g., p. 289). Barth mocks such motives, of course, suggesting (or pretending) that the real motive is a desire that the reader shall not miss a chance to leer, snicker, or relish a particularly racy "allusion"--thus the italicizing of such homiletics as "supping ere the priest said grace" (p. 38), "Many shuffle the cards that do not play" (p. 529), and "The older the millstones, the finer the grind" (p. 673).

Using italics in another way, Barth mocks the historical-romantic novel's rhetorical imitation of dialect, of "Indian-talk," as well as the conventional condescending attitude toward "salvages":

> I-am-the-poet-Laureate-of Maryland," [Ebenezer] declared
> to the black man; "I-will-not-harm-you." To il-
> lustrate he brandished a stick as though to strike
> with it, but snapped it over his knee instead and
> flung it away, shaking his head and smiling. He
> pointed to Bertrand and himself, flung his arm
> cordially about the valet's shoulders and said,
> "This-man-and-I-are-friends. You"--he pointed to
> all three in turn--"shall-be-our-friend-as-well."
> [p. 305]

This passage is also rich with gentle mockery of Ebenezer, of course.

Passages such as this often seem to be serious, straightforward imitations; sometimes the reader must infer the ironic intention from

the context of the rest of the work. Barth elucidates the problem in his article, "The Literature of Exhaustion": "if Beethoven's Sixth were composed today, it would be an embarrassment; but clearly it wouldn't be, necessarily, if done with ironic intent by a composer quite aware of where we've been and where we are."[7] The fact that passages such as the one above are written "today" and by John Barth, who is quite aware of where we have been, insures the ironic context. Susan Warren's pathetic tale of how she was ruined by Captain Mitchell (particularly pp. 332-333) is a brilliant tour de force, which might have been written by DeFoe at his best. It is very moving, even at face value. The addition of the ironic perspective makes it richer still.

Nevertheless, Barth obviously relishes rewriting Beethoven's Sixth for its own sake as well as for the sake of irony and parody. He obviously relishes the very energy of 18th century plot and prose--even without the spice of irony. For example, much of the vulgar word-play in The Sot-Weed Factor seems to exist for its own, delightful, witty sake. Rabelaisian irreverence deflates the solemnity of the hypothetical 18th century novel (at least if we assume that Fielding and Sterne, who would willingly match bawdy wits with Barth, wrote something other than "novels"), but irreverent word-play seems ultimately to require no support from irony. It is the raw energy of wit that attracts Barth to such obscenities as the Jesuit "Thomas Smith's" description of Father FitzMaurice's last night on earth; it was the Indian custom to send maidens in to comfort the condemned man the night before execution:

> "The good man struggles, but the maid hath strength, and besides, his foot is tethered. She lays hands upon the candle of the Carnal Mass, and mirabile,

> the more she trims it, the greater doth it wax! Father FitzMaurice scarce can conjure up his Latin, yet so bent is he on making at least one convert ere he dies, he stammers out a blessing. For reply the heathen licks his ear, whereupon Father Fitz-Maurice sets to saying Paternosters with all haste, more concerned now with the preservation of his own grace than the institution of his ward's. But no sooner is he thus engaged than zut! she caps his candle with the snuffer priests must shun, that so far from putting out the fire, only fuels it to a greater heat and brilliance. In sum, where he hath hoped to win a convert, 'tis Father Fitz-Maurice finds himself converted, in less time that it wants to write a syllogism--and baptized, catechized, received, and given orders into the bargain!" [p. 389]

I do not mean to say the passage is unjustified; first, the action displayed is a formal necessity--the plot demands that there be a mixed blood wife for the mixed blood Ahatchwhoop king, Chicamec (the details, the related Mendelian genetics, would require an extended digression here); second, the passage draws a response from Ebenezer ("What misery must his noble soul have suffered!") which helps to characterize the Poet Laureate. Still, raw, witty, erotic energy seems to be the main attraction. A catalogue of vulgar word-play and passages such as the one above could be compiled from The Sot-Weed Factor, ranging from passing pun to extended fabliau.[8] As in Rabelais, vulgar word-play and erotic wit are not used simply for "corrective" purposes; they are sources of Merriment as well as Mockery.

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This Rabelaisian delight in raw energy is related both to Menippean "comic vitality" and to the "exuberance" which leads the Menippean satirist to "overwhelm his pedantic targets with an avalanche of their own jargon." The very plot of The SWF is an avalanche, an overwhelming display of (literary) "erudition," as is the "history" of Maryland, with

all its "plots" and machinations, first spilled out as a single overwhelming unit by Lord Baltimore (who is really Henry Burlingame), pp. 86-102.[9] This chaotic "history" of the New World is "corrective"--used to educate innocent Eben, but Barth, like Burlingame (or Rabelais) also relishes its raw energy.

There are other catalogues of lore and jargon: the narrator of The SWF lists the games played and books read by youthful Eben and Anna (p. 6)--although his lists are not so long as their Rabelaisian equivalents (Gargantua and Pantagruel, pp. 63 ff., 185 ff.). Burlingame reviews and eventually deflates Descartes' theories of physical motion and light (pp. 24 ff.). The stationer, Benjamin Bragg, spills out all the possible permutations of thin and fat, plain and ruled, cardboard and leather, folio and quarto (a total of sixteen, p. 121). Beshit at the King o' the Seas tavern, Eben reviews Gargantua's disquisition on bum-swipes (pp. 189-191). Abandoned by pirates and washed ashore with Bertrand Burton, Eben reviews the exotic isles they may have landed upon (pp. 302-303). (Later he learns they have reached nothing but "poor shitten Maryland.") Ebenezer and Bertrand try to determine "Drakepecker's" (Drapecca's) name by listing their various impressions of the strange word from his uncivilized tongue (p. 308). Timothy Mitchell (who is really Henry Burlingame) expounds on perversity or sexual lore, a subject comprehended by the aphorism: There are more ways to the woods than one (pp. 353-355). Again as Timothy Mitchell, Burlingame lists the means of torture he and Eben might use on the Jesuit, "Thomas Smith" (pp. 393-394). Ebenezer poetically recapitulates the possible "sources" of "salvages" (pp. 407-410). And Ebenezer and Burlingame engage in a contest of cataloguing rhymes and hudibrastics

(pp. 410-417). Burlingame, in fact, spins Butler's Dwelling-Colonelling rhyme out for another twenty-one lines (p. 414). In a truly Rabelaisian display of wit, a French and English servant at Malden exchange epithets: six pages of French and English synonyms for "whore" or "hooker" (pp. 477-482). Captain John Smith lists the dishes consumed by Burlingame I and Attonce the Ahatchwhoop in their eating contest--a hilarious Rabelaisian hodgepodge (pp. 608-609). Ebenezer reviews some theories of history, or, as the chapter title puts it: "The Poet Wonders Whether the Course of Human History Is a Progress, A Drama, a Retrogression, a Cycle, an Undulation, a Vortex, a Right-or Left-Handed Spiral, a Mere Continuum, or What Have You" (pp. 734-737). And, in the ultimate chapter of exuberance and erudition, "A Layman's Pandect of Geminology Compended by Henry Burlingame, Cosmophilist," Henry Burlingame explains the significance of twins.

No single explanation can do justice to the variety of energy and irony in these catalogues (or in The SWF as a whole). For example, how does one explain the six pages of French and English synonyms for "whore"? This tour de force is clearly an expression of "exuberance," perhaps a "joke" on the reader, perhaps an imitation and invocation of the satura form--not of the gastronomic hodgepodge, but of the witty, satiric, conventional "flyting" or exchange of curses.[10] In one sense, Barth seems to be mocking the historical Ebenezer Cooke's original "Sot-Weed Factor," which describes

> . . . a jolly Female Crew,
> . . . deep engag'd at Lanterloo,
> In Nightrails white, with dirty Mien,
> Such Sights are scarce in England seen:
> I thought them first some Witches, bent
> On black Designs, in dire Convent;
> . . . who, with affected Air,
> Had nicely learned to Curse and Swear. [p. 497]

Barth acrobatically expands the original reference to swearing into six pages of bawdry. The six-page passage is a rewriting of Beethoven's Sixth, but with ironic intent. Yet, within The Sot-Weed Factor, the meager "Sot-Weed Factor" passage comes second, and seems to be a condensation of the "original" six pages--another ironic complication. Barth seems to be asking: which came first? Which elicited which? Which is the commentary on which? Thus the passage mocks The Sot-Weed Factor by John Barth as well as "The Sot-Weed Factor" by Ebenezer Cooke.

This is an example of the "self-parody in satiric rhetoric which prevents even the process of writing itself from becoming an over-simplified convention or ideal" (Frye; see p. 34, above). I have already noted the self-parody contained in the moral tag at the end of Burlingame's privy journal. The privy journal segment of The SWF contains other examples: consider Sir Burlingame as he ponders the revelation of the "Sacred Eggplant"--

> Forsooth, I was that amaz'd, that even some weeks thereafter, here in Jamestowne, what time I set to recording this narrative in my Journall-booke, it was no light matter to realize it was true. For had I not observ'd it my owne selfe, I had never believ'd it to be aught but the lewd construction of some dissolute fancie. Endlesse indeed, and beyond the ken of sober & continent men, are the practices and fowle receipts of those lustful persons, the votaries of the flesh, that still set Venus & Bacchus over chast Minerva, and studie with scholars zeale all the tricks and dark refynements of carnallitie! I blush to committ the thing to paper, even to these the privie pages of my Journall. Wch it is my vow, no man shall lay eyes upon, while that I live. [p. 792]

Barth is mocking Sir Burlingame's motives, but he is also purposely flaunting himself, baiting critics to say: "Ah! this privy (pun intended) journal is naught but the lewd construction of Barth's dissolute fancy." The exclamation mark at the end of the sentence about studying

"with scholars zeale all the tricks and dark refynements of carnallitie" really belongs to Barth, not Burlingame. It is the sign of his self-consciousness; were this Lost in the Funhouse, he would spell it out (exclamation mark) and then, perhaps, qualify and complicate it by saying "Oh God comma I abhor self-consciousness" (see p. 139, above).

Later in the same privy journal segment, Barth points to himself again with an exclamation mark, as Burlingame describes Captain Smith concocting his Eggplant potion: "Whenas he sawe this water commence to steem and bubble, then drewe he from his pockett (wch forsooth must needs have been a spacious one!), divers ingredients, and added them to the paste" (p. 798). During the course of The SWF, the carnal Captain's pocket has yielded a peep-hole compass, numerous pornographic cards, a pornographic movie-book, and, now, all the necessary Eggplant potion ingredients. Barth mocks Burlingame's attempt to emphasize his sudden witty realization (the exclamation mark is equivalent to italics), but Barth is also mocking his own fabrication of the John Smith story, which has forced him to create such a ridiculous pocket. And by commenting on the size of Smith's pocket, he is also purposely baiting the critics again, commenting on Smith's (and hence "Barth's") capacity for "carnallitie."

Finally, two self-parodic passages point to the "historical John Barth" as teacher and poet. Near the beginning of The SWF, Burlingame tries to help Eben decide what he will do in life:

> "Unhappy day!" laughed Ebenezer. "I've no skill in any craft or trade whatever. I cannot even play Flow My Tears on the guitar." [Barth is an amateur musician and attended Juilliard for one summer before dropping out to matriculate at Johns Hopkins.]
>
> "Then 'tis plain you'll be a teacher, like myself" [says Burlingame, p. 30].

So much for the historical John Barth, teacher.

The "Author" of The SWF ends his "apology to the readers" thus:

> Regrettably, [Ebenezer's] heirs saw fit not to immortalize their sire with this inscription [Ebenezer's self-writ epitaph], but instead had his headstone graved with the usual piffle. However, either his warning got about or else his complaint was accurate that Maryland's air--in any case, Dorchester's--ill supports the delicate muse, for to the best of the Author's knowledge her marshes have spawned no poet since Ebenezer Cooke, Gentleman, Laureate of the Province.[11] [p. 819]

So much for the historical John Barth of Dorchester, Author and Poet. These examples of self-parody prove that in this anti-romance absolutely no one: no "system," no convention, no ideal, no philosophy, no philosopher is safe. Everything is liable to deflation, including the deflationary Sot-Weed Factor and its author.

3. A Pandect of Dialectics Compended by James Gresham, Barthophilist

Now I turn to the dialectical systems which Barth progressively constructs, then deflates in The Sot-Weed Factor. I have already mentioned the dialectic composed of "The Marylandiad" and Ebenezer Cooke's "The Sot-Weed Factor." These before and after poems reflect Ebenezer's progression from Innocence to Experience, which progression is the main "plot" of The SWF, as of most Menippean satires: witness Gulliver's Travels, Candide, and Don Quixote. Eben, Burlingame, and Barth refer to Don Quixote on numerous occasions (pp. 17, 25, 65, 741) and "innocent" Don Quixote is clearly Eben's literary prototype[12] (while Adam is his religious prototype). Eben idealizes Joan Toast in about the same way Don Quixote idealizes his Dulcinea (Joan ultimately

becomes an ugly hag, something like Dulcinea, but more like Cunegonde in Candide), and Eben's "disillusionment" follows the general pattern established by Cervantes. Eben's companion and servant, Bertrand Burton, is an earthy, proverb-spouting Sancho, obsessed with obtaining his glorious "island" kingdom (Barth borrows the pattern from Cervantes, who got it from Amadis of Gaul, where "Firm Island is the promised land for the faithful squires of knights-errant"[13]). I will discuss other parallels, including Barth's quixotic ambivalence toward Romance and Anti-Romance, as I proceed below.

Ebenezer's voyage to the New World is a quixotic and Adamic voyage out of the Eden of innocence (cf. Eben and Eden), an initiation into the world of experience. From the beginning, Eben associates his innocence with virginity, thus his "initiation" (like that of Adam, perhaps) is finally the result of gaining "carnal knowledge." Dramatically, this initiation occurs with Eben's consummation of his marriage to Joan Toast (p. 801), but, in reality, the initiation is gradual, or, one might say, continuous, as Ebenezer is overwhelmed by a veritable avalanche of disillusionments along the way: in each case Eben gains knowledge of the world--generally, knowledge of the world's carnality.

During his initiation, Ebenezer's virgin-innocence destroys everything and everyone around it--at least ostensibly. For example, it is Eben's innocent and ignorant defense of "blind justice" that causes him to lose and, in effect, destroy, Malden. There are numerous equivalents in Don Quixote, such as the knight's obtusely chivalrous release of a gang of justly chained prisoners, including the notorious Ginés de Pasamonte (Part I, Chapter XXII). Several parables within The SWF obliquely emphasize this "innocent" destructiveness.

Consider, for example, The Tale of the Invulnerable Castle,[14] told by Henrietta Russecks McEvoy (pp. 723 ff.). Henrietta tells how her grandfather (as it turns out, the father of Eben's French nurse), Cecile Edouard, arriving in Maryland, became obsessed with fortifying his "castle" against the Indians--especially their flaming arrows. He covered the roof with lead, the walls, windows, and all but one door with bricks, and finally died with his wife in flames, unable to escape as the castle burned "from the inside out" (p. 731). The tale's moral is not unlike that regarding Eben's impregnable, figurative "maidenhead," as sarcastically expressed by Mary Mungummory: "'Stay virgin if ye can, lad: take your maidenhead to the tomb, and haply ye shan't ever be infected!'" (p. 458). The "maidenhead" motif in The SWF extends far beyond the burlesque Pocahontas episode,[15] reflecting the Menippean theme of Innocence vs. Experience, or, to introduce a similar set of terms: embeddedness vs. world-openness.[16] Barth likes all his "doors" open.

Another parable which stresses the destructiveness of Ebenezer's virgin-innocence is the manner of his naming. As Eben's father, Andrew Cooke, describes it, Eben's mother, Anne, tended "'to regard her several infirmities as an enemy host.'" Pregnant with Eben and Anna, sick with the ague, she partially recovers: "'when her ague passed off without killing her . . . she was proud as any general who sees a flank of the enemy turned, and she declared like the prophet Samuel upon the rout of the Philistines, "Thus far hath the Lord helped us!"'" (p. 39). She repeats the phrase when she survives the delivery of Anna, but she dies giving birth to Eben an hour later. Andrew, bitter and desolate, listens to the squalling twins up in the house as he places a makeshift headstone, a boulder, on Anne's grave:

> "it recalled to me those verses in the Book of Samuel where God smites the Philistines and Samuel dedicates the token of his aid--the stone the Hebrews called Ebenezer. 'Twas then, boy, in bitterness and sacrilege, I gave ye that name: I baptized ye myself, ere Roxanne [the French nurse] could stay me, with the dregs of a flagon of perry, and declared to the company of Malden, 'Thus far hath the Lord helped us!'" [p. 40]

The symmetry of this parable is intriguing: just as Eben's innocent birth, his delivery, kills his mother, so his delivery from innocence, dramatized and epitomized by his consummation of marriage with Joan Toast (which leaves her pregnant), kills his deliverers--specifically, Joan Toast. And what voice accompanies Eben, Anna, and Joan up the stairs and ends the "story"?

> "Ah, well now!" their father's [Andrew's] voice cried from the parlor. "We've a deal to drink to, lords and ladies!" And addressing the unseen servant in the kitchen he called "Grace? Grace! 'Sblood, Grace, fetch us a rundlet!" [p. 80]

Paradoxically, Andrew is far from bitter on this second baptismal occasion, because Eben, by consummating and thus legitimizing his marriage with Joan Toast (Susan Warren), has regained Malden. Furthermore, despite the destructiveness of Eben's delivery from innocence, Eben's innocence has been a kind of blessing, a kind of token of God's aid. I will discuss this aspect of Eben's innocence later, when I show how Barth deflates the dialectic of Innocence and Experience.

First, however, I must review the "plot" of disillusionment--Eben's progress from Innocence to Experience. When Eben first "discovers" his "double essence" of virgin and poet, he pens the following stanza:

> Preserv'd, my Innocence preserveth Me
> From Life, from Time, from Death, from History;
> Without it I must breathe Man's mortal Breath:
> Commence a Life--and thus commence my Death!
> [p. 66]

Ebenezer is "wittily," or, possibly, unwittingly, playing with the conventional paradoxes of the fortunate fall and the secondary, sexual meaning of "death." In the process, he is setting himself up for the kill. Soon, Burlingame, disguised as Baltimore, initiates him into the knowledge of "History," with his outlandish recapitulation of the chaotic history of Maryland (pp. 86-102). Eben is superficially disillusioned, but, with the commission for "The Marylandiad" in his pocket, he is still innocently expansive and ready for more hard knocks from Life, Time, Death, and History. He receives them, and beshits himself at the King o' the Seas Tavern. Soon after, aboard the Poseidon, his "Marylandiad" myths about the captain, the food, and the sailors are systematically deflated. Just as Eben believes he has befriended the humble but noble sailors they try to rape him (pp. 254-255); only capture by pirates saves his battered virginity. Months later, informed that he and Bertrand are to be released by the pirates, Eben prepares a grand departing speech, only to learn that he and Bertrand are to walk the plank (pp. 290-291). Disillusionments continue. Washed ashore, Eben and Bertrand envision golden cities and adoring natives, only to learn they have reached naught but "poor shitten Maryland" (p. 318).

This process of disillusionment can be viewed as a process of deflating dialectical systems, reflecting the progression from "The Marylandiad" to "The Sot-Weed Factor." For example, Eben envisions a coherent dialectic of Pirates and Passenger Boat Captains, the latter good and the former evil. However, Eben finds that Captain Meech of the Poseidon does not measure up to the ideal of "The Marylandiad" ("Our Captain" is described, p. 193). The captain turns out to be "a florid, beardless, portly fellow, jowled and stern as any Calvinist, but with

a pink of debauchery in both his eyes, and wet red lips that would have made Arminius frown" (p. 212). Later, the good captain proves party to a plot to cheat the passengers in the daily gambling pool. Conversely, Captain Pound, of the pirate ship, proves to be "formidable" but not "cruel," quite unlike a pirate. Eventually, the dialectic completely collapses, as Eben learns that the Captains Pound and Meech are in league with each other and with the archvillain (who later emerges as something else), John Coode.

Similarly, Eben envisions a coherent dialectic of Brigands and Honest English Planters as he steps foot on "poor shitten Maryland." He is soon stripped of this illusion by the rowdies who help him cross the river (pp. 319-324) and by the raucous congregation of planters at Captain Mitchell's house (pp. 339-343). This dialectic may be viewed as part of a larger dualistic pattern: White Men vs. Savages, or Civilization vs. Savagery. The secret journals of Smith and Burlingame conclusively deflate this dialectic, primarily by lowering both White Men and Savages to the level of the common denominators, sex and excrement.

This theme is also reflected in Eben's ambivalence toward the Indians and Negroes and their planned uprising. Having witnessed a certain nobility in Drepacca and Quassapelagh, and having been stripped of many personal illusions, Eben can agree with Harvey Russecks that he is "'half on the Indians' side o' the question,'"--"'not alone because there's justice in their cause,'" says Eben, "'but because there's a deal of the salvage in all of us'" (p. 638). By this time, Eben has turned the corner of innocence; he has written "The Sot-Weed Factor"; he has lost Malden, swallowed the bitter pill of opium, and openly cursed his own innocence. He has acknowledged a latent savagery in

himself, a lust for the girl in the rigging of the Cyprian (who is really Joan Toast). He has acknowledged his "responsibility" for the disastrous turn of events, and has thus accepted responsibility for the lives of Captain Cairn and Bertrand Burton, who are being held as captives by the "savages" while Eben and McEvoy search for Burlingame and his brother, Cohunkowprets. Indeed, by this time, Ebenezer has witnessed the ultimate revelation of "experience": Henry Burlingame's Pandect of Geminology. Therefore, he is receptive to revelations of a cosmic magnitude: deflations which unite dialectics on the order of Jesus and Judas, God and Satan, Heaven and Hell. He is, for example, receptive when Mary Mungummory, who is almost as world-corrupt as Burlingame, says: "'something in us pines for the black and lawless Pit'" (p. 639). And he is receptive when Harvey Russecks, the trapper-philosopher, the functional character who is one of Barth's voices of truth, says:

> "it doth give a civil man pause when first he lays eyes upon a salvage, for't carries him back to view the low origin of his history: yet by how much rarer is the spectacle of one of his kind fallen back to the salvage condition, by so much more confounding is't to behold, for it must drive home to him how strait and treacherous is the climb to politeness and refinement--so much so, that one breath of inattention, as't were, may send the climber a-plummet to his former state. . . . What I mean, . . . 'tis like the cultivation of our fields, so't seems to me: 'tis all order and purpose--and wondrous fruits doth it bring forth!--yet 'tis but a scratch, is't not, on the face of unplumbable deeps? Two turns o' the spade cuts through't to the untouched earth, and under that lies a thousand miles o' changeless rock, and deeper yet lie the raging fires at the core o' the world!" [p. 658]

Both Mary Mungummory and Harvey Russecks are referring to the mysterious relationship between Billy Rumbly (Cohunkowprets, "salvage" brother of Burlingame) and the Church Creek Virgin (Anna Cooke, Eben's

twin sister), and this relationship constitutes the ultimate collapse of the distinction between White Men and Savages, or Civilization and Savagery. The savage husband, Billy, becomes "unsavaged" and the civilized, English wife, Anna, becomes "unenglished" (terms used in the chapter title, p. 691). Later, the interchangeable husband and wife revert to their original states. In a strange, casual mood, Eben sums up the relationship:

> he posed to himself the question whether "cultural energy," so to speak, was conserved within a group after the fashion that physical energy, according to Professor Newton, was conserved within the universe. Was there, he wondered, some unreckoned law of compensation, whereby an access of cultivation on Billy's part reduced Anna to bestiality, and her improvement, which her paramour had so devoutly wished, necessarily brought him low? [p. 714]

Burlingame and his Brothers constitute a dialectic which recapitulates the collapse of the White Man-Savage dichotomy. (I find my prose recapitulating the patterns of John Barth!) The thin line between civilization and savagery described by Harvey Russecks is straddled by Henry Burlingame throughout The SWF, and, in the end, Henry runs off once and for all to join the savages (maybe). Or do the Indians represent civilization? Meanwhile, the "civilized" Henry Burlingame's brothers--two savages, Charley Matassin and Cohunkowprets--cross the line and easily assume the manners of civilized "white men." Burlingame and his Brothers thus form a dialectic that collapses as one realizes all three brothers accommodate both sides of the dialectic.

Ebenezer Cooke's progression from Innocence to Experience parallels the collapse of his idealistic distinctions between White Men and Savages. Eben's progression also involves deflation of the dialectic consisting of John Coode and Charles Calvert, Lord Baltimore. This

dialectic accounts for a large portion of The SWF, and lies at the center of the "history" expounded and expanded therein. The dialectic of Coode and Baltimore is the foremost of a series of historical duels: James vs. William (the glorious revolution); Catholics vs. Protestants; and French vs. English. In the beginning, believing he has been commissioned to write "The Marylandiad" by Lord Baltimore, Eben wholeheartedly supports this Lord and Proprietary of Maryland who has been mischievously stripped of his rights by King William (p. 101). The archvillain in the case seems to be John Coode, who runs a series of smuggling operations and insurrectionist campaigns in the New World. Burlingame is Baltimore's chief agent in the attempt to find and prosecute the mysterious Coode. It would take many pages to review the intrigues involved in the conflict, and I will not attempt to simplify a "history" whose essential feature is its corrective complexity. It will suffice to say that by the beginning of Part III of The SWF, when Eben has swallowed the bitter pill of disillusionment, lost Malden, "married" Susan Warren, run away to Cambridge to find passage to England, and found his friend, or enemy, Burlingame, he is still desperately clasping his dialectic; he tells Burlingame: "'I believe naught in the world save that Baltimore is the very principle of goodness, and Coode the pure embodiment of evil'" (p. 521). Then the ultimate deflation begins: Burlingame in effect turns the dialectic upside down; subordinates of Coode and Baltimore suddenly seem to have switched sides; maybe Baltimore, rather than Coode, is behind the anarchic plots to "destroy" Maryland. Burlingame informs Eben that Baltimore's "'plan, no less, is so to enervate the English in America with opium, and friendly towns of salvages with the pox, that anon the several governments will fall to the French and

the Naked Indians of Monsieur Casteene'" (a mysterious and perhaps fictitious character whom Burlingame himself impersonates during the inquisition of "Thomas Smith") (p. 524). Therefore, says Burlingame, Coode, who has "'worked counter to every government in Maryland . . . like Milton's Satan, might more deserve our sympathy than our censure'" (p. 525). But the dialectic has not simply been turned on end; the intrigue grows muddier: maybe Baltimore and Coode are <u>both</u> powers of anarchy; says Henry: "'History . . . is like those waterholes I have heard of in the wilds of Africa: the most various beasts may drink there side by side with equal nourishment'" (p. 525)

Burlingame, whom Eben comes to consider "the very essence of carnality" (p. 527), is the great leveller of the Coode-Baltimore dialectic. His double nature, as deflator and as "essence of carnality," is neatly illustrated by the Newton-More episode. Henry deflates the dialectic of Newton and More--the archantagonists, the mathematician and platonist--as <u>both</u> dons bugger after him and, ultimately, jaded, join forces to evict him (pp. 16 ff.). In the case of the Coode-Baltimore dialectic, Henry begins as Baltimore's agent, gaining favor with that Lord as he had with Newton and More (says Henry, p. 358). Later, after the discussion with Eben, just quoted, he seeks out Coode, believing him to be the worthier man. But it is not really worthiness that attracts Henry. As Baltimore's agent, Henry has been Coode's major antagonist. One envisions a Burlingame-Coode dialectic. But, actually, it is <u>attraction</u> to Coode which caused Henry to become his opponent in the first place. Henry sees himself not as Coode's opponent but as his Baltimorean counterpart; he tells Eben:

> "The man Coode intrigued me with his cunning and his boldness, his shifting roles as minister and priest, and most of all his motives: he seemed to have no wish for office, and held no post save in the St. Mary's County militia; he plundered more for sport than avarice, and would risk all to make a clever move. The fellow loved intrigue itself, I swear, and would unseat a governor for amusement! At length I vowed to match my wits with his, and to that end offered my services to Lord Baltimore as a sort of agent-at-large in the Maryland business." [p. 175]

Coode and Burlingame are brothers in temperament, lovers of intrigue.

Like Burlingame,

> Coode was known to be given to unusual dress--priest's robes, minister's frocks, and various military uniforms . . . and . . . it was in fact quite characteristic of him to appear as if from nowhere among his cohorts and disappear similarly, with such unexpectedness that not a few of the more credulous believed him to have occult powers. [p. 203]

During the course of The SWF, Henry Burlingame appears as Peter Sayer, Bertrand Burton, Timothy Mitchell, Ebenezer Cooke, Monsieur Casteene, Nicholas Lowe, Francis Nicholson, and--ultimate revelation!--Lord Baltimore and John Coode. Like Coode, Burlingame does seem to have "occult powers." In fact, one of the "more credulous," Eben Cooke, at one point comes to believe that Burlingame really is John Coode, and why not Lord Baltimore? When they appear, it is always Henry in disguise. All dialectics seem to have collapsed into the mysterious form of Henry Burlingame--until Ebenezer, ultimately disillusioned, cries: "' 'Tis all shifting and confounded!'" (p. 554).

Finally, Henry himself leaves the matter up in the air, merely shrugging his shoulders when Anna asks him "half seriously" whether he is John Coode:

> "I have been, now and again; for that matter, I was once Francis Nicholson for half a day, and three Mattawoman tarts were ne'er the wiser. But this I'll swear: albeit 'tis hard for me to think such famous wights are pure and total fictions, to this hour I've not laid eyes on either Baltimore or Coode. It may be they are all that rumor swears: devils and demigods, whichever's which; or it may be they're simple clotpolls like ourselves, that have been legend'd out of reasonable dimension; or it may be they're naught but the rumors and tales themselves." [pp. 763-764]

The Francis Nicholson whom Henry mentions, and whom Henry has impersonated, eventually becomes the "man in the middle" (p. 710), between the "anarchists," Coode and Baltimore. Henry finally lends Nicholson his support, so the Coode-Baltimore dialectic is finally levelled by Burlingame and Nicholson. Ebenezer ponders the characteristics of Nicholson which make him attractive to Burlingame:

> his impatience with dreamers and radicals, his hard-headedness, daring, irascibility, and efficiency. . . . Even the less creditable aspects of the man--his bastard origins, for instance, and that obscure erotic streak that alienated him from women and gave rise to rumors of everything from privateering to unnatural practices--Ebenezer could readily imagine to be attractive in Burlingame's eyes. [p. 711]

The Coode-Baltimore dialectic, then, is deflated by the carnal Burlingame and Nicholson, neither of whom is interested in the historical conflicts between James and William, Catholics and Protestants, and French and English--the dialectics which generated the conflict between Coode and Baltimore. Burlingame and Nicholson agree with Bertrand Burton that "'More history's made in the bedchamber than in the throne room'" (p. 264).

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The Coode-Baltimore deflation is the main "historical" disillusionment Ebenezer suffers in his progression from Innocence to Experience, but the thematic climax of The SWF, the ultimate merging of dialectical

systems, as I have already indicated, occurs in Chapter 2 of Part III, in the "Layman's Pandect of Geminology Compended by Henry Burlingame, Cosmophilist." Burlingame's revelations concerning Coode and Baltimore occur in the preceding chapter (Part III, Ch. 1). Thus the ultimate historical deflation is followed by the ultimate cosmic deflation, or, perhaps, by the ultimate personal deflation, because Burlingame's Geminological revelations are mainly aimed at convincing Eben of the sexual link between him--Eben--and his twin sister, Anna. Eben and Anna are part of that great dialectic reflecting the cyclic, dialectical processes of the cosmos and representing the ultimate synthesis through sex: Male and Female.

Burlingame deflates the dialectic of Eben and Anna, or Male and Female, in two ways (what else?). First, he loves both Eben and Anna, in at least two ways, suggested by the following pair of references. On the first occasion, the love seems rather innocent, as Henry defends himself before Ebenezer of the charges made by Andrew Cooke:"' 'Twere no absurd suspicion, methinks, that any man might look with love on Anna,' Burlingame declared, 'and I did indeed love the both of you for years, and love you yet; nor did I ever try to hide the fact'" (p. 28). On the second occasion, Ebenezer condemns Henry for having a love far from innocent: "'Son of Sodom!' he cried, and sprang upon his tutor. 'You've had my sister's maidenhead and now you lust for mine!'" (p. 366). Second, Burlingame deflates the dialectic of Eben and Anna, or Male and Female, by forcing Anna and Eben to acknowledge that their love for each other involves a latent lust. In this second capacity, Burlingame is the "serpent" who introduces Eben and Anna, Adam and Eve, to carnal knowledge, and who thus drives them out of Eden into the

"real" world of experience and mortality, of Life, Time, Death, and History. In this ideological Menippean satire, the references to Adam and Eve are playfully, blatantly obvious. In their youth, the twins

> might spend an autumn morning playing at Adam and Eve out in the orchard . . . and when at dinner their father forbade them to return there, on account of the mud, Ebenezer would reply with a knowing nod, "Mud's not the worst of't: I saw a snake as well." And little Anna . . . would declare, "It didn't frighten me, but Eben's forehead hath been sweating ever since." [pp. 6-7]

Eben is constantly aware of his role as Adam, of course (e.g., pp. 66, 170 ff.), even though he is often confused about the significance of that role. And the biblical parallel is spelled out rather clearly--brilliantly--in Chapter 28 of Part II, entitled: "If the Laureate Is Adam, Then Burlingame Is the Serpent" (pp. 431-437).

The matter of the "serpent"--the usual anatomical analogue, directly exposed by Burlingame I (p. 799) and indirectly exposed by Joan Toast in her story about how her uncle's "great tom leech" "cured" her of virginity (p. 60)--has a curious influence on Burlingame's first capacity as deflator, as "lover" of both Eben and Anna, Male and Female. It is the diminutive size of his "serpent" which forces him to satisfy his urges with abnormal sexual play, just as it is this diminutive size which allows him, or at least Anna, to remain a nominal "virgin." Furthermore, just as Anna loves and lusts after Burlingame by "proxy," subconsciously using Burlingame as a proxy for Eben (as Burlingame describes the process), so Burlingame, unable to consummate his love in the normal fashion, seems to desire the union of Eben and Anna as a kind of vicarious fulfillment. This motive underlies, although it does not totally explain, Burlingame's somewhat dishonest revelation to

Ebenezer in his Pandect of Geminology:

> "There are two facts you've got to swallow, Eben. The first is that I love no part of the world, as you might have guessed, but the entire parti-colored whole, with all her poles and contradictories. Coode and Baltimore alike I am enamored of, whate'er the twain might stand for; and you know what various ground hath held my seed. For this same reason 'twas never you I loved, nor yet your sister Anna, but the twain inseparably, and could lust for neither alone. Whence issues the second fact, which is, that de'il the times her blood waxed warm the while she spoke of you, and de'il the times I kissed her as the symbol for you both, and played the sad games of her invention, yet your sister is a virgin still for aught of me!" [p. 529]

From a psychological perspective, one might say that Burlingame's preoccupation with "union," revealed in the chapter on Geminology, is the result of his own inability to achieve the union of sexual intercourse. However, this explanation is inadequate. As Jacob Horner convincingly argues in The End of the Road, the Freudian "DANCE OF SEX" is a weak reduction of experience--mere mythotherapy:

> "On our planet, sir, males and females copulate. Moreover, they enjoy copulating. But for various reasons they cannot do this whenever, wherever, and with whomever they choose. Hence all this running around that you observe. Hence the world" . . . A therapeutic notion! [ER, p. 93]

Furthermore, and more to the point, psychological motivations are of secondary importance in this ideological Menippean satire, The Sot-Weed Factor. Incidentally, sexual "union" in the Pandect of Geminology implies not mythotherapeutic reduction of experience, but, rather, metaphorical synthesis--a process which glorifies, rather than limits, multiplicity. "Love" seems more descriptive of Burlingame's cosmophilism than does "lust." The cosmophilistic process of collapsing or deflating dialectical systems by embracing, refusing to choose between, opposite

poles, is not a mythotherapeutic process of simplification or reduction; it is a process of removing or destroying simplifications or reductions of experience.

As might be expected, Burlingame does not even allow for a dichotomy of love and lust, in regard to Eben and Anna. He tells Eben:

> "Your sister is a driven and fragmented spirit, friend; the one half of her soul yearns but to fuse itself with yours, whilst the other half recoils at the thought. 'Tis neither love nor lust she feels for you, but a prime and massy urge to coalescence, which is deserving less of censure than of awe. As Aristophanes maintained that male and female are displaced moieties of an ancient whole, and wooing but their vain attempt at union, so Anna, I long since concluded, repines willy-nilly for the dark identity that twins share in the womb, and for the well-nigh fetal closeness of their childhood." [p. 528][17]

Eben feels more than "awe" at this force of "coalescence" which Burlingame sees in Anna and the universe of twins. At the end of the Pandect, Eben stands

> stunned, as well with recognition as with appall: he clutched his head and moaned.
>
> Burlingame stopped before him. "Surely you'll not deny your share of guilt?"
>
> The poet shook his head. "I'll not deny that the soul of man is deep and various as the reach of Heav'n," he replied, "or that he hath in germ the sum of poles and possibilities. But I am stricken by what you say of me and Anna!"
>
> "What have I said, but that thou'rt human?" Ebenezer sighed. "'Tis quite enough." [p. 537]

After Burlingame has finished, Eben seems convinced of his and Anna's "guilt"--that is to say, of his and Anna's essential, mortal humanity. He has been driven from Eden, forced to acknowledge carnal knowledge. I will trace this theme of the Edenic fall to its conclusions in The SWF before returning to the riches of Burlingame's Pandect of Geminology.

The fact is, Eben does not merely "fall" in the sense of becoming

aware of his and Anna's latent sexual yearning for "coalescence." The yearning comes very close to being realized. When the pirate, Long Ben Avery, captures Anna, Eben, and their friends, the Cooke twins, fearing death is imminent, converse in peculiar fashion. Barth disguises their motives, but Eben clearly realizes that Anna's desire for "coalescence" is about to break out:

> She [Anna] wet his hand with tears. "If I must suffer what I shall, then I amend my wish: I wish we two were the only folk on earth!"
>
> "Eve and Adam?" The poet's face burned. "So be it; but we must be God as well, and build a universe to hold our Garden." [Now Anna misconstrues his words:]
>
> Anna squeezed his hand.
>
> "What I mean," he said, "we must cling to life and search each moment for escape. . ."
>
> Anna shook her head. "Anon they'll run you through and throw you to the fishes, and I . . . [visions of rape] Nay, Eben! This present hour is all our future, and this black cave our only Garden. Anon they'll tear our innocence from us . . ."
>
> He sensed her eyes upon him. "Dear God!"
>
> Just then a shout came down from above. . . ." [p. 742]

And the dangerous conversation ends. The pirates throw Eben, McEvoy, and Bertrand off the ship and Eben does not see Anna again until much later, just before the trial which precedes the final scene. The final scene is, again, peculiar. When Eben agrees to consummate his marriage with Joan Toast in order to "redeem" himself and regain Malden, Joan is too sick to walk upstairs:

> Burlingame lifted Joan in his arms. "Good night all!" he called merrily. "Tell cook we'll want a wedding breakfast in the morning, Andrew!" As he headed for the hallway he added with a laugh, "See to what lengths the fallen go, to increase their number! Come along, Anna; this errand wants a chaperon."
>
> Blushing, Anna took Ebenezer's arm, and the twins followed their chuckling tutor up the stairs. [p. 801]

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Joan is almost forgotten as the twins climb the stairs together. "Adam and Eve" are paired, as are Burlingame and Joan, two incarnations of the "serpent" of "experience."

In the Author's anticlimax (Part IV), the "fall" of Eben and Anna becomes as explicit as it possibly can, short of incest. Anna is living with Eben and Joan at Malden. Joan and Anna become pregnant about the same time, Joan by Eben, Anna by Burlingame. However, neighbors gossip; Eben comes home shaken:

> "They're saying 'twas I got the twain of you with child. . . .
>
> But why me?" Ebenezer cried. "Are people so evilminded by nature? Or is't God's punishment to shame us as if we did in sooth what--"
>
> Anna smiled grimly at his discomposure. "What ever and aye we've blushed to dream of? Haply it is, Eben; but if so, His sentence hath many a precedent. 'Tis the universal doubt of salvages and peasants, whether twins of different sexes have not sinned together in the womb; is't likely they'd think us guiltless now?" [p. 811]

Joan and her daughter die in childbirth; Anna's son is delivered safely, with Eben's help. Desiring to withhold from Andrew the shocking news that Anna has had a bastard child (by Burlingame, Eben's "proxy"), Eben and Anna christen the child Andrew III and tell their father that it is the son of Eben and Joan, being cared for by Anna. Thus the child is almost literally the son of Eben and Anna (it is "their son," p. 817).

This hint at incest is an anticlimactic deflation of the "climax" which ends the regular portion of The SWF. The pun on "climax" is quite overt, as, in Part IV, the Author says, "The story of Ebenezer Cooke is told; Drama wants no more than his consent to Joan Toast's terms, their sundry implications being clear. All the rest is anticlimax. . ." (p. 806). One might say that the nearly incestuous "fall" of Eben and

Anna, Adam and Eve, in the anticlimax, is an attempt to deflate the paradox of the fortunate fall. Eben-Adam has begun to rise--or in Christian terms, ascend--as the "story" ends. Therefore the Author must deflate this myth; he must bring the story back down to the level of "history" again.

The fact is, at the "story's" end, Eben-Adam has become a sort of Christ. (Adam is the traditional anti-type of Christ in classical Biblical exegesis.[18]) The anti-romance has begun to shift to a romance of sorts, not unlike Don Quixote, near whose end we begin to glorify innocence rather than ridicule ignorance. Long before the end of the "story," Eben begins to accept "responsibility" for his actions, or inaction. He ceases to see himself as the world's innocent and begins to see himself carrying the world's burdens:

> he wanted to explain to McEvoy that he suffered not from his loss alone, but from McEvoy's as well, and Anna's, and Andrew's, and even Bertrand's--from the general condition of things, in sum, for which he saw himself answerable--and that the pain of loss, however great, was as nothing beside the pain of responsibility for it. [p. 751]

In short, Eben comes to see himself as a kind of Christ who must sacrifice himself to save the world. Having agreed to consummate his marriage with Joan and thereby contract the pox, Eben says

> "Whate'er she hath, she hath on my account, by reason of our ill-starred love. I little care now for my legacy, save that I must earn it. 'Tis atonement I crave: redemption for my sins against the girl, against my father, against Anna, e'en against you, Henry--" [p. 800]

And what is Eben's sin?--"the crime of innocence" (p. 801). To some extent, Eben is still ignorant, innocent, blind to his destructive "innocence" at the end. He merely begins to see himself playing a new

role: Christ now instead of Adam. The Author deflates this new image in the anticlimax by returning Eben to the role of Adam--the inglorious falling Adam. However, there is no denying that Eben becomes a sort of Christ figure for the reader as well as for Eben himself at the story's end. The structure of The SWF definitely implies that Eben's final act is a redemptive recognition and assumption of "sin" and "responsibility"--a completion of the journey from Innocence to Experience. Yet the journey is too obviously a story-book journey. The mock-journey, which collapsed the hero's idealistic, "romantic" objectives, has succeeded too well in bringing the "anti-hero" to the upside-down, ironic, anti-romantic objective of "experience." The Author has been too successful, and must mock himself--and mock the mock-journey--in his anticlimax.

The numerous paradoxes of Eben's fortunate fall are complicated by Eben's attitude toward Joan Toast. At first, one imagines a dialectic of Joan Toast and Anna Cooke. Joan Toast is a whore and Anna Cooke is, notoriously, a virgin. The dialectic quickly collapses. It is, after all, based on sexuality, and base sex is the great leveller, the common denominator of The SWF. First, the dialectic turns on end: Ebenezer learns that Anna is not a virgin by choice but by chance--due to Burlingame's peculiar malady. She compensates by using perverted alternatives (exaggerated by a vindictive Burlingame in Ch. 28, Part II), and she descends to explicit savagery as the mistress of Burlingame's brother, Billy Rumbly. Conversely, the whore, Joan Toast (in some respects the hyperbolically conventional gold-hearted woman of ill-fame) becomes almost saint-like in her devotion to Eben and Eben's dream of "innocence." Eben originally idealizes both Joan and Anna; indeed,

he idealizes Joan completely out of existence (p. 67). However, he finally "unites" the two not by seeing them as angels but by lusting after both of them as women. Eventually he acknowledges his lust. Until then, he rationalizes it away in a manner that has Anna and Joan almost emerging as sisters--much as Anna equates Burlingame and Eben in her mind. After almost raping the girl in the rigging of the Cyprian who looks like (and later proves to be) Joan Toast, Eben, shocked by this revelation of his animality, rationalizes at length, reviewing the emotions he feels after his narrow escape:

> chagrin . . . disappointment . . . alarm . . . awe . . . and finally, a sort of overarching joy commingled with relief at a suspicion that seemed more probable every time he reviewed it--the suspicion that his otherwise not easily accountable possession by desire, contingent as it had been on the assumption of her late deflowering and his consequent pity, was by the very perverseness of that contingency rendered almost innocent, an affair as it were between virgins. This mystic yearning of the pure to join his ravished sister in impurity: was it not, in fact, self-ravishment, and hence a variety of love? [p. 289]

Joan and Anna are also linked with each other and with Eben by the conventional and "romantic" but also sexually suggestive ring. Anna gives her silver ring to Eben when he leaves England; Eben later gives the fishbone ring he obtained from Quassapelagh to Joan (Susan Warren), who later trades it back for Eben's silver ring; Joan, stumbling upon Anna at the Cambridge wharf, throws the silver ring at her feet (p. 711), and it is this ring mix-up that is partly responsible for Eben's confusion about whether the "Church Creek Virgin" is his wife or sister, Joan or Anna. All this sounds confusing, and Barth plans it that way.

Having traced the Edenic theme to its confusing conclusions, I will return now to Burlingame's Pandect of Geminology.[19] In this

compendious chapter all the dialectical systems of The SWF are assembled, at least metaphorically, and merged by Henry Burlingame, "Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories, Husband to all Creation, the Cosmic Lover," accompanied by thunder storms, fornication, fertility rites, the cosmic motion of planets, history, myth, and showers of meteors flashing from Aquarius. Without pretending to do justice to the context, content, or rhetoric of the chapter, I will review a few of the dialectical "twins" united therein.

Burlingame links Phosphor and Hesper with Eben and Anna: the morning star and evening star, which are one and the same: Venus, planet of love. He tells Eben that Anna is wont to read the letters in the seal of their silver ring,

(pictured, p. 129), which originally designated their mother, Anne B., as "ANN and EB conjoined" (p. 529). The ring is their cyclic, sexual link. Incidentally, it resembles the Pass All Fail All circle in Giles Goat-Boy

(p. 428) and the Moebius strip "Frame-Tale" of Lost in the Funhouse. (For evidence of the sexual capacity of the ring, see Rabelais' story of "Hans Carvel's ring," Gargantua and Pantagruel, Bk. III, Ch. xxviii.) Burlingame informs Eben that the twins' sign is Gemini, their season is springtime, Maytime, "the season of fertility and the year's first thunderstorms" (p. 531). Twins are

> "the embodiment of dualism, polarity, and compensation. Thou'rt the Heavenly Twins, the Sons of Thunder, the Dioscuri, the Boanerges; thou'rt the twin principles of male and female, mortal and divine, good and evil, light and darkness. Your tree is the sacred oak, the thundertree; your flower is the twin-leaved mistletoe, seat of the oak tree's life, whose twin white berries betoken the celestial semen and are thus employed to rejuvenate the old, fructify the barren, and turn the shy maid's fancies to lusty thoughts of love. Your bird is the red

> cock Chanticleer, singer of light and love. Your emblems are legion: twin circles represent you, whether suggested by the sun and moon, the wheels of the solar chariot, the two eggs laid by Leda, the nipples of Solomon's bride, the spectacles of Love and Knowledge, the testicles of maleness, or the staring eyes of God. Twin acorns represent you, both because they are the thunder-tree's seed and because their two parts fit like male and female. Twin mountains represent you, the breasts of Mother Nature; the Maypole and its ring are danced round in your honor. Your sacred letters are A, C, H, I, M, O, P, S, W, X, and Z--" [p. 532]

And the lore continues: the emblematic letters, all having "common kinship with swiving, storms, and the double face of Nature"; historical, mythical, biblical, and legendary twins, including Jesus and Judas ("hatched from a single egg!") and God and Satan; the significance of various twins, bound by various bonds--"love or hate or death." And, says Henry, "'almost always their union is brilliance, totality, apocalypse--a thing to yearn and tremble for!'" (p. 536). Yearning and trembling are comparable to the "reverence" and "fear" which Burlingame describes as the reactions of savages to storms, twins, and fornication (p. 534). And are not "reverence" and "fear" analogues of the "pity" and "terror" of tragedy, the "sympathy" and "ridicule" of comedy, the dialectical "faith" and "cynicism" of Todd Andrews, the "loving" and "loathing" of Charley Matassin and hence Henry Burlingame, described by Mary Mungummory (p. 449)?

Now I am going beyond the chapter on twins. It invites such extension. Its cosmic magnitude reflects a motif of dialectical, cyclic movement which extends to all levels of The Sot-Weed Factor. For example, in casual conversation, Bertrand Burton describes a "ladder of wit," whose rungs, in the case of the fashion of wearing wigs,

represent alternate social positions and thus alternating yea's and nay's (pp. 238-239).[20] Soon after, during a storm at sea, Eben is washed off, then back onto the Poseidon; unconscious, he dreams of mysterious "twin alabaster mountain cones" (pp. 246-247). Much later, under the influence of opium, Eben continues his dream of the twin mountain peaks: a Sisyphean parable about existential choice and action (pp. 489 ff.). Still later, these twin mountains seem to represent the distance between Eben and Anna (p. 707; cf. Burlingame's "Twin mountains represent you, the breasts of Mother Nature"). Then there is Eben's catalogue of historical theories, which features the cyclic theory associated with the legendary bird called Ouida, which flies in ever diminishing circles until it disappears in its own fundament (p. 737). And there is the most outrageous, unspeakable "dialectic" of them all: the halved eggplant, appropriately hollowed, between whose hemispheres Captain John Smith places his burning, "plaistered codd," dramatizing quite literally, while preparing for, The Sot-Weed Factor's ultimate deflation and union through sex (pp. 798-799). Or, in a similar, outrageous vein, one might consider the dialectic of John Smith and Henry Burlingame I, the arch-antagonists of the "privie journall" and "secret historie." Their common denominator is gross carnality. In each case, the grossness, the bigness, is quite literal: in the case of Captain Smith, there is the (at least momentarily) momentous "codd"; in the case of Burlingame, there is the massive bulk which allows him to restrain his bowels, yet unloose a gargantuan flood upon Smith at the proper moment--the bulk which also accompanies his gluttony, the talent which crowns him king of the Ahatchwhoops.

All these cyclic, dialectical undercurrents are subsumed and

justified by the magnitudinous Pandect of Geminology, which, strictly speaking, ends with Burlingame's rhapsodic assertion that he is

> "Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories, Husband to all Creation, the Cosmic Lover! Henry More and Isaac Newton are my pimps and aides-de-chambre; I have known my great Bride part by splendrous part, and have made love to her disjecta membra, her sundry brilliant pieces [as described in Ch. 21, Part II]; but I crave the Whole--the tenon in the mortise, the jointure of polarities, the seamless universe--whereof you twain are token, in coito! I have no parentage to give me place and aim in Nature's order; very well--I am outside Her, and shall be Her lord and spouse!" [pp. 536-537]

In addition to the motives implied here--Henry's inability to achieve ultimate sexual union and his unknown parentage, which might give him "place and aim in Nature's order"--Henry seems to be driven by a love of what might be called the world's raw energy. Jesus and Judas, good and evil, God and Satan, Heaven and Hell: poles do not matter; Henry admires the absolute value of both sides of the dialectic, as though all that matters is the absolute distance from zero, from nothingness. Throughout the Anatomy of Criticism, Northrop Frye assumes that myth (and, in a sense, all knowledge) is dialectical, driven by visions of the apocalyptic and the demonic, corresponding to the psychic states of attraction and repulsion. Henry Burlingame reveals that the dialectical process is more complicated than this. Man does not "invent" a Hell to go with Heaven just because attraction implies a corresponding repulsion. Rather, Man is "attracted" to both Heaven and Hell, God and Satan, the Apocalyptic and the Demonic, as though magnetically drawn by the raw force and energy of both sides of the dialectic. And while man reveres both sides, because both sides are wondrous and (in Elizabethan terms) "brave," he also fears both sides.

Such is the case with Henry Burlingame, and recognition of this fact leads to a veritable revelation: realization of the deflation of the dialectic of Innocence and Experience, reflecting a merging of anti-romance and romance, of the Real and Ideal. We can analyze the collapse of this dialectic by considering the dialectic of Burlingame and Ebenezer. In many respects, as I have said, Burlingame is almost synonymous with "experience." He is "Eden's serpent, that . . . nested in the Tree of Knowledge" (p. 436). He is carnal knowledge. He is flux itself, eternally changing form, like the universe he embraces. He is Virgil leading Dante (Eben) through Hell and Heaven, proving that the road through each is "the same road" (p. 141), and that the New World provinces are neither Hell nor Purgatorio, just "a piece o' the great world" (p. 180). He is leading Eben from Innocence to Experience, insisting, like McEvoy, that "'the world's a tangled skein and all is knottier than ye take it for'" (p. 69). He is introducing Eben to Life, Time, Death and History, by forcing Eben to abandon such reductive formulas as Coode vs. Baltimore and White Men vs. Savages, trying to get Eben to join him in collapsing by embracing both sides of such dialectics.

But there is another side to Burlingame. He is not all worldliness, not all carnal knowledge, not all serpent, as the diminutive size of his "serpent" indicates. Although he is Suitor of Totality, he desperately wants union with something more mundane and less frightening than the Universe. The chaotic freedom of interstellar wanderer leaves him yearning for a link with the past: a "place and aim in Nature's order," knowledge of his parentage, security, a kind of innocence. When Eben's father calls Eben away from London, Burlingame insists he

would not like to be shackled by such a "link":

> "Praise Heav'n I know not my own father, if this be how they shackle one!"
>
> "I pray Heav'n rather you may someday find him," Anna said calmly, "or word of him, at least. A man's father is his link with the past; the bond 'twixt him and the world he's born to."
>
> "Then again I thank Heav'n I'm quit of mine," said Burlingame. "It leaves me free and unencumbered."
>
> "It doth in sooth, Henry," Anna said with some emotion, "for better or worse." [p. 34]

But, of course, Burlingame does want to be shackled; it is the search for his father that leads him to the New World and into the Coode-Baltimore intrigue. He hints at this attitude when he talks to Eben about the freedom found in the provinces:

> Burlingame shrugged. "Haply so, haply no. There is a freedom there that's both a blessing and a curse. 'Tis more than just political and religious liberty--they come and go from one year to the next. 'Tis philosophic liberty I speak of, that comes from want of history. It makes every man an orphan like myself, that freedom, and can as well demoralize as elevate." [p. 181]

Burlingame is describing a kind of existential "freedom": the "freedom" of men who awake to find themselves living in a universe without God, a Father, a vital "link" which will explain and justify their existence. All they have is existence--no essence, no father. Apparently their only satisfaction is to defy fate, to embrace chaos bravely, to glory in the heady freedom of wandering, to become a Suitor of Totality, a Cosmic Lover. Still, there remains a profound yearning for that perhaps imaginary, lost world of innocence, the security of knowing Father is watching and perhaps guiding them.

As Eben progresses from Innocence to Experience, then, his guide, Henry Burlingame, is reversing the motion--trying to escape the world

of experience in the search for his father. This contrapuntal motion can be described in terms of one of The SWF's most intriguing dialectics, which I will call Recto-Verso. This dialectic punningly produces two emblems of Burlingame and Ebenezer: rectum and verse. The Recto-Verso dialectic consists of a document, the Journal of the 1691 Virginia Assembly, printed on the verso of a set of papers whose recto contains the "Secret Historie" of John Smith and the "Privie Journall" of Sir Henry Burlingame. The verso, the Journal of the 1691 Assembly, contains damning evidence against John Coode. Baltimore wants his agent, Burlingame, to obtain the document so he can destroy his enemy. However, the "verso" plot becomes infinitely muddy: Coode and Baltimore both own parts of the 1691 Journal; evidently Coode has the "Privie Journall" segment and Baltimore has the "Secret Historie" segment, both men entrusting their papers to men in the provinces with the surname Smith. But the segments of the journal and the loyalties of the Smiths become reversed and confused. Finally, the "verso" Journal, Eben's side of the dialectic, rather than convicting Coode, collapses the Coode-Baltimore dialectic, disillusions Eben, and initiates him into the real world of History.

Conversely, the "recto" Journal, Burlingame's side of the dialectic, despite its deflationary impact on "history," finally leads Henry to his father, Burlingame II (the crazy old coot and Ahatchwhoop chieftain, Chicamec). It is Henry's link with the past; it gives Henry a "place and aim in Nature's order." Specifically, and, as usual, ironically--it leads Henry into the wilderness, where he evidently becomes chief of the "salvages"--is he salvaged, or does he turn savage? Or are the salvages savages?

Henry's paradoxical search for "innocence" is comparable to Joan Toast's voyage to the New World in search for Eben and Eben's dream of innocence. Joan, like Burlingame, is experience personified--a whore--yet she has a certain vision of lost innocence. Largely due to this rueful sense of contradiction, she is, next to Henry, the most complex character in The SWF. Indeed, the character Joan Toast dispells any notion that the ideological Menippean satirist, John Barth, works with simple "humor" characters. His characters are types but they are complicated types. It is only upon later readings of The SWF that one becomes fully aware of Joan's complexity, for upon the first reading, it is not until about page 508 that the reader becomes positive Susan Warren is Joan Toast. Returning to Susan Warren's earlier tales about Elizabeth Williams and Joan Toast (especially pp. 336-347), one finds that what upon first reading seemed to be mock-arbitrary manipulations of plot, are really subtle human motives--Susan's (i.e., Joan's) inner conflicts. The ugly, pox-ridden swine maiden, Susan-Joan, wants to be loved for what she is now, yet she wants her old beauty back; and she wants to be loved as "Joan Toast," not as the slut "Susan Warren"; she wants to attract Eben, yet she does not want him to be attracted toward anyone but Joan Toast--maybe even his idealized image of Joan Toast; she wants Eben to maintain his "innocence," yet she wants him to love her, and maybe even lust after her, as though she were beautiful; she wants to maintain her essence from the past, yet she wants to know that her present essence is not totally despicable. Later passages, such as the marriage ceremony (pp. 487-488), are similarly rich in the characterization of Joan Toast.

At the "story's" end (the end of Part III), Joan Toast affirms

Eben's "innocence." "'Thou'rt the very spirit of Innocence,'" she says, as he agrees to consummate his initiation into "experience" (p. 800). Joan's motives are ambivalent: she wants Eben to escape his state of "innocence"; yet she, like Eben, and like the reader, to some degree, sees Eben's Christ-like "atonement" as another affirmation of innocence. (Furthermore, she wants Eben, and she wants him to want her.) Joan Toast, like the reader, senses the glory of martyrdom in Eben's blind adherence to innocence. Earlier, Eben himself made the inevitable connection with Don Quixote:

> Granted that the Earth, as Burlingame was fond of pointing out, is "a dust-mote whirling through the night," there was something brave, defiantly human, about the passengers on this mote who perished for some dream of Value. To die, to risk death, even to raise a finger for any Cause, was to penon one's lance with the riband of Purpose, so the poet judged, and had about it the same high lunacy of a tilt with Manchegan windmills. [p. 741]

Even Eben's final "redemptive" initiation into "experience" tastes of this glorious quixotic lunacy, as I have already noted. I will discuss this aspect of Eben's innocence again in section four of this chapter.

However, first, and finally, I should note that the dialectic of Innocence and Experience is climactically collapsed in the anticlimax, as the Author deflates the parallel dialectic of "The Marylandiad" and "The Sot-Weed Factor." In the end, the Author informs us, "The Sot-Weed Factor's"

> net effect was precisely what Baltimore had hoped to gain from a Marylandiad, and precisely the reverse of its author's intention. Maryland, in part because of the well-known poem, acquired in the early eighteenth century a reputation for graciousness and refinement comparable to Virginia's, and a number of excellent families were induced to settle there. [p. 818][21]

In recognition of Eben's contribution, the fifth Lord Baltimore (who has regained through the Bedchamber what his relatives lost through Court Politics) offers to make Ebenezer the real, instead of the mock, "Poet & Laureat of the Province of Maryland" (p. 818). Eben turns him down. This deflation of the dialectic of Innocence and Experience is a straightforward Menippean twist, of course, while that involving the contrapuntal quests of Eben and Burlingame is a complicating ambiguity--the anarchic element of "romance" which seems inevitably to disrupt the anti-romantic surface of Menippean satire. Barth's Menippean satire is doubly dualistic, then: structurally dialectical and tonally ambivalent.

4. Cosmopsis, Mythotherapy, and Cosmophilism

The most perplexing dialectic in The Sot-Weed Factor is that of Cosmopsis and Cosmophilism, cosmopsis signifying paralysis, cosmophilism signifying assertive action. Much confusion stems from the similarity between cosmophilistic "action" and mythotherapeutic "action." Eben is, somewhat like Jake Horner, so aware of the world's dualism that he "cannot choose"; he suffers paralysis of the will: "' 'twixt Stools my Breech falleth to the Ground!'":

> it seemed to him as fine a thing to be fat as to be lean, to be short as tall, homely as handsome. . . . Ebenezer could be persuaded, at least notionally, by any philosophy of the world . . . and as for ethics, could he have been all three and not just one he'd have enjoyed dying once a saint, once a frightful sinner, and once lukewarm between the two.
>
> The man (in short), thanks both to Burlingame and to his natural proclivities, was dizzy with the beauty of the possible; dazzled, he threw up his hands at choice, and like ungainly flotsam rode half-content the tide of chance. . . .[22]
>
> Finally one day he did not deign even to dress

> himself or eat, but sat immobile in the window seat in his nightshirt and stared at the activity in the street below, unable to choose a motion at all even when, some hours later, his untutored bladder suggested one. [p. 12]

On the other hand, Burlingame, as the Pandect of Geminology demonstrates, is not paralyzed by duality or by multiplicity; he collapses all in his arms, as Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories. Burlingame is "a glutton for the great world" (p. 159), while Eben stands starving before the table, paralyzed by the sight of so many dishes.

Yet there are obvious similarities between the attitudes of Eben and Burlingame. Like Burlingame, Eben is "dazzled" and rather enamored with the world. At one point Eben recalls how Mrs. Twigg, the housekeeper, allowed Eben and Anna "an extra hour 'twixt bath and bed" when the twins turned five. "'I' faith,'" says Eben, "'what a treasure that hour seemed: time for any of a hundred pleasures! We fetched out the cards, to play some game or other--but what silly game was worth such a wondrous hour?'" (p. 578). In short, the twins were so excited by the extra hour that they became paralyzed; finally they got sick and Mrs. Twigg put them to bed fifteen minutes before their hour was up. The important point is that Eben and Anna were as enamored--perhaps more enamored--by that hour, than the jaded Henry Burlingame would have been.

How, then, is Eben cured of Cosmopsis? Or is he? In some respects, Eben seems to choose the same cure as Burlingame (Burlingame, like Eben, was afflicted with cosmopsis in his youth); he arbitrarily chooses an "essence": poet and virgin. "'I vowed to fling myself into the arms of Life, and what is life but the taking of sides?'" he says, rationalizing as "action" a "virginity" which is in some respects merely a rationalization for inaction or paralysis. Eben chooses the "side" of Innocence,

while Burlingame chooses the "side" of Experience, yet Burlingame seems to affirm Eben's cure when he describes his own cure for the "cosmic view"--for having to exist as "Chance's fool, the toy of aimless Nature--a mayfly flitting down the winds of Chaos" (p. 372):

> "the truth that drives men mad must be sought for ere it's found, and it eludes the doltish or myopic hunter. But once 'tis caught and looked on, whether by insight or instruction, the captor's sole expedient is to force his will upon't ere it work his ruin! Why is't you set such store by innocence and rhyming, and I by searching out my father and battling Coode? One must needs make and seize his soul, and then cleave fast to't, or go babbling in the corner; one must choose his gods and devils on the run, quill his own name upon the universe, and declare, ''Tis I, and the world stands such-a-way!' One must assert, assert, assert, or go screaming mad." [p. 373]

Or as Henry simplifies on other occasions: "'Life is short; there's time for naught but bold resolves'" (pp. 28, 132). Henry seems to be seconding Eben's defense of Don Quixote and thus of Eben himself, defending the mad knight who defiantly tilts with windmills, asserts by crowning his lance "with the riband of Purpose"; Eben on one occasion calls this the "knight-errantry of Innocence and Art" (p. 680)!

Captain Cairn summarizes the "cosmic view" in The SWF:

> "what matter if a man lives seven years or seventy? His years are not an eyeblink to eternity, and de'il the way he spends 'em--whether steering ships or scribbling verse, or building towns or burning 'em--he dies like a May fly when his day is done, and the stars go round their courses just the same." [p. 577]

Eben and Burlingame both resist this cosmic perspective. Says Eben:

> "One night when Burlingame and I were watching the stars . . . I remarked that men's problems, like earth's mountains, amounted to naught from the aspect of eternity and the boundless heavens and Henry answered, 'Quite so, Eben: but down here where we live they are mountainous enough, and no mistake!'" [p. 661]

This essentially "pragmatic" stance indicates a similarity between Burlingame and the Negro Doctor of The End of the Road. One might further compare the two by citing Burlingame's disdainful comment concerning Eben's "essence" or "self": "'Oh la,' scoffed Burlingame. 'Thou'rt talking schoolish rot. What is this coin, thy self, and how hath he [Eben's impersonator aboard the Poseidon] possessed it?'" (p. 205; cf. the Doctor on the "self," p. 169, above). David Morrell goes so far as to equate Burlingame and the Doctor (he throws in Harold Bray, of Giles, for good measure), and thus to equate Cosmophilism and Mythotherapy.[23] Yes, Burlingame, master of disguises, wearer of many "masks," seems to be preaching mythotherapy when he says "'The world can alter a man entirely, Eben, or he can alter himself, down to his very essence. . . . Nay, a man must alter willy-nilly in's flight to the grave; he is a river running seaward, that is ne'er the same from hour to hour'" (p. 137).

Yes, both Eben ("I vowed to fling myself into the arms of Life, and what is life but the taking of sides?") and Burlingame ("assert, assert, assert") seem to affirm a doctrine of action. Yet there is a crucial difference between their manners of asserting. Eben chooses the "side" of Innocence and Burlingame the "side" of Experience. Eben asserts by "choosing" an essence, by saying "'Tis I, and the world stands such-a-way," but he sees his "essence" as a "calling": "'tis of no moment what I do; poet is what I am'" (p. 81). He "discovers" his "essence"; it is a kind of rationalization. He is rigid, shackled, and also protected and aggrandized by it. Burlingame, on the other hand, is flux itself, "a river running seaward"; he believes "the very universe is naught but change and motion" (pp. 137, 138). He is lucidly aware

of the Heraclitean Depth of Things, unwilling and unable to wear his "mask" "wholeheartedly," unlike Eben. Henry is, in fact, somewhat jealous of Eben, or at least rueful that he, Burlingame, jaded even as he frantically embraces protean experience, cannot return to safe ground. He simultaneously loves and loathes his mistress, and his mistress is Totality, Creation, or the Real, not a mythotherapeutic role, mask, or reduction of the Real.

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Eben's "cure" for cosmopsis is not cosmophilism, then, but a kind of mythotherapy: choosing a "role" (or letting it choose him) and letting that role determine his actions. It requires blinding himself to "experience," to "the world as it is" (p. 433); it requires the building of "romantic" dualistic systems and then the choosing of sides. Yet Eben seems peculiarly receptive to "experience," at least when he is paralyzed by cosmopsis. It seems to be the abortive cure--mythotherapy (innocence: the "essence" poet and virgin)--that destroys this receptivity. Cosmopsis and cosmophilism are related. Their relationship is complicated by a pivotal factor: both cosmopsis and cosmophilism seem dependent on seeing Life as Play, or as Art.

Burlingame incorporates the education of Eben and Anna into their daily "sport" or play:

> he ran them through Zeno's paradoxes as one would ask riddles, and rehearsed them in Descartes' skepticism as gaily as though the search for truth and value in the universe were a game of Who's Got the Button. . . .
>
> The result of this education was that the twins grew quite enamored of the world--especially Ebenezer. [p. 8]

But:

> because learning had been for [Eben] such a pleasant game, he could not regard the facts of zoology or the Norman Conquest, for example, with genuine seriousness, nor could he discipline himself to long labor at long tasks. Even his great imagination and enthusiasm for the world were not unalloyed virtues when combined with his gay irresolution, for though they led him to a great sense of the arbitrariness of the particular real world, they did not endow him with a corresponding realization of its finality.[24] [p. 9]

Eben looks at "the facts of life and the facts of history and geography . . . from the storyteller's point of view" (p. 294).

Now the first principle of Burlingame's "pedagogy" is "that of the three usual motives for learning things--necessity, ambition, and curiosity--simple curiosity was the worthiest of development, it being the 'purest' (in that the value of what it drives us to learn is terminal rather than instrumental[25]), the most conducive to exhaustive and continuing rather than cursory or limited study. . ." (p. 8). Burlin- "game" makes learning--and living--a game for Ebenezer because only play is "pure"; it is motivated by curiosity; it has a "terminal" value. In a similar vein, Joan Toast argues that sex only has terminal value when it is treated as "sport"; ideally, the gentleman "'should propose a cordial swiving as one might a hand of whist'"; too often, instead, the male treats the woman not as a "partner" but as a "'vassal: 'tis not mere sport a man lusts after, 'tis conquest. . .'" (p. 63).

It is largely Eben's tendency to see life as a game that is responsible for cosmopsis: "he would have to . . . seek his fortune in the world at large. But in what manner? . . . Here, in his difficulty with this question, the profoundest effects of Burlingame's amiable pedagogy become [sic] discernible: Ebenezer's imagination was excited by every person he met either in or out of books who could do with

skill and understanding anything whatever" (p. 11). When the pirate, Tom Pound, dumps Eben and Bertrand overboard, Eben ponders suicide, but finds he cannot take death any more seriously than life:

> it was not simply fear that kept him paddling; it was also the same constitutional deficiency that had made him unable to draw his own blood, will himself unconscious, or acknowledge in his heart that there really had been a Roman Empire. [p. 294]

The same tendency to see life as an arbitrary game characterizes Henry Burlingame's Cosmophilism. Burlingame is intrigued by Coode because Coode plunders "more for sport than avarice"; he "love[s] intrigue itself" (p. 175). Henry likes to "play" the "game of governments" (p. 180). He "sports" with women (p. 362) and he plays the "world like a harpsichord" (p. 456). Henry sees the governmental and insurrectionist "plots" as an intricate game, a plot out of Chaucer or Boccaccio. He has an infinite "curiosity" to "know" all of Creation's patterns, characters, sensations, plots. And he embraces Creation just as Joan Toast recommended; he swives Creation as a man might play a game of whist. The game has terminal value because it is valued for its own sake. The trapper, Harvey Russecks, comes close to expressing Henry Burlingame's opinion when he insists that Eben and Mary Mungummory tell their tales, whatever the length:

> "Ha! And the plot is tangled, d'ye say? Is't more knotful or bewildered than the skein o' life, that a good tale tangles the better to unsnarl? Nay, out with your story, now, and yours as well, sir, and shame on both o' ye thou'rt not commenced already! Spin and tangle till the Dogstar sets i' the Bay; a tale well wrought is the gossip o' the gods, that see the heart and point o' life on earth; the web o' the world; the Warp and the Woof . . . I' Christ, I do love a story, sirs!" [pp. 636-637]

This passage is typically ambiguous. Does Harvey love "story"

or the "skein of life"? Similarly, is Burlingame "embracing" Art (e.g., dialectical "systems") or Life when he calls himself "Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories, Husband to all Creation, the Cosmic Lover"? Several factors are involved, I think: first is the kind of ambivalence regarding intellectual "systems" I discussed in Chapter II. Henry "embraces" contradictories, collapses dualistic systems in order to deflate them but also in order to play with them. Furthermore, repelled even as he is attracted by Totality, Henry, somewhat like Tristram Shandy, perhaps, recognizes the need for hobby-horses: to this degree his "cosmophilism" is indeed a kind of lucid mythotherapy, to which he cannot "wholeheartedly" commit himself because of his awareness of the Depths behind mythotherapeutic "masks." Henry, like Sterne, is <u>also</u> enamored with chaotic Reality itself. And, as in the case of Rabelais, his love for Art, "story," intellectual systems, lore, or whatever, seems finally due to the <u>life</u>-like "vitality" of art, story, and so forth: "And the plot is tangled, d'ye say? Is't more knotful or bewildered than the skein o' life, that a good tale tangles the better to unsnarl?" Henry cosmophilistically considers the world and artifice, or life and play, as equivalents. He embraces all of them as Creation, "the world as it is."

There are other layers of complexity, however. Burlingame simultaneously loves and loathes Creation. He is to some extent contemptuous and enraged because the world--a game--is <u>only</u> "terminal"; it is not "instrumental" in the sense of leading one beyond, to a Purpose, God, or Father. In this sense, Burlingame's tendency to "play" with the world is "contemptuous" (see p. 449), a function of his sense of orphanage, his sense of lacking a "place and aim in Nature's order."

But, again, it is this very sense of being "outside" Creation that lends a desperate elation and intensity to Burlingame's decision--or maybe need--to become Creation's "lord and spouse." If at first he treats life as a game out of "contempt," he comes finally (having reached an existential end of the road) to view and embrace life for its game-like, "terminal" value.

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In distinguishing between mythotherapy and cosmophilism I have implied that the former aligns with "instrumental" and the latter with "terminal." Mythotherapy reduces and "uses" experience as an instrument for protecting or aggrandizing the "self," while cosmophilism views experience as a "terminal" thing-in-itself. In Metamorphosis, the contemporary psychologist Ernest G. Schachtel uses two pairs of terms which elucidate the relationships among mythotherapy, cosmophilism, and cosmopsis.[26] Roughly speaking, these two pairs of terms describe, first, antithetical existential stances ("embeddedness" vs. "world-openness"), and, second, antithetical perceptual modes ("autocentric" vs. "allocentric" perception).

"Embeddedness" (cf. "innocence") is a self-deluding, self-restrictive reliance on the "pleasures" of quiescence or of the womb:

> In embeddedness-affect man reacts . . . as if the world were a womb for him. If the obstacles and frustrations are sufficiently great, most of us revert, to some extent, to this attitude, perhaps with the exception of those few who have traveled the difficult path to a profound and complete acceptance of man's situation in the world.
>
> The person who resorts to magic feelings of omnipotence in the attempt to deny the difficulties of reality and to return, in phantasy, to the quasi-intrauterine phase where his wishes seemed magically to produce maternal care and fulfillment of the wish will be particularly vulnerable to the

> encounter of obstacles and frustrations, because they are in such glaring contrast to the narcissistic phantasy of omnipotence. [p. 36]

Insofar as Myth and Romance (in Frye's context) serve wish-fulfillment, the Freudian "pleasure principle," or man's desire for "omnipotence" (or power over his environment), they are forms of "embeddedness." The same holds true of "mythotherapy."

"World-openness," in contrast to "embeddedness," is a desire and attempt to encounter rather than escape Reality.[27] If "embeddedness-affects" are "germane" to Embeddedness, "activity-affects" are "germane" to World-openness, and "In their purest form, the activity-affects are connected with an activity performed for its own sake" (p. 73). Schachtel sees world-openness and activity-affect as natural human capacities or desires. However, "Man's anxiety in leaving embeddedness is the one most powerful antagonist of his world-openness. It wants to confine him in the embeddedness of the familiar so that he will not experience the awe and wonder of the infinitely new and unknown. And it wants to confine him in the embeddedness of using other people for his needs, as he once was embedded in using his mother's care for his needs" (pp. 53-54).

"Autocentric" perception, like "rubricizing"[28] and mythotherapy, is a tool of embeddedness. "Primary autocentricity" is infantile inability to distinguish between self and world or between pleasure and stimulus. "Secondary autocentricity," the kind of autocentricity pertinent to this discussion, involves inability or unwillingness to distinguish between external object and subjective need, or reaction to external "stimuli as disturbances of embeddedness" (p. 167). "Objects are most frequently perceived from the perspective of how they will

serve a certain need of the perceiver, or how they can be used (cf. "instrumental") by him for some purpose, or how they have to be avoided in order to prevent pain, displeasure, injury, or discomfort" (p. 167). Everything is an "object-of-use."

In contrast, "allocentric" perception is "full" perception of objects as things-in-themselves (cf. "terminal"). Allocentric perception "is characterized by an inexhaustible and ineffable quality, by the profoundest interest in the object, and by the enriching, refreshing, vitalizing effect which the act of perception has on the perceiver. The main reason for this difference lies in the fact that the fully allocentric perception (especially of nature, people, and the great works of art) always breaks through and transcends the confines of the labeled, the familiar, and establishes a relation in which a direct encounter with the object itself, instead of with one or more of its labeled and familiar aspects, takes place" (p. 177). Allocentric perception yields an "intimate knowledge" of things (p. 239). It yields delight in the "familiar" because it is a kind of "creation"--a perceptual piercing beneath the familiar, safe surface of things. It involves "objectification"--seeing things-in-themselves, and also an "interest" in, a "total turning to" these "objects" (p. 225). Finally,

> In the allocentric attitude, which is the foundation of allocentric perception, there is an element of affirmation. Every act of allocentric perception has this affirmative quality which acknowledges the object of the act as existing in its own right. In Hegel's thought it is the movement from knowledge to acknowledgment which constitutes love. [p. 226]

Thence Schachtel notes the dual meaning of "know," to which I referred in Chapter I, above, and which Henry Burlingame uses in his Pandect: "I have known my Bride part by splendrous part" (SWF, p. 536).

Schachtel says "allocentricity, characterized by objectification . . . is a late development, phylogenetically and ontogenetically, and is to be found only in man, at the highest stage of evolution and after man has emerged from the infantile mode of relatedness. Autocentricity, with its lack of objectification and . . . with its fusion with pleasure-unpleasure feelings, is the exclusive sensory mode of relatedness in earlier, lower stages of phylogenetic and ontogenetic development" (pp. 99-100). From a literary perspective, Schachtel is here describing Frye's historical (cf. "phylogenetic") progression from the Mythic mode toward the more "realistic" Ironic mode, but in a manner unflattering to Frye's system, since "reality" is conceived here as a desirable entity in its own right rather than as a rationalized concession to "plausibility," an ugly disguise covering pleasurable myth. Schachtel is also accounting for the novelist's and Menippean satirist's esteem for the Real, and for their dramatization of "disillusionment" or the loss of "innocence." Again, Schachtel's system accounts for the Menippean satirist's ambivalence toward the Real: when "anxiety" gains the upper hand, the desire to encounter becomes a desire to escape reality. World-openness is disrupted by embeddedness. Allocentricity shifts to autocentricity. Cosmophilism shifts to mythotherapy.

And where does that leave cosmopsis? In this context, cosmopsis seems equivalent to "existence" itself. Existence is, as every new-born child announces, a crisis, to which one can react, according to Schachtel (and also Barth, I am arguing) in two contrasting ways: one can apply mythotherapy or cosmophilism, remain embedded in the womb, or confront and encounter reality. Actually, of course, the two reactions alternate, and psychological, literary, and Barthian theorists have differing

opinions about which reaction prevails.

Schachtel's book begins about where The End of the Road begins and ends: replace Jake Horner with a new-born child confronting existence (presumably only sucking his thumb at this point, rocking in his crib rather than a rocking chair). Now the Freudian "asserts that the fundamental movement of the living organism is toward an excitationless state of quiescence," the ultimate end of this "pleasure principle" being "the death instinct" (p. 5). The strange, glazed expression in the baby's eyes stems from "anxiety" or pleasures based on "escape" or regression to the womb. Frye's literary system is similarly oriented, the "order of words" or "myth" functioning as womb. Barth critics of the "fabulator" school repeat this pattern. In contrast, Schachtel believes the expression in the baby's eyes stems from a natural desire to "encounter" the "reality" impinging on him, a desire to escape from the dark womb to the dazzling world outside. The child is staring at the world in interest. Similarly, Frye's literary antagonists (Erich Auerbach, for example) see the historical-literary progression described by Frye as a movement toward (valued) "reality" rather tahn away from (valued) myth. And, of course, I see Barth practicing cosmophilism rather than mythotherapy, encountering and confronting rather than escaping "reality." Thus the glazed eyes, the cosmoptic stare, the reaction to existence in the world that is, can potentially shift to awe, bedazzlement, delight in Totality, reality, Creation, the "skein o' life," the "web o' the world."

Mythotherapy, supposed "cure" for existence, is really a step backward, toward embeddedness, toward the womb (at least in its "secondary" stages; within Schachtel's system, some ego-centric reduction

of the world to an external object-of-use must precede allocentric "objectification" of the world). The cosmoptic stare potentially contains the cosmophilistic stare of "interest," knowledge, and acknowledgment or love; mythotherapy can destroy this infantile wonderment, for it reflects "anxiety" or repulsion and leads to an existential (cf. the "death instinct") and perceptual dead-end (boredom, insecurity, self-delusion, paralysis of the mind). I will not try to determine whether it leads to a literary dead-end,[29] since I do not see Barth's Menippean satires as "mythotherapeutic" works.

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"Fabulator" critics see Barth's The Sot-Weed Factor as a mythotherapeutic work largely due to the element of "play" or "art" which I have discussed in relation to Cosmopsis and Cosmophilism. In "John Barth and the Aesthetics of Artifice," Campbell Tatham refers to Jake Horner's "articulation" speech (see p. 167, above) and says this attitude is the "basic point" of The SWF. Tatham says "the essence of Barth's aesthetic is the assertion that even as vision is personal, potentially arbitrary, so art cannot hope and should not try to mirror the existence of an objective reality. Art, Barth is saying again and again, assumes and affirms artifice."[30] I largely agree with Tatham concerning Barth's opinion of art's mimetic capabilities, but I fundamentally disagree concerning Barth's attendant use of "artifice." For Tatham, "artifice" in art seems roughly equivalent to "action" in life. But I have already pointed out the crucial difference between Ebenezer's mythotherapeutic and Burlingame's cosmophilistic policies of "action" in The SWF. Tatham sees Barth siding with Eben and mythotherapy. But the "action," "articulation," "art"--the plot, the

collapsed dialectics, the entire parodic structure of this Menippean satire--all these are fundamentally anti-mythotherapeutic, even though Barth's attitude toward mythotherapy is as ambivalent as his attitude toward romance. The "plot" of The SWF, for example, is not directed toward the organization or reduction of experience into mythotherapeutic patterns; it is directed toward the destruction of such patterns (although, of course, it "uses" these patterns to destroy these patterns). Burlingame's--and Barth's--"affirmation" of "art" or "artifice" or "play" in The SWF is finally an affirmation of experience rather than an affirmation of reductions of experience. It represents the cure of cosmophilism rather than the cure of mythotherapy. It incorporates the positive aspects of the malady cosmopsis into the cure. Like cosmopsis, cosmophilism treats the game of life as a terminal, rather than as an instrumental, Creation. It does not turn "life" into a "game" in order to escape it, but in order to embrace it.

Barth treats his Creation, The Sot-Weed Factor, as a kind of "game" partly because, like Burlingame, he loves and loathes it, but also because only thus can he embrace it for its "terminal" value; only thus can he swive Creation, progress from Cosmopsis, which stops at seeing, to Cosmophilism, which terminally "stops" at loving. It is only by sporting with Creation that he can truly become "Her lord and spouse," for better or worse. In The Sot-Weed Factor, Barth becomes a Suitor of Totality, Embracer of Contradictories, Husband to all Creation, the Cosmic Lover, which is not to say that his is a totally happy marriage, for Menippean satirists almost always find Reality a tempestuous mate. Perhaps this is one reason they prefer to approach her obliquely; they court her by ambiguously ridiculing her deceptively beautiful half-sister,

the Ideal. This is also why The Sot-Weed Factor does not end with a Rabelaisian paean to life, drink, and marriage; Burlingame is ambiguously "salvaged" at the end, while Eben, placidly cynical, only sporadically enthused by the "cosmophilist" Nicholas Lowe (p. 817), exits with an epitaph (p. 819) distinguished more by Mockery than by Merriment.

NOTES

[1] Jerry H. Bryant, The Open Decision: The Contemporary American Novel and its Intellectual Background (N.Y., 1970). See Chapter 8, "Novels of Ambiguity and Affirmation: The Moral Outlook."

[2] R. W. Murphy, "In Print: John Barth," Horizon, V (January, 1963), 37.

[3] John Enck interview, p. 11.

[4] For a discussion of "The Historical Ebenezer Cooke," the relation between the historical Cooke, the historical "Sot-Weed Factor," and Barth's Cooke and SWF, see Philip E. Diser's article in Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, X, iii (1968), 48-59. Diser's article, like Barth's SWF, is largely based on Lawrence C. Wroth's "The Maryland Muse by Ebenezer Cooke," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, N.S. XLIV (October, 1934). Morrell and Tatham discuss the historical background at some length; Tatham prints the complete text of Ebenezer Cooke's "The Sot-Weed Factor" at the end of his dissertation.

[5] While Barth was working on The SWF, Philip Young, one of his friends and colleagues at Penn State, was working on a "corrective" (not the first by any means) study of Pocahontas. This study, entitled "The Mother of Us All: Pocahontas Reconsidered," was published after The SWF, in Kenyon Review, XXIV, iii (Summer, 1962), 391-415. Young summarizes the ups and downs of the Pocahontas legend, notes Smith's curious taste for tales of how he was rescued by various "honorable and vertuous Ladies," and shows how the story follows the patterns of numerous ancient and modern tales and myths. As Young says, there is no way to prove conclusively that Smith's version of the Pocahontas incident was a fabrication, but there is fairly good circumstantial evidence indicating as much. Barth rates an incongruously flattering footnote in Young's article.

[6] Russell H. Miller somewhat mechanically traces a conventional "epic structure" in his article, "The SWF: A Contemporary Mock-Epic," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, VIII, ii, 88-100.

[7] "Lit. of Exhaustion," p. 31. Barth uses a similar analogy in an interview with Phyllis Meras--"John Barth: A Truffle No Longer," New York Times Book Review, August 7, 1966, p. 22: "The cathedral at Chartres is a remarkable piece of architecture, but if it were built today, it would be embarrassing--unless it were done tongue-in-cheek, deliberately, as an ironic comment."

[8] A researcher might begin with the wit and word-play on pp. 135, 221, 242, 254, 401, 413, 448, 529, 580, 738, 477-482, 672, and 806.

[9] Alan Holder discusses the relationship between the "real" history of Maryland and Barth's necessarily expanded version, based on the Archives of Maryland, in "'What Marvelous Plot . . . Was Afoot?' History in Barth's The Sot-Weed Factor," American Quarterly, XX (1968), 596-604.

[10] Robert C. Elliott's The Power of Satire is literally manufactured from "flyting" lore: the ancient traditions of Greek invective, Arabian "slanging matches," the Irish "shame culture" with its reverence for the formal curse. The "flyting" has numerous equivalents in other cultures: the Greenland eskimos settle quarrels with a "drum match" or "song duel"--contests of abuse. American negroes call it "playing the Dozens." The Italian equivalent is "la legge" or The Law. Elliott associates such contests with the Saturnalia or "institutionalized ridicule": among Guinea natives, the Ashanti "Apo" ceremony; the Feast of Fools or Mass of Fools of medieval France, and so forth. Highet, Hodgart, and others, discuss similar lore.

[11] Leslie Fiedler notes the personal significance of the ending in "John Barth: An Eccentric Genius," The New Leader, XLIV (Feb. 13, 1961), 24, although he evidently sees it in a more serious light than I do. He sees "Ebenezer's" epitaph as a wry comment on Barth's own literary status (at least in 1961):

> Labour not for Earthly Glory:
> Fame's a fickle Slut and whory.
> From thy Fancy's chast Couch drive her:
> He's a Fool who'll strive to swive her!

[12] According to Morrell, one of Barth's major influences at Johns Hopkins was the Spanish poet-teacher with whom he read Don Quixote.

[13] Don Quixote, Mod. Lib. ed., note, p. 475.

[14] According to Morrell, Barth originally intended to include this story in a (subsequently abandoned) work called Dorchester Tales.

[15] The researcher interested in penetrating deeper into the subject could start with pp. 134, 168, 274, 488, 640, and 700.

[16] I borrow these terms from the psychologist Ernest G. Schachtel (Metamorphosis, N.Y., 1959). For present purposes, the terms are self-explanatory; more of this later, in section 4.

[17] Cf. Hudibras' hypocritical and pragmatic treatise on twos in Part III, Canto I of Butler's poem:

> The World is but two Parts, that meet
> And close at th' Aequinoctial fit;
> And so are all the works of Nature,
> Stamp'd with her signature on matter;
> Which all her Creatures, to a Leaf,
> Or smallest Blade of Grass, receive.
> All which sufficiently declare
> How intirely Marriage is her care. . . .
> [p. 212, Wilders ed.]

[18] Discussed by Frye in the Anatomy, for example, pp. 189-190.

[19] In regard to the chapter on Geminology and Barth's dualistic-dialectical orientation, I will note without comment that Barth is a twin. "Jack" Barth's twin sister's name is Jill--which leads one to believe some of Barth's wry sense of humor must have been inherited from his parents. For some interesting background on the kind of folklore Barth deals with in the "Geminology" chapter, see Donald Ward, The Divine Twins: An Indo-European Myth in Germanic Tradition (Berkeley, 1968) and Alan W. Watts, The Two Hands of God: The Myths of Polarity (N.Y., 1963).

[20] This is a conventional 18th century pattern of course, related to the idea of "compensation," as articulated by Oliver Goldsmith and Samuel Johnson, for example. Or cf. Fielding in Book II, Chapter XIII of Joseph Andrews ("A dissertation concerning high people and low people. . .:): "it may not be unpleasant to survey the picture of dependence like a kind of ladder; as, for instance: early in the morning arises the postilion . . . and falls to brushing the clothes and cleaning the shoes of John the footman; who, being drest himself, applies his hands to the same labours for Mr. Second-hand," and so forth.

[21] The same paradoxical reversal occurs in the case of Barth, as I have previously indicated: readers tend to ignore the satiric aspect of The SWF and see it as a florid "fabulation"; they view this anti-romance as a romance (with some justification, of course).

[22] Cf. Montaigne: "The uncertainty of my judgement is so evenly balanced in most cases that I would willingly refer the decision to a throw of the dice. . . ." (Book Two, Chapter 17, "On Presumption")

[23] Morrell generalizes thus in his "overview," the final chapter of his dissertation; see pp. 165-167.

[24] Barth comments on the "arbitrariness" of the world--its game quality--in various interviews. See the Enck interview, p. 8, for example, where Barth comments on the arbitrariness of France's being shaped like a teapot; the idea is borrowed almost directly from The SWF, p. 8. Giles contains numerous similar references.

[25] Todd Andrews uses "terminal" the same way in FO, p. 71.

[26] Page references in parentheses are to Ernest G. Schachtel's Metamorphosis: On the Development of Affect, Perception, Attention, and Memory (N.Y.: Basic Books, Inc., 1959).

[27] Cf. Jerry Bryant's use of the term and idea "open decision." Bryant borrows the term from Max Scheler and uses it to signify self-consciousness and awareness of existence as a kind of thing-in-itself. Insofar as contemporary novelists (such as Barth) adhere to the "open decision," they "tacitly assume that reality self-evidently embodies the highest good, and that the highest reality lies in a consciousness which reveals its very limitations. The game is 'won' when such consciousness is achieved" (p. 8). Incidentally, Bryant notes that "Every victory of human consciousness contains some element of defeat. It is this ambiguity that gives the novels of our time their air of apparent pessimism" (p. 7). Cf. the Menippean satirist's ambivalent feelings toward "Reality."

[28] See note 24, Chapter I, for Maslow's definition of rubricizing.

[29] Such a discussion would probably involve judging the relative values of literature's "mythic" and "realistic" or "mimetic" aspects. One important factor introduced by Schachtel which would complicate such an investigation is this: "fantasy" (cf. mythotherapy) can be either (1) "regressive" or (2) "progressive" (see p. 245 in Schachtel), serving either (1) an escape to the womb and to autocentric perception, or (2) an "escape" from secondary autocentricity to the allocentric perceptual modes of childhood--the dream-fantasies which escape the autocentric rubrics or cerebral categories of our adulthood. The latter phenomenon is largely responsible for dream and childhood amnesia, says Schachtel.

CHAPTER V. Giles Goat-Boy

1. Giles Goat-Boy as Menippean Satire

Giles Goat-Boy's Menippean plot resembles that of The Sot-Weed Factor. Giles records a process of disillusionment, the initiation of a would-be Hero into a world of unheroic experience. Ebenezer Cooke preserves his virginity until the bitter and glorious end, while Giles loses his to the does of the herd early and displays his goatly sensuality throughout, yet the two protagonists are equally innocent; the climax of both processes of initiation is sexual and literal. Like The SWF, Giles Goat-Boy burlesques the conventions of mythic-heroic plot: the mysteries of birth (the Moishe-Moses-like discovery of Giles in the WESCAC tapelift is comparable to the discovery of Burlingame in his canoe among the rushes of Chesapeake Bay); childhood tutoring by the wise mentor (Max Spielman replaces Henry Burlingame); the virginity and innocence of the "hero's" ladyship (Joan Toast is a whore; Anastasia Stoker is a nymphomaniac); disguises and changes of identity (consider the chameleonic H. B.'s, Harold Bray and Henry Burlingame); threats of incest (between Eben and Roxanne and Eben and Anna; between Giles and Lady Creamhair and Giles and his possible "twin," Anastasia).

Giles's anti-romantic plot not only resembles that of The SWF: Giles's quest grew out of Eben's quest. Philip Young, Barth's colleague

at Penn State, read The SWF and told Barth he "must have had in mind Lord Raglan's twenty-five prerequisites for ritual heroes" when he created Ebenezer. "I hadn't read Raglan," says Barth, "so I bought The Hero, and Ebenezer scored on twenty-three of the twenty-five, which is higher than anybody else except Oedipus."[1] Barth subsequently became interested in "the pattern of the mythical wandering hero":

> From 1960 on, I became enormously interested in this pattern and the great amount of learned commentary on it and decided that it would be a good skeleton for a large, comic novel. One of my intentions, indeed, was to do something a little analagous [sic] to what Cervantes did with the chivalry novel in "Don Quixote ." . . . My intention was to begin by satirizing the basic myth and then, hopefully, escalate the satire into something larger, darker and more compassionate.[2]

"'I'm interested in the myth of the hero,'" he says. "'The trick was to be fully conscious of it--to satirize it, to parody it--but with compassion; and then to cover my tracks with irony--to cloak obscurity with brightness. I knew exactly what I wanted to do.'"[3]

So does Billy Bocksfuss (soon to become George Giles), as he tells Max: "'I'm going to be a hero'" (p. 125). Max, a self-effacing Moishian (Jew), has doubts about heroes: "If he was suspicious of adventuring heroes, it was because like that gentlest of dons, Quijote, they were wont at the very least to damage useful windmills in the name of dragomachy. 'Heroes, bah,' he said" (p. 127). And "Quijote" was one of the better heroes; at their worst, they--those in the "Dean Arthur Cycle," for example--"'decide they're heroes first and then go looking for trouble to prove it; often as not they end up causing trouble themselves'" (pp. 126-127). "'[B]e glad if you can learn to be a man--that's hero-work enough!'" says Max (p. 128), because "'if you believe

you're something you aren't, it'll keep you from becoming what you could be. . .'" (p. 131). Yet Max also wants Billy (George) to be a Hero, specifically a Grand Tutor. When not in a "reasonable mood" (p. 148), he becomes "excited" because Billy-George meets

> nearly all the prerequisites of herohood, as far as could be judged: the mystery of my parentage [says Giles], about which it could be presumed only that I was the offspring of someone high in the administration; the irregularity of my birth [begotten by the WESCAC computer on virginal Virginia Hector], which had so seemed a threat to someone that an attempt had been made on my life [George's grandfather, Reginald Hector, sent him down into WESCAC's belly to be EATen]; the consequent injury to my legs [in the tapelift; the cause of George's gimp]; the circumstances of my rescue [by George Herrold], and my being raised by a foster parent [Max] in a foster-home [the goat-barns], disguised as an animal and bearing a name not my own--these and other details corresponded to what Max had found true of scores of hero-histories. [p. 147]

George, then, is a latter-day Hero. When he is christened, baptized, and Maximized (I,i,7^4), named "George" after his EATen savior, George Herrold, Max says "'there's been famous Georges'" (p. 110), recalling George Washington and St. George, perhaps. But George Giles's main prototypes are Jesus Christ (Enos Enoch: anagramatically, "Chosen One") and Oedipus Rex (or Taliped Decanus, as he is called in Barth's parody). Other prototypes are Dante ("the lost professor in the Campus Cantos"), Socrates (Maios), Aeneas (Anchises), Ulysses (Laertides), King Arthur (Dean Arthur), Buddha (Sakhyan), and Moses (Moishe). (Most of these are listed on p. 149.) George is simultaneously an imitation and a parody of these Heroes; his heroic quest both reflects and distorts their archetypal Quest; that is, Giles Goat-Boy contains the typical Menippean tension between romance and anti-romance, or, as Barth says, between "satire" and "something larger, darker and more compassionate."

In order to call Giles an anti-romance one must define "romance" very loosely--as almost any or every Art or system of Order. However, one can reduce the field by focusing on the areas associated with George Giles's two main prototypes, Jesus and Oedipus: Christianity and Tragedy. Giles Goat-Boy's title and major metaphor refer to both: Christianity insofar as "goat" reflects and distorts "lamb" (as in "lamb of God"); Tragedy through that genre's etymological and historical connections with the cult of Dionysus ("Tragedy," tragōidia, means"goat-song"). These are also the two fields most emphatically parodied in Giles, the University-Universe "allegory" serving as vehicle in both cases. Consider Harold Bray's University Prayer to his "'Learned Founder! Liberal Artist! Dean of deans and Coach of coaches'":

> "Be keg and tap behind the bar of every order, that the brothers may chug-a-lug Thy lore, see Truth in the bottom of their steins, and find their heads a-crack with insight. Be with each co-ed at the evening's close: paw her with facts, make vain her protests against learning's advances; take her to Thy mind's backseat, strip off preconceptions, let down illusions, unharness her from error--that she may ere the curfew be infused with Knowledge. Above all, Sir, stand by me at my lectern; be chalk and notes to me; silence the mowers and stay the traffic that I may speak; awaken the drowsy, confound the heckler; bring him to naught who would digress when I would not, and would not when I would; take my words from his mouth who would take them from mine; save me from slip of tongue and lapse of memory, from twice-told joke and unzippered fly. Doctor of doctors, vouchsafe unto me examples of the Unexampled, words to speak the Wordless; be now and ever my visual aid, that upon the empty slate of these young minds I may inscribe, bold and squeaklessly, the Answers!" [pp. 454-455; italicized in the text]

And in regard to Tragedy, consider Barth's "modern translation" of Oedipus the King: The Tragedy of Taliped Decanus, about "the famous Dean of Cadmus College" (pp. 312-354)--a rich, coarse concoction of

sexual and "University" lore; an inversion of tragedy, a kind of satyr-drama which nevertheless climactically (and anti-climactically) articulates the theme of lucidity so important in Giles. In this sense Taliped Decanus is a microcosm of Giles itself.

Giles itself is a kind of satyr-drama, a burlesque or travesty of "serious" literary and religious forms. Christianity and Tragedy are historically susceptible and even accommodating to this kind of inversion. In fact, if one sights down the parallel lines of Christianity and Tragedy far enough they tend to meet under the emblematic goat, which connotes the scapegoat victim-hero and the Dionysian festival of life, death, fertility, and license. Barth sights down these lines and sees Christianity and Tragedy as folklore twins. He is always aware of Christianity's collusion with paganism, as in Easter and Christmas, the festivals marking, respectively, ironically, the beginning and ending of George's quest. Even the word "Easter" is borrowed from a pagan ceremony, of course--that celebrating Eastre, Aurora (of the East), or the dawn, staged at the vernal equinox. Barth calls it the Spring-Carnival. It is an Enochist (Christian) ceremony but also the beginning of Spring term, associated with the "ritual of registration and matriculation" (pp. 296 ff.). The major event of this ritual is the "Trial by Turnstile" or by "Scrapegoat Grate." Max explains to George that "Scrapegoat Grate"

> had nothing to do with scapegoat,[5] more the pity, but alluded to three characteristically anticaprine remarks of Enos Enoch's: that He was come to separate the sheep from the goats; that the Way to Graduation was too narrow for even a goat to walk, but a broad mall for His flock; and that it were easier for a goat to scrape through an iron fence-grating than for a merely learned man to enter Commencement Gate. [pp. 297-298]

Nevertheless, Barth considers the Christian and pagan ceremonies a single unit. The athletes of New Tammany College challenge the turnstile during the ritual, inevitably fail (only Grand Tutors can succeed), then the gates are opened and the students pass in to register, while the Dean o' Flunks gnashes "his teeth in mock frustration" (p. 298). The narrator (George Giles via Stoker Giles via "J.B.") says "Few who participated in these festivities were aware of their original significance, any more than they recognized Carnival as coming from the Remusian [Latin, Roman] 'farewell to flesh' that preceded any period of fasting or mourning. . ." (p. 298). A valid historical connection between the pagan and Christian ceremonies of spring or Easter underlies Barth's parodic, irreverent, "allegorical" conversion of Maundy Thursday into "Randy-Thursday."

"Randy" certainly describes the Spring-Carnival Party at which George is introduced to New Tammany society (stick in one hand, cod in the other, as Maurice Stoker tricks him, pushes him through the door shouting "'Ladies and gentlemen! . . . The Grand Tutor of the Western Campus!'" [p. 226]). George's initial encyclopaedic description suggests Petronius:

> It was the first party I had witnessed. The guests sang, they danced and scuffled. Here one vomited; there one wept. This one balanced bottles on his nose; that one beat his head against a wall. Two gentlemen tickled a flailing lady until with a whoop she pissed; three matrons sat upon an old man's back while a fourth befoamed him with a fire extinguisher. Here a bloody fist-fight was in progress; there a game of leap-frog. A brass band bleated like two-score shophars in a storm of thunder--my first experience of music. Long tables at the wall were laden with bowls of black liquor and great platters of meat: the guests, I realized with horror, were gnawing upon legs of fowl and knuckles of deceased pigs. I saw a very pregnant lady brought to one such

> table and laid supine among the spare-ribs, where, drawing up her knees and clutching at her belly, she shouted, "Here it comes!" I saw a shy young couple holding hands in the corner, and two pretty maids kissing, and two fellows waltzing nimbly together, and a solitary chap with his hand in his trouserfly. Just before my eyes a man was struck down with an empty bottle and robbed of his watch by his drinking-companions. . . . [p. 227]

And so forth. "'A little Carnival party,'" Stoker calls it:

> "We have one every night this week. You should see the place on New Year's Eve!" So persistently rumored was the approach of a new Grand Tutor, he explained, it had become popular practice among conscientious students to don caps and gowns and celebrate his arrival, and their own Commencement, in advance; in less reverent circles, like Stoker's the same thing was done in burlesque. . . . [p. 127]

The powerhouse party's tone of Merriment and Mockery is not so much Rabelaisian as Aristophanic. As Gilbert Highet says, "Aristophanic comedy is wildly unpredictable and asymmetrical and apparently improvisatorial. It always reminds us that it originated in a drunken revel; indeed, some of the extant comedies end where comedy began, in a wild party, with wine, women, crazy dancing, and gay semi-coherent singing."[6] The party invokes the Attic revel--also, it seems, the Semitic fertility rite and the life-death rites of Easter: George Herrold is "buried" at this ceremony as George Giles services Anastasia, while the Spring Sunrise Service is piped in via Telerama. Stoker, Dean o' Flunks, brings the dual meaning of "service" out in the open (p. 242), and the services become mixed at the climax. "Incredibly, as I mounted home," says George, "the music swelled and rose to bursting. As ever in goatdom, the service was instant: swiftly as the sunflash smiting now the Founder's Shaft I drove and was done" (p. 243).

If the powerhouse party suggests the origins of Comedy, of western

religion (associated with the fertility rites denounced by old testament prophets, for example), and of Easter, it also suggests the satyr-play. It is a "burlesque," as Stoker says. It burlesques religion by emphasizing George's Goatliness; this latter day Grand Tutor is no lamb; he is, as Stoker puts it, "Enos Enoch with balls" (p. 233), a "young satyr," says Dr. Sear (p. 232). Giles is also a "goat" in other ways, of course: the innocent tricked by Stoker and others here and elsewhere; also the scapegoat of Barth's ambiguously inverted "tragedy." "'You were an orphan of the storm, like me,'" says Max, "'that the student race made their goats'" (literally in George's case, as he escaped to Max and the goat-barns after the childhood tapelift trip to WESCAC's belly). The crowd cries "Get the Goat" before and after George's later trips into the belly, and he becomes not only the scapegoat of primitive tragedy but also of Christianity. Max is a stock or stick character in many ways and his concern with "suffering" is excessive, but he speaks the truth when he warns George:

> "Do you know what a Grand Tutor's life is like? I mean a real one like Enos Enoch or Maios the Lykeionian, not the story-book kind. Do you know what has to happen to them in the end? When did you ever hear of a happy hero? They always suffer--it's almost what they're for. . . ." [p. 130]

Barth has many reasons for making Giles a goat, some serious, some satiric, and it is hard to separate the two. As he says, "'I'm delighted by the old spurious etymology of the words <u>tragedy</u> and <u>satire</u>, . . . both of which have been traced back to the root word for goat. Because what I was after in [<u>Giles</u>], as in most of my work, is a way to get at some of the passion and power of the tragic view of life, which I share, through the medium of farce and satire. To fuse those elements

has been an aspiration of mine from the beginning.'"[7] Satire--"satyr" in this context--is the satyr-play, or, specifically, in the case of Giles, the burlesque Tragedy of Taliped Decanus. Structurally, this "satyr-drama" serves the same purpose as "The Sot-Weed Factor" in The SWF. Taliped Decanus is a brilliant, glib, obscene parody, too long and allusive to analyze here, although I will occasionally refer to it in passing. It is Giles in miniature, as I have already noted--an intensification of the parodic method of Giles as a whole, a randy inversion of tragedy that mocks and yet glorifies tragic insight or lucidity.

As Taliped Decanus is about to end ("'Ladies and gentlemen: we interrupt this catharsis to bring you two special news bulletins'" [p. 346]), George learns there is another would-be "Grand Tutor"--the mysterious Harold Bray. If Giles is an inverted Holy Book and Tragedy and if Taliped Decanus is a satyr-play, then Bray is a burlesque Grand Tutor--specifically, the burlesque Giles. Yet Giles himself is a "burlesque" grand tutor in many respects. Bray inverts an inversion and, within the context of Barth's burlesque, makes George a serious candidate for Grand Tutorhood. Bray's "role" is that of "proph-prof, foil, and routed antigiles" (p. 563). He is "impostor, troll . . . it is his function to be driven out" (p. 728). He is George's "adversary," as "necessary" to George as "Failure is to Passage," George decides. "I.e., not only contrary and interdependent, but finally undifferentiable" (p. 759). Bray and Giles, Giles and Jesus, Giles and Oedipus, Satyr-play and Tragedy, Burlesque and Bible, Parody and Parodied: they are rivals; one is the inversion of the other; yet they are mysteriously related and in some respects "undifferentiable." Bray is "a gifted

impostor--so much so that in some instances the question of his fraudulence [becomes] more metaphysical than legal or ethical" (p. 371).

George Giles's goatliness connotes a rich mythic background, centered in the Greek cult of Dionysus, the god whose sacred animal was the goat (tragos), somber cousin of the satyr (saturos).[8] Bray's asininity connotes an equally rich background. As irreverent "anti-giles" and anarchic anti-Christ (Giles's Biblical parodies are all brayed by Bray), Bray suggests the medieval Saturnalia, the licentious festival called the Asses' Mass or festum asinarium, "during which donkeys were led up to the high altar and the responses were brayed."[9] Giles's final Christmas ceremony "On Founder's Hill" (II,iii,7) suggests a western European folklore tradition, the French "mid-winter Saturnalia at the conclusion of which the ass-eared god, later the Christmas Fool with his ass-eared cap, was killed by his rival, the Spirit of the New Year--the child Horus, or Harpocrates, or the infant Zeus."[10] As burlesque inversion, Bray is, like Taliped Decanus, a Gilesian paradigm: the "anti"-creature which historically, mysteriously shadows all things--Christianity, Tragedy, Order, Good, Light, Romance.

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I have tried to indicate some of the dimensions of Giles Goat-Boy's parodic or "anti-romantic" structure. George Giles's disillusioning Heroic quest might be termed a Menippean satyr--with all the associated comic, tragic, and satiric overtones. Barth's satyr-play is an "intellectual odyssey" and addresses most of the literary, philosophical, historical, social-political, and theological "systems" of our time and all time, from comedy to tragedy, from rational dualism to mystic monism, from laissez faire optimism to Marxist fatalism, from western

individualism to eastern communism, and from Christianity to Taoism and Zen Buddhism. And at the end of his quest George Giles learns the lesson of Menippus (in its most sophisticated form; Barth is no simple-minded Lucian); as Robert Scholes puts it: Giles's "moral urges the advantages of action over ratiocination."[11] Giles's intellectual "systems" negate one another, and this negation of systems is essentially an affirmation of experience, a movement toward "reality" and lucidity, even though lucidity and reality may be disillusioning, resisted, and even ridiculed.

It remains to review Giles's other Menippean characteristics. First is the catalogue; "avalanche" is surely a better word in this case. The allegorical apparatus is a glib avalanche of correspondences, motivated by Rabelaisian exuberance and used both for Merriment and Mockery. Consider "Commencement," "Flunkèd," "Passèd," "mid-percentile," "Final Examinations," "Beism," "Being" (and the conjugations of that verb), "Quiet Riot," "Founder's Pomological Test-Grove," and "A-plus." These "allegorical" equivalents of salvation, damned, blessed, middle-class, final judgment, beat-existentialism, fornication, cold war, Eden, and Amen are satirically barbed, but the satire is often merely a vehicle for comic wit and energy. Similar comic motives underly the following satirical, anti-intellectual avalanche:

> "Another chap we had [says Stoker] claimed the Answer [to the question of how to Commence] was a science he'd invented called Psychophysics. Something to do with the Third Law of Emotion, and the mind as a Reaction Engine . . . I forget exactly. Anyhow he said we'd never reach Commencement Gate because we'd lost our compression and had no spark; we were too choked up; the modern transmission of our power-drives had made us shiftless; we were neutral idlers who slipped in the clutches for want of a new converter; our blocks were cracked; we needed our heads

> examined and our old shock-absorbers replaced. So he picked Stacey to be the first to get a Psychomotor Tune-up and be equipped with new Overhead Values--they always pick Stacey. But by the time she got up on the platform with him-- . . . Well, he had all his gadgets set up there, but once he got under Stacey's hood. . . ." [p. 228]

This abominable eroto-automobile jargon is matched by Dr. Sear's parenthetical prolixity in another anti-intellectual set-piece. In this case, the "anti-intellectual" satire is also a complex indictment of something resembling "lucidity." Dr. Sear, says George,

> enraptured by the carving on my stick (which he identified as a first-chop example of late-transitional mandibulary carving in the East Frumentian polycaryatidic tradition except for the shelah-na-gigs--seldom to be found in the work of mandibulary artists by reason of strictures extended from taboos against certain kinds of oral heteroerotic foreplay--and the now completed intaglio vine, obviously an extraquadrangular influence since both viniculture and oenology were unknown in the East-Frumentian "colleges"), declared to Max with a sigh that after all he sometimes regarded the absolutely unself-conscious, like Croaker, to be the only real Graduates--"using the term figuratively, of course. . . ." [pp. 306-307]

Another anti-intellectual avalanche is that poured out by the teaching machine: first a "gloss" on Bray's couplet, "Milo did not pass in class, / Nor did he fail in jail. . ." (p. 449). The gloss occasions a gloss-gloss, (pp. 450-451), which occasions a gloss-gloss-gloss, (pp. 451-452), which occasions a gloss-gloss-gloss-gloss (pp. 452-454), that is, a gloss on "There is one way to raise a cow," which is spilled out in diagram form. Taliped Decanus contains a similar gloss--the chorus' pedantic "recapitulation" of the "tragic-plot" (p. 346); their literary-scientific jargon conflicts with the potential emotion of the moment (Taliped has just seen the "blinding light" of Truth). The conflict resembles

that described by Frye in the Ithaca section of Ulysses (see p. 114, above), and the pedantic passage as a whole resembles the analysis of Slawkenbergius' Tale in Tristram Shandy.[12] Finally, there is that ultimate piece of intellectual egg-headism, Eblis Eierkopf's

> grand historico-chemico-mathematico-biologico-mytho-physical treatise upon the egg in all its aspects (excepting the culinary, which he dismissed in a long footnote to the title as intellectually unpalatable); its fourteen volumes were complete, as well as their prefaces, plates, paste-ins, fold-outs, glossaries, indices, appendices, bibliographies, celebratory sonnets, statistical supplements, epistles dedicatory, tape-recorded musical accompaniment, and jacket-copy. . . . [p. 483]

These catalogues are anti-intellectual avalanches. Barth displays a different kind of Rabelaisian exuberance when he describes Croaker's escapades upon escaping from the Tower Hall Belfry.

> Putting by all restraint, he had deflowered two co-eds, one male freshman, a trustee's maiden aunt, a blue-ribbon gilt, and a cast-bronze allegorical statue in heroic scale of Truth Unveiled. In addition he had consumed indiscriminately raw chipmunks, aspen catkins, toadstools, dog-stools, and the loose-leaf lecture-notes of his third victim, an economics major. [p. 592]

Eventually Croaker is captured, after being paralyzed (dismayed, addled and unmanned) by Mrs. Sear, who, naked, leaps him while he is making love to a soft-drink dispenser. Also Rabelaisian is the chapter (II,ii,6) in which George "sees through his Ladyship," measures, sees, hears, tastes, and feels every part of her (pp. 673-676; cf. Rabelais, p. 419). There is no need to further catalogue Barth's catalogues and verbal extravagance. The reader may research on his own by turning at random to any page of Giles Goat-Boy.

Related to the Menippean catalogue is Giles's admixture of verse. The versified Tragedy of Taliped Decanus is the longest example (again

equivalent to "The Sot-Weed Factor"). Passing (and passèd) aphorisms (a "Gloss" by the Philosophy Department ends, "The mind that can philosophize, never ossifies") abound and remind one of those in, say, Babbitt and Brave New World. An added feature is the lyric with music: the Alma Mater Dolorosa (pp. 237-239), an untitled juke-box number in the Pedal Inn (p. 276), and Greene's Blues: "I had a C,--but now my grade's gone down; / I hate to see--that av'rage grade go down. / Gonna flunk, baby; never wear no cap and gown" (p. 615).

"Humor" characters prevail; Giles's "allegorical" apparatus vivifies them: Eblis Eierkopf the egghead; Croaker the beastly Frumentian; Ira Hector the selfish capitalist; Pete Greene the American innocent ("I'm okay"); Leonid Alexandrov, Pete's "selfless" Russian counterpart; Dr. Sear, perverted seer; Maurice Stoker, sooty Dean o' Flunks; "Lucky" Lucius Rexford, bright, pragmatic politician; George Herrold (Old Black George), conglomerate of Negro types, from Huck Finn's Jim to bumbling, buggering dotard.

Giles's "ideological" orientation often takes the form of the dialogue, as in the "prepping" chapter (I,ii,1), wherein Max and George discuss many things--seven years worth of education, until George feels "engorged to bursting with human lore" (pp. 122-123). Dr. Sear is later a participant in such affairs, as are Eblis Eierkopf, Stoker, Chancellor Rexford, Pete Greene, and Leonid Alexandrov.

Self-parody in Giles ranges in subtlety from the devious Gloss on "There is one way to raise a cow" (p. 453), which is ultimately a gloss and mockery of Barth's metaphysical concerns ("Expletivism," "Adverbialism," Monism, Pluralism), to the pre- and post-Giles editorial apparatus, which is hilariously, heavy-handedly Scriblerian. In the

"Publisher's Disclaimer," for example, "Editor C," who votes against publishing the book, says The Revised New Syllabus is

> a poor-risk work by a poor-risk author. It wants subtlety and expertise: the story is not so much "astonishing" as preposterous, the action absurd. The hero is a physical, aesthetic, and moral monstrosity; the other characters are drawn with small regard for realism and at times lack even the consistency of stereotypes; the dialogue is generally unnatural and wanting in variety from speaker to speaker--everyone sounds like the author! The prose style--that unmodern, euphuistic, half-metrical bombast--is admittedly contagious (witness [A's] and [B's] lapses into it); even more so is syphilis. The theme is obscure, probably blasphemous; the wit is impolite, perhaps even suggestive of unwholesome preoccupations; the psychology--but there is no psychology in it. . . . [p. xvii]

In his "POSTSCRIPT TO THE POSTTAPE," "J.B." denounces the "POSTTAPE" as impossibly "gloomy": "no, the idea is ridiculous. Some impostor and antigiles composed the 'Posttape,' to gainsay and weaken faith in Giles's Way. Even the type of those flunked pages is different!" (p. 766). Then, in a "FOOTNOTE TO THE POSTSCRIPT TO THE POSTTAPE," an "Ed." says "The type of the typescript pages of the document entitled 'Postscript to the Posttape' is not the same as that of ["J.B.'s"] 'Cover-Letter to the Editors and Publisher'" (p. 766). Shades of a smirking, shifting Swift or Pope.

Although Giles is a Menippean hodgepodge there is no satura lanx-ious catalogue comparable to that in The Sot-Weed Factor. Yet EATing is central, partly because George is a goat-boy, who, for example, gags at human meat-eaters, literally devours books, sees his future in a picnic basket, and at one point sophistically wonders whether his fifth "Assignment," "Re-place the Founder's Scroll," might not mean "make a meal of the Founder's words!" (after all, we do not live by bread alone;

p. 634). But EAT most often means Electroencephalic Amplification and Transmission; it is WESCAC's means of destruction; WESCAC's inner chamber is the "belly" and its computer program is a "menu" (p. 129). "Allegorically," of course, WESCAC's EATing capacity is a function of its dragonhood. St. George must EAT it before it EATs all of student-dom. (Cannibalism and parricide are also associated with this theme: as antitype of Oedipus, George is out to kill his father.)

Like all satire, Giles Goat-Boy is various, digressive, coarse, obscene. Again, the reader may convince himself of this by turning to any page at random. For a delightfully coarse, obscene digression, turn to the tale of Harry the Beist and Chickie-in-the-buckwheat, pp. 66 ff.

Finally, however, Giles differs from conventional satire in its norm, which is the Real rather than the Ideal. This Menippean formula is far from simple; there are strong contrapuntal forces in Giles--for example, the Max-im, "Self-knowledge is bad news." Yet lucidity is finally upheld over innocence: this is one reason Barth's goat-book is a "tragedy" as well as a "satyr."

2. Twixt, Twin, Twine: the Dialectical Patterns of Giles Goat-Boy

One midnight in the twenty-second year of his prepping, the Goat-Boy has an Oedipal dream, very likely triggered (George decides) by the labor cries of Hedda of the Speckled Teats, who gave birth that midnight to Tommy's Tommy's Tom, the Triple T who ultimately helps George butt Bray out of New Tammany. Triple T's grandfather was Red-fearn's Tommy, the goat George killed with a "white-ash crook" (p. 79) in a fit of jealous human rage; afterwards, George, in despair, sought

out Max and discovered he was a human-kid (I,i,7). Even as George killed him, Redfearn's Tommy was planting in Hedda the seed that would become Tommy's Thomas, and Tommy's Thomas was subsequently bred with Hedda, his own mother, to produce Triple T. Now it is Max's (Freudian) interpretation of George's dream (and George's subsequent resistance) that induces Max to bring up "the fateful subject of Cyclology and Grand-Tutorhood" that same day (p. 121). And, muses George, "it was this day's conversation, . . . like the original crime of my dear pal's murder, that turned me round a corner of my life" (p. 122). He notes the "white-ash staff" with which he has just chucked new-born Triple T's chin is the same stick that had appeared in his Oedipal dream, a stick he had whittled "from a broken herdsman's crook which once lay out in the pens." With one stick, then, he killed Redfearn's Tommy and chucked Triple T's chin and hobbled out to his lesson that day and hobbles still; the same stick will support him on his imminent trip to the "hilltop" and Shaft where he will "want no more supporting." "Dark ties; thing twined to thing!" he muses (p. 122).

The cycle and the dialectic, twining and twinning, are major structural patterns in Giles, as in The Sot-Weed Factor. "Spielman's law," Max's "cyclological theory" is a pivotal part of these patterns just as it is pivotal in George's life (it "turned me round a corner of my life").

> As the embryologists maintained that ontogeny repeats phylogeny, so, Max claimed, the race itself--and on a smaller scale, West-Campus culture--followed demonstrably--in capital letters, as it were, or slow motion--the life-pattern of its least new freshman. This was the basis of Spielman's Law--ontogeny repeats cosmogeny--and there was much more to it and to the science of cyclology whereof it was first principle. The important thing for

> now was that, by his calculations, West Campus as a whole was in mid-adolescence. . . . [p. 300]
>
> . . . cyclological theory was founded on such correspondences as that between the celestial and psychic day, the seasons of the year, the stages of ordinary human life, the growth and decline of individual colleges, the evolution and history of studentdom as a whole, the ultimate fate of the University, and what had we. The rhythm of all these was repeated literally and emblematically in the life of the hero, whose function, Max took it, was the important but prosaic one of helping a college grow up or get out of a particular bind: more than that he denied. [p. 309]

Max is not only a "psycho-symbolistic cosmographer," but also founder of the science of "analogical proctoscopy":

> In three words Max Spielman synthesized all the fields which thitherto he'd browsed in brilliantly one by one--showed the "sphincter's riddle" and the mystery of the University to be the same. Ontogeny recapitulates cosmogeny--what is it but to say that proctoscopy repeats hagiography? That our Founder on Founder's Hill and the rawest freshman on his first mons veneris are father and son? That my day, my year, my life, and the history of West Campus are wheels within wheels? [p. 43]

(As Scholes notes in The Fabulators, "sphincter's riddle" is a pun on the riddle of the sphinx solved by Oedipus.)

Pressing the "gloss" button next to "proctoscopy repeats hagiography," one obtains a sophisticated version of the lesson of Menippus: just as ontogeny recapitulates cosmogeny, so proctoscopy repeats hagiography, so to study the rectum is to study grand tutorhood. A man becomes a saint and prophet only by becoming "supremely human" (p. 114): "'be glad if you can learn to be a man--that's hero-work enough!'" says Max (p. 128). In Giles's case, becoming "supremely human" involves recognition of his goatliness, recognition of humanity's lowest common denominators: sex, excrement--the rectum. Max's "masterwork, The Riddle

of the Sphincters . . . meant to demonstrate mathematically his belief in the fundamental rectitude of student nature" (p. 42). The pun on "rectum" is intended and etymologically justified. The "rectum" equals the "end" and hence the "beginning," something like "commencement." Only by lowering himself to the common level of humanity can Giles finally "love" and become "supremely human." All these paradoxes are contained in Giles's post-commencement, post-climax rumination:

> Anastasia's eyes shone still with love; my own I think with neutral Truth, dispassionate compassion. Calm of heart, I kissed her thrice; once on the brow, in gratitude for her having been to me Truth's vessel, and declared her Passèd; once on the navel, sign of the lightless place [WESCAC's "belly" or womb, with associations of East Campus yin and yang] where I had seen, become myself, issued from to my post-Graduate Assignment; once finally on the Mount of Love [mons veneris] where I'd Commenced, and upon whose counterpart [the Shaft] I'd one day meet my end [and "beginning"]. The Cyclological Hypothesis, Spielman's Law: at last I understood it, as Max perhaps could never, and kissed its sign. [p. 732]

A discussion of other twinnings and twinings in Giles is little more than a continued "gloss" on Spielman's Law. I have already referred to several such repetitions of Max's cyclological rhythms: Bray and Giles, for example. Initially, Giles sees himself as the "true" Grand Tutor and Bray as the "false" Grand Tutor. Bray reinforces this conception when he reveals he is a kind of "proph-prof ("John the Bursar" or John the Baptist), foil, and routed antigiles" (p. 563) who must be cast out before Giles can be acknowledged--all this during Giles's first descent into WESCAC's belly. The two would-be grand tutors wear masks that reverse their apparent identities, however, and Giles's dialectical system of "true" and "false" grand tutors is turned upside down. During the second attempt Giles does indeed reverse the positions: he now sees

Bray as the true grand tutor. But upon his second descent he again flunks his examination. The dialectic is levelled or synthesized during the third "reel" of Volume II as Giles realizes his distinctions between true and false grand tutors are ultimately unimportant; the lesson of Menippus is that there are no "answers"; existence, life, and action replace "true," "false," failure and passage as Giles's prime concerns.

The Giles-Bray dialectic is analogous to the pattern of ceremony and mock-ceremony and to the paradox reflected in the title: Goat-Boy. George's goatliness is as radically ambiguous as that of the Christian and Dionysian scapegoats, goats, and lambs. "Dark ties; thing twined to thing!" I have also noted, in passing, the ambivalence of the term and concept of "commencement." The end of Giles's search for commencement is his initiation into the common world of human experience, as the "POSTTAPE" anti-climactically emphasizes. "Commencement" (the end) is truly a "commencement" (a beginning). The climactic shafting ceremony (II,iii,7)--another kind of commencement, especially for the Christ-like max--takes place, as I previously noted, at Christmastime[13] (rather than, say, Easter), and marks Giles's initiation into "manhood" (p. 753).

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If Spielman's Law illustrates Giles's cyclic patterns, the Tower Hall clockwork embodies Giles's dialectic principle. This is how George describes Eblis Eierkopf's "office of Clockwatcher":

> The job was actually quite sensitive, involving responsibility not only for the measurement of NTC time but for the "ticking heart" of WESCAC itself, "the very pulse of West Campus": as best I could conceive it, a metronomic apparatus (or was it merely a principle?) which both set and was itself the pace of WESCAC's operations; which in

> some manner beyond my fathom both drove and derived from the Tower Hall clockworks. [p. 368]

Later George learns that the "metronomic apparatus" (or principle) is the clockwork escapement fulcrum, the rocking, beating "heart" of tick and tock. The fulcrum runs north and south on the meridian which divides East Campus from West Campus and is thus the center of an East-West political and cartographical controversy. It is also the center of an East-West controversy having to do with time and reflecting the metaphysical dialectic of Giles. The Eastern, "Everlasting Now-niks," "associated with Sakhyanist [Buddhist] curricula," believe in "tickless time," the abolishment of "all forms of escapement" (p. 481), or, in the context of Giles as a whole, the abolishment of "differentiation"--coinciding with George's second Answer to his "assignment." In contrast, Eierkopf and the Western rationalists want to perfect tick-time, embodied in the Tower Hall escapement mechanism. Eierkopf believes he will solve all these East-West problems by measuring the exact moment when the escapement mechanism rocks from tick over to tock. Thus he has developed a measuring device, "the Infinite Divisor," which hones the fulcrum as it measures:

> its two opposed millingheads--tiny diamond-dust affairs--would dart along the upper knife-edge, honing it as they went; during their approach to the hole in the escapement-shaft (the point on which the whole assembly pivoted) automatic calibrators would halve and halve again, ad infinitum, the width of the edge, until theoretically it reached a perfect point at the center of the hole and the midpoint of the Tick-Tock swing. [p. 482]

Of course, the entire assembly topples as the fulcrum is finally honed down toward zero, decisively collapsing the dialectics of Tick and Tock and East and West. Eierkopf is simultaneously working on his "grand

historico-chemico-mathematico-biologico-mythophysical treatise upon the egg," and when Giles accidentally hints that he has omitted the greatest problem of all--that of the chicken and the egg--Eierkopf takes up this second "infinite divisor": the infinite regression involving the precedence of chicken or egg. The results are again disastrous, as Eierkopf the egghead literally ends up as an egg (in a nest) in the Tower Hall belfry. This is perhaps Giles's most outlandish chapter of puns and paradoxes (II,ii,3).

Eierkopf the egghead has a feeble capacity for sex and is all head and brain; his roommate, chosen "on the basis of complementation" (p. 373), is Croaker the Frumentian, a sexual giant and mental dwarf who carries Eierkopf on his shoulders, feeds him, and administers to his feeble carnal desires. If these two were mated on the basis of complementation, Giles's first-answer advice, paralleling Eierkopf's principle of "differentiation," is to separate: Eierkopf should expunge all traces of Croakerism in himself and Croaker should expunge all traces of Eierkopfism. The key is to "differentiate": distinguish Failure from Passage, tick from tock, East from West, Eierkopf from Croaker. Giles's divisively dualistic eggheadism is of course as disastrous as that of Eierkopf himself.

Twin is twined with twin to such a degree in Giles that one can hardly decide which connective strand to follow from one twin to another. I shall choose the main analogue of the tick-tock dialectic: East and West. As I have already indicated, most of the philosophical, sociological, ideological, cartographical, religious, and political "controversies" in Giles divide along East-West lines: informationalism (capitalism) vs. student unionism (communism); tick-timists vs. the

Sakhyanist "Everlasting Now-niks"; rational dualism vs. mystic monism, and so forth; in many respects the first and second Answers to Giles's "assignment" divide along the same lines.

Indeed, one could argue that Life, Time, History--the Cosmos itself divides along East-West lines in Giles. Consider, for example, George's Maximizing:

> So saying [Max] declared to the empty stacks: "This kid he's not a goat any more, but a human student. Let suffering make him smart, that's all I care." His voice rose: "By all the Grand Tutors, true ones and fakes, that ever made students miserable; by everything that suffers--Moishians and Schwarzers [negroes] and billygoats and the whole flunking student body--I dub you once George, you should Pass All Fail All."
>
> The clock in far-off Tower Hall happening just at this point to strike the hour of one (but we were on Daylight Saving Time), he touched waterdrops to my brow. We three then stepped into shadowless midday, my namesake [George Herrold] singing as he bore me:
>
> "'One more river' say the Founder-Man Boss:
> 'Y'all gone graduate soon's y'all cross.'" [p. 111]

The curious reference to Daylight Saving Time shifts the daily cycle and emphasizes that the end--or is it the beginning?--"12 o'clock"--leads to the beginning--or is it the end?--"1 o'clock." The cyclic "turning" of the clock recapitulates the turning of the sun, which in its cyclic, apparent movement around the earth, measures and generates the dialectic of day and night, light and darkness. And what is "shadowless midday" but the still moment between Tick and Tock, the moment when the shadowy pendulum created by the sun shifts from left to right, west to east, repeating the rhythm voiced by Max: "Grand Tutors, true ones and fakes," and "Pass All Fail All"?

The mysterious character figuratively stationed between East and West in Giles is the sooty Dean o' Flunks, Maurice Stoker. He runs the

powerhouse and the powerhouse runs both the East and West Campuses. The Campuses ("camps") are united by their common power source: Stoker's powerhouse--power as raw chaos:

> "Here's where your power is!" Stoker shouted. . . . Grinning he thumped his chest with one hand and extended the other towards the bedlam beneath us. "Volcano with a cap ot it!" . . . "This is Graduation!" Stoker shouted happily. "Never mind the question: the Answer's power!" [pp. 220, 222]

EASCAC and WESCAC are the veritable hearts and brains of the East and West Campuses (WESCAC is "the first energy of the University: the Mind-force, that we couldn't live a minute without!" says Max, p. 86; it is also the computer, technology, the military-industrial complex and, in its EATing capacity, the A-Bomb). And EASCAC and WESCAC, like East and West, are twins:

> Of necessity, WESCAC and EASCAC shared the common power source on Founder's Hill, and a certain communication--ostensibly for espionage--went on between them; from a special point of view it might be argued that they were brothers, or even the hemispheres of a single brain. [p. 95]

Only Stoker can pass at will past the electric grid dividing the East from the West portion of the powerhouse. East and West alike fear and admire power, negation, chaos--all things represented by Stoker. He "delight[s] in recklessness" (p. 200). "Wherever disorder was, Maurice Stoker seemed to be also. . . . Even the best-intentioned, most high-minded administrators . . . seemed unable to do without Maurice Stoker; fear and despise him as they might, all came at last to terms with him" (p. 166).

One such administrator is the chancellor of New Tammany College, "Lucky" Lucius Rexford, who is "reputed to be a half-brother" to Stoker. If Stoker is "sooty" (e.g., p. 191) and represents negation, he nevertheless

runs the powerhouse; "Lucky" is, above all, "positive" in the best modern way; his emblem is light ("Light up with Lucky" is his campaign slogan). When Giles applies his principle of "differentiation" and suggests the "half-brothers" sever their mysterious relationship, chaos (a power and light failure) ensues. Ultimately, in the POSTTAPE, Giles and Giles imply the Stoker-Lucius fraternity is necessary: "Of Stoker little need be said: . . . denial is his affirmation, and from that contradiction he--indeed, the campus--draws strength" (p. 760). This yin-yang conclusion seems to support Stoker's own ostensibly sophistic definition of "order":

> His argument (which I assumed was meant simply to bait me) seemed to be that the opposition and tension of extremes--East and West Campuses, Passage and Failure--was itself a kind of harmony, and that moderationists like Chancellor Rexford, who regarded themselves as realistic, were actually deluded. . . . But Stoker's reasoning was no more orderly than the rest of his character: having asserted in effect that Disorder was the only true order, and Contradiction the only harmony, he went on to maintain, always grinning, that in fact the alleged passèdness of such people as his "brother," his wife [Anastasia], and my advisor [Max], if true, was false, inasmuch as it not only gave meaning and reality to his own flunkèdness, for example, but induced it into being. . . . [p. 467]

Dark ties!: Lucky Rexford, the, above all, orderly Chancellor of NTC, preaches a philosophy of "moderation," "neutrality," and "compromise" that mysteriously resembles the anarchism of his disorderly "brother." Rexford's politically slick and smiling policy of "compromise" is the target of some barbed but ambiguous satire (see pp. 413, 495); Stoker, always prepared to capitalize on a paradox, whispers loudly to Giles: "'He could work out a cooperative arrangement between Enos Enoch and the Dean o' Flunks" (p. 408)--like the Dean o' Flunks himself, who works

out the "cooperative arrangement" between East and West.

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As we have seen in the case of Stoker and Rexford, Eierkopf and Croaker, and George and Bray, Giles's characters come in pairs. Peter Greene and Leonid Andreich Alexandrov are the pair most graphically reflecting the East-West dialectic. Peter Greene's life more or less parallels that of the United States (or of the typical WASP, Scholes argues). "Pete" began as a wild, rustic Huck Finn, friend of "a Frumentian from a South-Quad chain-gang" named Old Black George (p. 271), who, it turns out, was actually George Herrold. He gained renown as a pioneer in the Forestry preserves, had sexual difficulties with Old Black George's daughter, Georgina, and with his own sweetheart and eventual wife, Sally Ann, moved to an urban quad and became a profligate swinger, until (with the 30's) life went kerflooey. No need to reiterate how Pete became a war hero, turned to post-war advertising enterprises, and so forth: we already know his history. Pete represents all the American ambiguities. For example, George finds him "of two minds" about "his own childhood . . . declaring on the one hand his intention to see to it that his children enjoyed all the privileges himself had never known, and on the other that the modern generation was plumb spoilt by the luxuries of life in present-day NTC and would amount to nothing for want of such rigor as had been his lot" (p. 271). Pete represents (this is an "allegory") American "innocence," which is akin to ignorance and even blindness--especially regarding his own erotic desires. Like Dr. Sear (cf. "seer"), who watches his wife masturbate through a fluoroscope, and Dr. Eierkopf (cf. "eye"), who watches co-eds undress through his remarkable telescope, Pete is a peeping Tom, but he is

schizophrenically blind to this part of himself--literally: one eye is blind because Pete threw a rock at a mirrored image of himself peeping at his sweetheart (pp. 278-279). Now Pete has a mortal fear of mirrors.

Pete's Russian counterpart, Leonid Alexandrov, also has an aversion for mirrors and one blind eye (see pp. 502-503). Leonid is also an innocent of sorts, but, unlike Pete, he is blinded by selflessness rather than by selfishness. Leonid blindly falls in love with Anastasia Stoker--with her "selflessnesshood" (both men speak a strange tongue), just as Pete falls in love with Anastasia's virgin innocence! Eventually they fight over her (pp. 706-707); the winner's prize will be the loser's good eye; in the battle Leonid's good eye is accidentally slashed and Pete, remorseful, thence stabs out his own, a pattern established earlier by Taliped Decanus. Pete and Leonid, West and East, are ultimately united by blindness.

3. Twixt Innocence and Lucidity

Pete Greene is also paired with Dr. Sear, again through mirrors and the motif of "seeing." This pairing reflects not the dialectic of East and West or of seflessness and selfishness, but that of innocence and lucidity--perhaps the central theme of Giles Goat-Boy and of all Menippean satire. Is not the Menippean norm of the Real a norm of lucidity? Lucian, Rabelais, Cervantes, and Voltaire are essentially laughing at blindness. I have also discussed at length the opposite force: the paradox of lucidity, and the attendant desire for Romance, Innocence, the Ideal, sweet inner blindness. This Menippean pattern is similar

to the "tragic" pattern of Taliped Decanus; the Dean's desire for lucidity, his desire to escape ignorance and innocence, leads to an even more disastrous blindness. Is he a fool, a hero, or simply a man trapped by an inescapable paradox? This correspondence of the Menippean and tragic patterns perhaps reflects Barth's expressed intention of "fusing" tragedy and satire (see pp. 256-257, above, and note 7).

Pete Greene's "innocence" is consistently ridiculed in Giles. His self-protective blinder is the incantation, "I'm okay, what the heck anyhow," and George tries to cure him by making him see that neither he nor New Tammany is "okay." George tells him the only way he'll be okay is to open his eyes a little (paraphrasing p. 471). Pete defends his innocence by quoting Bray's maxim, "Passèd are the Kindergarteners." "I pointed out to him," says George, "that Enos Enoch's advice had been to become as a kindergartner, not to remain one." "'Whatever it is that's passèd about kindergarteners, it isn't their childishness. Or their ignorance.' . . . I agreed that Enos Enoch might have had in mind a certain kind of innocent simplicity such as Dr. Sear could not be said to share. 'But you're not innocent or simple either, it seems to me. You just like to see yourself that way'" (pp. 470-471). Passed are the Kindergarteners--into First Grade, says George (p. 475).

> "My advice would be to get a pair of high-resolution glasses like the ones Dr. Eierkopf gave me, to help you see the difference between things. And Dr. Sear's mirror, to take a closer look at yourself in."
> . . . this time [Pete's] aim would not be therapy, but sophistication, and . . . for Knowledge of the Campus Dr. Sear [who will be Pete's therapist-sophisticator] was reputed to have no equal. [p. 474]

"'Pfui on innocence,'" Max says, as he, Sear, George and Pete prepare to watch Taliped Decanus.

> "I couldn't agree more [Dr. Sear responds]. I'll go even further: innocence is ignorance; ignorance is illusion; and Commencement, while it certainly is a metaphor, is no illusion. Commencement's for the disillusioned, not for the innocent." [p. 307]

Soon after, when the blind seer Gynander (Tiresias) comes onstage, Sear exclaims "'There's my Grand Tutor! . . . Give me Gynander, and you can keep your Enos Enoch'" (p. 321). And at play's end, when Taliped departs, saying I might take up proph-proffing, now I'm blind, Sear whispers proudly,

> "That's my Grand Tutor! . . . Poor blind Taliped and his fatal ID-card, stripped of innocence! Committed and condemned to knowledge! That's the only Graduation offered on West Campus, George--and, my dear boy, we are Westerners! . . .
>
> We all flunked with the first two students in the Botanical Garden, George; we're committed to Knowledge of the Campus, and if there's any hope for us at all, it's in perfecting that knowledge. Ye would be like Founders, the Old Syllabus says, with knowledge of Truth and Falsehood. Very well, then we've got to be like Founders, even if the things we learn destroy us. . . ." [p. 353]

"'I enjoy looking things straight in the eye,'" he says. Sear "readily seconded the Maxim that self-knowledge is generally bad news," Giles tells us, "and would yield to none in the degree of his own self-loathing" (p. 523).

The problem is that Sear is a perversion of the Seer, not a "mantic" but a "connoisseur" (p. 527). He relishes the bad news of self-knowledge. Perhaps "know" in "know thyself" should be "'understood in the Old-Syllabus sense of carnal knowledge. In other words, Fornicate thyself,'" he suggests (p. 524). Sear is hardly afraid of mirrors. He enjoys peeping at his masturbating wife through a fluoroscope--and enjoys admitting it, and enjoys loathing himself for admitting it. He is the aesthete-eroticist par excellence: "The whole effect of him was of a

lean pear dried in the sun, its gold juice burnt into thin exotic savor--and in fact it was pleasant to smell him, all but his breath, which was slightly foul" (p. 231). Indeed, Sear is a rotten pear: his foul breath stems from squamous-cell carcinoma, a cancer which began as a growth on his nose and festered "from daily contact with the frames of his eyeglasses" (p. 526). Eventually it blinds him. Blind Sear ultimately expires by castrating himself, believing that "his generative organs" are all that stand between him and Gynander-like "prophprof-hood" (p. 756). Sear gives George a mirror to add to his walking stick, saying

> "As you know, George, I think that Knowledge of the University, no matter what it costs, is the only Commencement we can hope for. . . . When you look at this mirror I hope you'll remember that there's always another way of seeing things: that's the beginning of wisdom."
>
> "You can look up co-eds' dresses with it, too" [Mrs. Sear interjects]. "That's what we do." [p. 404]

Sear and "seeing" are satirized in Giles, but so are Peter Greene and innocence. Both men have mutilated marriages; neither can assert his sexuality; both are peeping Toms--although one is all too anxious to admit his perversity, the other all too anxious to hide it; Giles argues that Dr. Sear, in his obsession with "seeing," is finally as "naive" as Pete Greene (pp. 527 ff.); both men are blinded in the end, Sear by too much brightness, perhaps, Greene by too much darkness; Sear dies believing he is Gynander, a blind prophprof; Greene ends as a blind revivalist preacher (p. 761).

Have I just described a Menippean dialectical deflation or Menippean ambivalence? In the case of a self-conscious work such as Giles, this question is very hard to answer. Barth seems to enjoy confounding

the Sear-Greene dialectic in the same way he enjoys confounding that of Greene and Alexandrov, Giles and Bray, Stoker and Rexford, or Eierkopf and Croaker. Sometimes one is up, the other down, then vice versa. Topsy-turvydom is the Menippean satirist's favorite state. Yet one senses ambivalence as well as Aristophanic, comic anarchism in Barth's attitude.

One could argue that Giles is an attack on lucidity and defends a kind of "innocence": here Barth goes beyond the commendation of Ebenezer Cooke's Quixotic innocence and maintains that Self-knowledge is bad news (pp. 121, 131, 322, 523, etc.). See what "knowledge" does to Sear--or to seers in general: Gynander, Taliped

> (The blinding light! At last I see the light!
> And what it shows me is: Gynander's right!
> I'm flunked on my ID-card, flunked in bed,
> and flunked at Three-Tined Fork--I, Taliped,
> the smartest dean that ever deaned, will never
> see the light again! I'm flunked forever! [p. 345])--

even Peter Greene. George and Dr. Sear "cure" Pete by opening his eyes to Anastasia's floozihood, so that he descends from blind optimism to absurd "black despisal" of the world (pp. 522 ff.). Indeed, is not Giles's entire first Answer, dependent as it is on "the differentiation of this from that," figuratively requiring mirrors and "high-resolution lenses" (p. 485), merely a kind of "seeing"? And it nearly kills him; he flunks miserably.

"'Why didn't Taliped leave well enough alone?'" Chancellor Rexford asks, "'People ought to mind their own business, and get their work done, and not ask basic questions like whether anything's worth doing!'" (p. 493). Despite the ironic stinger at the end, this sounds like the lesson of Menippus, and, in fact, Giles, though questioning Rexford's

analysis of Taliped ("had he forgotten that Cadmus College was rotting and dying from the poison of the Dean's secret flunkage?"), commends "sincerely both his distinction between theory and practice in science and politics and his general position vis-à-vis first principles, which [Giles] rather share[s]" (p. 494). Maybe the lesson of Menippus is, after all, a kind of "innocence"--not "ingenuousness" (like that of Peter Greene; see p. 621), but, as Max describes the insights of all Grand Tutors, "a profound and transcendently powerful simplicity, which the flunkèd sophistication of modern intelligences might confuse with naïveté" (p. 181). Giles's third and final Answer to his assignment has this tone of (let us call it Menippean) "simplicity"--a lull after the storm of his first two philosophically tortuous Answers. Early in the book, Max voices that crucial paradox of lucidity: "the question whether the search for truth remained desirable if the truth was that the seeker is flunked forever" (p. 122). Perhaps Barth's answer is "no."

Yet, consider how Barth has Gynander and Taliped voice this same paradox: Gynander--

> Goodness gracious me.
> It isn't any fun at all to see
> the Answers when they're always such bad news!
> How could I have forgotten that? [p. 322]

and Taliped-- Gee whiz, it hurts to know as much as me! (p. 350). Gynander and Taliped are travesties of the lucid, tragic Seer--as is Sear (Gynander and Taliped are his Grand Tutors). All three face the paradox of lucidity too calmly--Sear even relishes it. They are too contented, contented in the same way as Rexford, with his cheery, facile pragmatism. "'In short,'" Rexford says, "'my view is the opposite of the tragic view. The author of Taliped Decanus believes we lose even when

we win; that there are only different ways of losing. But I believe we'll win even if we lose!'" (p. 416; Peter Greene stamps his feet and whistles with pleasure at this speech). At this point Giles has "a clear and complex vision" that glorifies Oedipus Rex and lucidity and the "tragic" view (stationed inside the Taliped Decanus burlesque, Giles does not see it as a burlesque):

> I saw that however gimped and pleasureless my way, rough my manner, crude my tuition, outlandish my behavior and appearance, profound my doubts--I was nearer Graduation than Lucky Rexford, whose lot was so brighter! I could not say what passèd meant, but in an instant I saw that neither he nor Sear nor Greene, nor Stoker, Croaker, or Eierkopf, nor even Max or Anastasia, was passed; they all were failed! Dean Taliped, in the horror of his knowledge, was passèder than they, as was I in my clear confoundment; he was as passèd as one can be who understands and accepts that in studentdom is only failure. [p. 417]

Giles (and "Barth," "J.B.," or whoever is in control), may admire "simplicity," but only if it is "profound and transcendently powerful," tied to "failure" and awareness of failure.

Thus, although he burlesques lucidity, Barth is also committed to it. Even Max, though aware that self-knowledge is bad news, is committed to self-knowledge; "'Pfui on innocence,'" he says (p. 307); Moishian Max believes "Suffering is Graduation" (p. 464), and suffering comes from within as well as from without; the basis of Max's "bad news" is his own culpability in the WESCAC EAT project (Hiroshima): Max pressed the EAT button--and afterwards punished himself by cutting off the guilty finger; "'Innocence, bah'" (p. 307).

If Barth is committed to "lucidity," "seeing" is not just a mocked motif. Stoker Giles, son of Giles, who gives "J.B." the "Revised New Syllabus" and initiates Giles Goat-Boy, still carries Giles's engraved

staff, coated with the mirrors and lenses presented by Eierkopf and Sear, the (albeit perverted) Eye and Seer. Prodded by Stoker Giles, "J.B." imagines he will make the "seeker" in his novel of the same name "astigmatic" and also "addicted to lenses, telescopic and microscopic" (p. xxviii). Giles's quest is obviously an exercise in vision, not unlike that of Taliped Decanus--even if it is a burlesque quest in many respects. Giles is literally saturated with mirrors, scopes and lenses:[14] Lady Creamhair's glasses, Sear's perverse fluoroscope, Eierkopf's telescope, Giles's mirrors and lenses, the mirrors feared by Greene and Alexandrov. Blind men are everywhere: Gynander, Taliped, Sear, Greene, Alexandrov. One of Giles's major assignments is to "see through his Ladyship." The "iris-shuttered port" in WESCAC's belly opens and closes "like a great black pupil" (p. 694). And the anagnorisis of Taliped Decanus (The blinding light! At last I see the light! [p. 345]) anticipates the veritable climax of Giles ("We passed together, and together cried, 'Oh, wonderful!' Yes and No. In the darkness, blinding light! The end of the University! Commencement Day!" [p. 731]). It is in WESCAC's belly that George "sees" the final Answer.[15]

To summarize: Giles ultimately although equivocally celebrates lucidity--learning the bad news. "Barth" admires the Sophoclean, Swiftean sufferer even though he ridicules him. He is ambivalent toward lucidity partly because he sees it is destructive--physically in the case of Taliped Decanus and maybe Max; spiritually in the case of Sear. Hedwig Sear tells George her husband is "the most knowledgeable man on campus; in fact, he [knows] all the answers, despite his perversions." "'Not despite,'" replies Sear: "'because of. George understands the tragic view'" (p. 400). Barth is also ambivalent toward lucidity due to the

resemblance between "innocence" and Menippean pragmatism. (The latter is innocence of action rather than of thought or "knowing"; as Max says, it should not be confused with "naïveté." It is a "profound and transcendently powerful simplicity" earned only by passing from Innocence to Experience.) As a result, ridicule of lucidity is associated with Menippean anti-intellectualism in Giles. Menippean anti-intellectualism collides with Menippean esteem for lucidity. This is the same conflict found in Swift, the difference between Tale of a Tub and Gulliver's Travels: in the former, anti-intellectualism prevails as Swift equivocally condemns the "philosopher" who (like Sear) shamelessly strips the clothes off Nature and peeps at the Depth of Things; in the latter, Swift equivocally supports the Seeker after Truth, the ultimately doomed man unsatisfied with pretty outer clothing. Sear's "lucidity" is also ridiculed as the bane of spontaneity--a kind of paralyzing agent not unlike cosmopsis in The End of the Road and self-consciousness in Lost in the Funhouse. Sear has gone so far down the road and into the funhouse that he cannot even "mount" his wife in "the ordinary way" (cf. pp. 663 and 747). Yet lucidity survives the mockery; Giles escapes the perverteed Sear and becomes a legitimate Seer, climactically twined with his Ladyship (p. 731).

4. Paradoxes and Paroxysms

I want to look more closely at anti-intellectualism and the treatment of "suffering" and selflessness in Giles, for one must understand these phenomena before one can understand the significance of Giles's three assignment Answers.

As I have said, Barth admires the sufferer even though he ridicules him. Examples are tragic Taliped Decanus, who is an imitation as well as a travesty of Oedipus; the self-effacing Moishian, Max; Leonid, the Nikolayan obsessed with "selflessnesshood"; and Anastasia, who extends the conventional Heroine's values of duty, pity, and suffering to absurd limits. In the case of Max and Leonid, "suffering" is associated with selflessness and the paradox of "Failure is Passage," or "Suffering is Graduation"--a paradox that ultimately becomes a paroxysm and a target of anti-intellectualism.

Max is the archetypal Moishian. When Stoker picks up George and Anastasia after the adventure in George's Gorge, Max says "'Take me and let them go! . . . They aren't even Moishians. You can kick and beat me!' To encourage them [says George] he began pummeling his own head with both fists, and continued to do so even after they had deposited him in the sidecar and mounted their cycles" (p. 199). Ultimately Max compulsively confesses the murder of Herman Hermann the notorious Moishiocaustnik (anti-Semite) of Siegfrieder College (Germany), concludes that Suffering is Graduation, and is gloriously shafted at Christmas-time. Stoker sarcastically describes him (and Anastasia) as "'Sheep! . . . She's a sheep, and Spielman's another! "Baa, baa, take me to the slaughterhouse!" With their great silly lamb's eyes! "Do what you want to us, we won't bite." Made to be persecuted!'" (p. 213).

Anastasia is a hilarious creation--ultimate parody of the Ideal Christian woman and sentimental Heroine. She enters as a Siren luring Ulysses to watery disaster in George's Gorge, but soon we see her in a different light, as the embodiment of an "astonishing selflessness" (p. 187). It turns out she was luring Croaker, not George, with her

sexual charms, because she "felt responsible, in a way," when he escaped (p. 163). "She groaned when the great fellow beached her," says George, "and turned her face from his slavering--but herself drew up her shift, and dutifully, as it seemed, raised knees to his unimaginable tup!'" (p. 159). She is "so ready to obey, one can not resist commanding her" (p. 173). Always she is willing to sacrifice herself sexually for the sake of duty or pity: to stop Croaker, make her Uncle Ira happy, tame the Siegfrieder dogs, "cure" Hedwig Sear (and Peter Greene), please the inmates of Main Detention, and placate Bray (for George's sake). We are delighted by the transparency of her motives, by the exaggerated disparity between her professed, idealistic motives, and her nymphomaniacal "real" motives; indeed, the disparity is so great that Anastasia emerges as a likable innocent. (Peter Greene rationalizes the disparity--with Stoker's sardonic help--by inventing a Stacey-Lacey dialectic: "a flunkèd floozy [Lacey] with a passèd virgin twin [Stacey]"; p. 707, and see pp. 624 ff.)

Anastasia Stoker's masochistic selflessness is paired with, and as ambiguous as, Maurice Stoker's sadistic selfishness (actually, "selfishness" is an inadequate term, since it implies Stoker cares). As I said earlier, this selfless-selfish pattern is also reflected in the East-West dialectic, notably in Alexandrov and Greene. Alexandrov carries the desire for selflessness to its logical, i.e., absurd limit. His father expunged self to the extent of re- (or de-) naming himself Classmate X; Alexandrov, realizing that to crave love, selflessness--anything at all--is to exalt the self, goes one step further and tries to expunge himself by drinking a bottle of disappearing ink. As he begins to "strangle triumphantly" he cries "'Hooray! Eradicationness!

Goodbye me! . . . Releasedom! Freehood! Death to Selfity!'" (p. 602). George barely saves him.

Max's obsession with suffering and Alexandrov's desire for selflessness involve the logical, Christian paradox of Pride: George condemns Max's scapegoatism as Vanity--"the vanity of choosing himself to suffer for the failings of others" (p. 465). He points out the same flaw in Alexandrov: "Leonid's dilemma was thus not unlike mine, or any right-thinking undergraduate's . . . : the wish to achieve perfect self-suppression, like the yen to Graduate, was finally a prideful wish and thus self-defeating. . ." (p. 505). George in fact concludes that this is why he flunked his first test in WESCAC's belly (see p. 580). Afterwards, locked in Main Detention, he watches Max and Leonid puzzle over the paradox: "No good my withdrawing those criticisms now, as bad-tempered, specious, logic-chopping," he says.

> As to principle [Max and Leonid] were agreed: if the desire to sacrifice oneself, whether by martyrdom or in perfect selflessness, was selfish, and thus self-contradictory, then to attain that end one must not aspire to it. Further, they agreed--sometimes, at least--that not-aspiring, if conceived as a means to the same end, was morally identical with aspiring, and that imperfect selflessness, when deliberately practiced to avoid the vanity of perfection, became itself perfect, itself vain. Therefore, as best I could infer, they aspired to not-aspire to an imperfect imperfection, each in his way--and found themselves at odds. Would an unvain martyr stay on in Main Detention, Maios-like, even unto the Shaft, as Max was inclined to, or escape, given the chance, to continue his work in studentdom's behalf? Leonid insisted, most often, that the slightly selfish (and thus truly selfless) choice was the latter, and offered "daily" to effect my keeper's freedom by secret means. [pp. 594-595]

"'For Founder's sake, stop!'" cries George when he can "bear no more of this casuistry" (p. 596). However, soon afterwards, George himself

joins them by glorifying the paradox: munching the Founder's Scroll, triggered by his mad mother's aphorism, "Passèd are the flunkèd," he suddenly realizes that if Passage (or the desire to Pass) is Failure, then Failure is also Passage. His second Answer is the inversion of his first: he decides the enemy is not Bray, but WESCAC, "that root and fruit of Differentiation" (p. 605). Passage and Failure are false distinctions, false categories. It was "that distinction of Passage and Failure from which depended all my subsequent mistakes," he concludes. "There in a word was the Way: Embrace" (p. 605); embrace all alike; see that Passage is Failure, Failure Passage.

He begins preaching this "paradox" (p. 605), dazzling, frightening Stoker with "inversions-of-inversions" (p. 629), likewise Ira and Reginald Hector, Eierkopf, Rexford, and all others whom he had falsely tutored before. In the case of Sear, inversion-of-inversions becomes "perversion, reversion, and reversal" (p. 66). During the first test in WESCAC's belly George answered all questions "yes"; this time, deviously juggling paradoxes, he answers all questions "no," largely in order to spite WESCAC and its "arbitrary" distinctions or categories (pp. 695-696). But he flunks again, and, whipped out of NTC, sticks home atop Croaker, his neck sore, "stomach empty, . . . bladder full" (p. 703). On the way he encounters Stoker, with Greene and Alexandrov, who have just lost their last eyes in the fight over Anastasia, thanks to Leonid's militant selflessness. "'So there they sit, Goat-Boy,'" says Stoker: "'two blind bats! Are they passed or failed?'" (p. 708).

It is at this moment that George Giles literally "passes all" (perhaps solving The Riddle of the Sphincters?):

> my spirit was seized: it was not I concentrating, but something concentrating upon me, taking me over, like the spasms of defecation or labor pains. Leonid Andreich and Peter Greene--their estates were rather the occasion than the object of this concentration, whose real substance was the fundamental contradictions of failure and passage. Truly now those paradoxes became paroxysms: I shut my eyes, swayed on Croaker's shoulders, trembled and sweated. All things converged. . . . That circular device on my Assignment-sheet--beginningless, endless, infi-

> nite equivalence--constricted my reason like a torture-tool from the Age of Faith. Passage was Failure, and Failure Passage; yet Passage was Passage, Failure Failure! Equally true, none was the Answer; the two were not different, neither were they the same; and true and false, and same and different--unspeakable! Unnamable! Unimaginable! Surely my mind must crack! [pp. 708-709]

And not just his mind:

> "Don't try to get loose!" No doubt it was Leonid Stoker warned, but his words struck my heart, and I gave myself up utterly to that which bound , possessed, and bore me. I let go, I let all go; relief went through me like a purge. [p. 709]

Just then the Tower Clock rings, and, "Sol, la, ti, each a tone higher than its predecessor, unbinding, releasing me--then [ambiguously and cyclically[16]] do: my eyes were opened; I was delivered."

George is "delivered" of his third and final Answer but this delivery is little more than a purging of his first two Answers. His third Answer is that there are no "answers"; it is a negation of two philosophical systems, and hence an oblique affirmation of Experience. The first, "Western" Answer--"differentiation"--was generated by the rationalism of duality; the second, "Eastern" Answer--abolition of differentiation--was generated by the rationalism of paradox. Both involved infinite regressions: Answer #1 the regression of the

"infinite divisor" or of infinite differentiation; Answer #2 the regression of the infinite unitor or of "infinite equivalence"--deviously converting all the "contradictions" of Passage and Failure into "paradoxes." I think it is necessary to emphasize this common denominator of Answers one and two and the anti-intellectual aspects of Giles's Menippean conversion because his second answer resembles and can easily be confused with his third Answer, with the lesson of Menippus, and with Cosmophilism.

5. Three Answers

One problem is that Answers two and three both involve deflation of a dialectical system. Answer #1, delineated in the First Reel of Volume Two, is essentially the "differentiation of this from that": tick from tock, East from West, but, most importantly, Passage from Failure. Answer #2, delineated in the Second Reel of Volume Two, is essentially the abolition of differentiation or of "arbitrary categories" (p. 633), notably Passage and Failure. Answer #2 collapses the dualistic "system" of Passage and Failure. It is tempting, then, to see Answer #2 as a kind of Cosmophilism (defined as philosophical nihilism): Answer #1 applies rationalistic Mythotherapy; Answer #2 destroys Mythotherapy "cosmophilistically"--and the lesson of Giles is that neither "Answer" by itself is satisfactory. This is approximately how Tatham interprets Giles, equating Burlingame's cosmophilism with Giles's second Answer. Jerry Bryant interprets all of Barth's works this way; in the case of Giles: "The problem George must overcome is the tendency to reify abstract categories by making distinctions. Barth's point, by now familiar, is not to avoid making distinctions, but to avoid using

them as substitutes for rather than accompaniments to existence."[17] Jake's "articulation" speech in ER (p. 119) is Bryant's Holy Text. The Higher (i.e., consciously acknowledged) Mythotherapy preached therein, which Bryant sees in all of Barth's works, is attractive--not unlike the Higher Hobby-Horsism of Tristram Shandy (see pp. 99-100, above)--but it is not the lesson of Giles Goat-Boy--at least not in this simple form. In describing how the second, "cosmophilistic" Answer is rejected, Tatham says Giles "realizes . . . that the embracing of contradictions is not ultimately much different from the insistence upon categories."[18] I agree--but not just because both Answers fail; I agree because Barth, I believe, sees both Answers from an anti-intellectual, anti-philosophical, Menippean perspective. Paradox leads to paroxysm just as dualistic eggheadism leads to a nest in the belfry.

However, I recognize the difference between the rationalism of Answer #1 and the mental gymnastics of Answer #2--gymnastics that cause George's mind to "crack" (p. 709). In one sense Answer #1 is based on "reason" and Answer #2 is based on the abandonment of "reason." When Giles finds Eierkopf nested in the belfry and reverses his first Answer, Eierkopf mutters "'You lost your mind.'" "Only my Reason," George replies: "the flunking Reason that distinguished him from Croaker, and denied that contradictories could both be passèd at the same time, in the same respect" (p. 642). It is tempting, in this case, to see Answers One and Two as a reworking of the "ontological Manichaeism" Jake imagines in ER, involving Being and Unbeing, Reason and Unreason (see p. 173, above). Again, one could say Giles learns that neither is adequate, at least in isolation. If so, what is his third "Answer"--abandonment of both Reason and Unreason? Merging of the two? What is

left after both Reason and Unreason are purged? What is created by the merging of the two? The impossibility of answering these questions indicates the inadequacy of the categories, I think. The fact is, the second Answer is not so much a "loss" of "reason" as it is an inversion of "reason." If "reason" creates distinctions or categories, the mental faculty employed in Answer #2 de-creates them in a similar fashion, as though running the film backwards. A similar faculty is involved in creating "contraries" [Answer #1] and in converting the "contraries" into "paradoxes"[19] [Answer #2]--that is, into merely apparent contradictions.

Answer #2, then, is an "inversion" of Answer #1, but part of the same rationalistic system--a system collapsed by Answer #3. Yet, as I said above, Answer #2 resembles Answer #3 insofar as it, too, collapses a "system" (Failure and Passage). In one sense, Answer #3 is merely Answer #2 turned upon itself. I believe this is why Answer #3 resembles Answer #2 and has a distinctly Eastern, mystic, and monistic flavor. Gerhard Joseph distinguishes between Answers Two and Three by calling #2 the "union of contraries" and #3 the "transcension of categories."[20] This distinction points toward the pragmatic Lesson of Menippus: "union of contraries" implies mental manipulation and "transcension of categories" implies escape from mental rubrics. But Joseph's explanation does not acknowledge the degree to which Answer #3 "transcends" categories only in the sense of "uniting" or, as Scholes puts it, in a slightly different context, "synthesizing" contraries. In this sense, Answer #3 does indeed resemble Answer #2.

Consider, for example, Barth's use of the term "seamless." At the climax of the third trip into WESCAC's belly, Giles cries "In the sweet

place that contained me there was no East, no West, but an entire, single, seamless campus. . ." (p. 731). In his second trip into WESCAC's belly, guided by his second, "Eastern" Answer, Giles also refers to "the timeless, seamless University" (p. 695). Earlier in the same Reel, he says "I saw the error of my flunking the 'Eierkopf' in [Croaker] and the 'Croaker' in Eierkopf--as if the seamless University knew aught of such distinctions!" (p. 627). Much earlier, before arriving at his First Answer, George listens to Bray's Enochist attack on flunked Education and senses the "truth" of his contention: "Our Schools and Divisions--what are they but seams in the seamless?" (p. 447). Finally, we should recall Burlingame's climactic cry: "'I am Suitor of Totality. . . . I have known my great Bride part by splendrous part. . . ; but I crave the Whole--the tenon in the mortise, the jointure of polarities, the seamless universe. . ." (SWF, pp. 536-537).

The difference between Answers Two and Three--that which accounts for the "paroxysm"--may simply be the "reasoned" aspect of the former. Its "seamlessness" is rational rather than passional. Giles's Answers during his second trip are tortuously reasoned, while those during his third and final trip are gay, careless, spontaneous. HAVE YOU COMPLETED YOUR ASSIGNMENT AT ONCE, IN NO TIME, WESCAC asks during the second trip:

> Readily I answered Yes, for the triple reasons that I'd fixed Tower Clock in position, that the passage of time was anyhow a flunked delusion, and that, Failure being Passage, my non-completion of the Assignment, last time or this, was not ultimately differentiable from its completion. But after a moment's further reflection I pressed the other button to change my answer, for on the loftiest view of all there was no I to complete the Assignment, as distinct from an Assignment to be completed, in the timeless, seamless University--which University itself, et cetera. The same reasoning led me, not without trepidation despite my convictions, to press No at appearance of the

> epithet GILES SON OF WESCAC: for not only were GILES and WESCAC distinctions as spurious as son and father, but, viewed rightly (if after all through the finally false lenses of student reason), the eugenical specimen whereof I was the issue had been drawn as it were from all studentdom, whose scion therefore I was; WESCAC's role had been merely that of an inseminatory instrument, the tool of the student body. [pp. 695-696]

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Answer #2 ("NO") is the inversion of Answer #1 ("YES"). Answer #3 collapses and "embraces" both of them ("YES-NO"). This time the "embracing" is truly "cosmophilistic," not sophistic; it involves "transcension of categories" as well as, or through the "union of contraries." Giles and Anastasia descend to WESCAC's belly in the tapelift (whence Giles had originally issued): "Knees to chin and arsy-turvy--like two shoes in a box, or that East-Campus sign [yin-yang] of which her navel had reminded me. . ." (p. 729). If Answer #3 begins with a purge--and scatological self-mockery--it climaxes with sexual self-mockery--and also profound merriment, a form of comic vitality: arsy-turvy in the tapelift, Giles says,

> "there's a riddle here somewhere, Anastasia [readers recall Max's Riddle of the Sphincters]; something fundamental [an etymological pun, something like that on "rectitude"]. It's as if the Answer were right under my nose! And yet I don't quite have it. . . ."
>
> So cramped were our quarters, she could but murmur acknowledgment [later "Knowledge" will "warm" Giles]. Yet respond she did to my impassioned ruminations [this is not the first time George has tasted of his Ladyship], vouchsafing me in wordless tongue a foretaste of ultimate Solution [yes, Giles is a Holy obscene book].

Ultimate Solution begins as Giles and Anastasia reach the bottom, express their love, and kiss:

> Like Truth's last veils our wrappers rose: her eyes opened; I closed mine, and saw the Answer.

"Pass you!" I whispered. She nodded.
Supporting her under the buttocks with my stick, I lifted her upon me; she twined me round.

Anastasia dons Bray's mask, Giles the empty purse that held it. They open the belly by hooking WESCAC's Input and Output jacks together, slip inside, then, entwined, dissolve Yes and No into a single Solution:

> "It says ARE YOU MALE OR FEMALE," she whispered. We rose up joinèd, found the box, and joyously pushed the buttons, both together, holding them fast as we held each other.
> "HAVE YOU COMPLETED YOUR ASSIGNMENT AT ONCE, IN NO TIME"
> Was it Anastasia's voice? Mother's? Mine? In the sweet place that contained me there was no East, no West, but an entire, single, seamless campus: Turnstile, Scrapegoat Grate, the Mall, the barns, the awful fires of the Powerhouse, the balmy heights of Founder's Hill--I saw them all; rank jungles of Frumentius, Nikolay's cold fastness, teeming T'ang--all one, and one with me. Here lay with there, tick clipped tock, all serviced nothing; I and My Ladyship, all, were one.
> "GILES, SON OF WESCAC"
> Milk of studentdom; nipple inexhaustible! I was the Founder; I was WESCAC; I was not. I hung on those twin buttons; I fed myself myself.
> "DO YOU WISH TO PASS"
> I the passer, she the passage, we passed together, and together cried, "Oh, wonderful!" Yes and No. In the darkness, blinding light! The end of the University! Commencement Day! [p. 731]

As in The Sot-Weed Factor, sexual union (tick clipped tock, all serviced nothing) serves to "unite" all polar opposites: Male and Female, East and West, hot and cold, light and dark, beginning and end, yes and no. And this time the Solution, the Paradox (e.g., "The end of the University! Commencement Day!") is apocalyptic, not a "paroxysm." This time "flunkèd Contradiction" becomes "passèd Paradox" (p. 741; I have altered the context), whereas in the second descent flunkèd contradiction became flunkèd paradox.

****

Giles's lucid, passional vision of a seamless "University" is mystic and "tragic," again reflecting those aspects of our culture associated with Giles's two main prototypes, Jesus and Oedipus. Both of these figures embody the "passèd paradox" of Failure and Passage. Christ is born in order to die, flunks in order to pass mankind, and even in his passèd flunking, realizes he may not have been able to teach mankind his "unspeakable" lesson. "What does Giles learn in his heroic quest?" Barth asks; then, perhaps oversimplifying, he answers: "That the tragedy is you can't transmit wisdom and insight."[21] Similarly, Oedipus is blinded, destroyed by lucidity, yet gains a tragic passèdness by flunking. As Giles says, "Dean Taliped, in the horror of his knowledge . . . was as passèd as one can be who understands and accepts that in studentdom is only failure" (p. 417).

As Joseph insists, Giles's third Answer, his apocalyptic vision, is a "transcension of categories" as well as a "union of contraries," Passage and Failure included. It involves a somewhat Taoistic "letting be": spontaneity and carelessness, abandonment of rational categories--not because they are too complex while life is simple but because they are too mechanical, devious, perverse--incapable of comprehending or conveying Reality. The lesson Giles learns is "simple" in a way--but not because it is reductive. The "University" he sees is "seamless" but its "simplicity" is that of an irreducible, ineffable organism or Whole; it is "seamless" but not pole-less; it does not contain "contradiction" but it bristles with "paradox."

After his climactic experience in WESCAC's belly, George confirms his humanhood, but also, paradoxically, his Herohood, by ceasing to worry about Assignments, Answers, Passage, and Failure. In a way,

he achieves Grand Tutorhood only by having "successfully" failed to find the "Answer"--he has discovered the "Answer" from the rear--by seeing there are no Answers; like Ebenezer Cooke he is Heroic because he has so "successfully" completed his inverted quest. As in The Sot-Weed Factor, Barth deflates the "Heroic" aspects of this conclusion (the shafting ceremony on Founder's Hill; II,iii,7) with an anti-climax--the POSTTAPE. Giles differs from The SWF to the degree that the POSTTAPE merely imitates the anti-climactic patterns of archetypal myth (even the Founder's Scroll says "A proph-prof is never cum laude in his own quad" [p. 690]) rather than deflating the climactic patterns of Romance.[22] However, whatever its source, the POSTTAPE is most important as a deflation of Heroic "triumph" and as a dramatization of Giles's initiation into Experience:

> Thus it is, and in no other wise, I have lingered on the campus these dozen years, in the humblest capacity, advising one at a time undergraduates to whom my words convey nothing. Thus it is I accept without much grumble their failings and my own: the abuse of my enemies, the lapses of my friends; the growing pains in both my legs, my goatly seizures, my errors of fact and judgment, my failures of resolve--all these and more, the ineluctable shortcomings of mortal studenthood. And thus it is--empowered as it were by impotence, driven by want of motive--I record this posttape (which she [Anastasia, who has grown shrewish] will not know of), in order to speak of the interval between my "triumph" of twelve years back, just recounted, and my present pass. Perhaps too to speak to myself of what is to come: the end Max saw from the beginning; the "Commencement" I saw at the end. [pp. 755-756]

Scott Byrd detects Candidean "resignation" and Swiftean "misanthropy" at the end:[23] there is some of this, but also acceptance and even (as Jerry Bryant insists) "muted satisfaction."[24] There is a muted satisfaction with Experience,[25] with having "failed"--with Giles's having failed to become the "Hero" he hoped. Indeed, the latter "failure" is the cause

of Giles's unpopularity and imminent shafting--thus (as in the case of Christ) the source of his "tragic" passage. Failure to become the "Hero" is Passage in this Menippean satire--and thus (Dark ties; Thing twined to thing) finally Heroic--or as close to the Heroic as man can come in an anti-romance. If the POSTTAPE sets out to deflate the Heroic (or Romantic) aspects of George's inverted quest, it ends by re-inverting the inversion, or reasserting the same Paradox. This may also indicate the strength of Barth's desire to make Giles an Ideal Hero as well as a Real, "anti," or burlesque hero. Or perhaps it indicates that the two "Heroes," as in the case of Bray and Giles, are "not only contrary and interdependent, but finally undifferentiable": Real twined with Ideal, Romance with Anti-Romance, Parody with Parodied, tragos with saturos, Loving with Loathing.

A POSTSCRIPT

The "University" Giles sees is "seamless," though not pole-less; it is a whole, but not "simple"; it does not contain "contradiction" but it bristles with "paradox." The Menippean "universe" I have constructed has many seams; it is "simple" and dichotomous in many respects, and I have often treated as "contradiction" and "conflict" what may only be "paradox": consider the Real and Ideal, Romance and Anti-Romance, Innocence and Experience, Loving and Loathing. As I said in discussing Don Quixote, we may intuit the music of these paired voices as "harmony," although we analyze it in two parts.

Then again--to continue the analogy--the ear is historically accommodating to cacophony: musical intervals that sound harmonious to

modern ears once seemed unbearable. There is a danger in converting all cacophony into harmony, or in mistaking two voices for one. Despite the similarities, this is not the danger of "cosmophilism" (which also involves "embracing" and "collapsing"), but the danger of reductive synthesis--rubricizing that stems not from use of "categories" but from a lack of "categories"--a failure to discriminate. Everything, in effect, fits a single category--that of "harmony," for example. (This may be one lesson of Giles's second Answer.)

I do not mean to say that Barth's Menippean satires are bad, cacophonous, or confused. I merely insist that their peculiar tone, their odd "harmony," is the product of clashing voices. The Real and Ideal, Romance and Anti-Romance, Innocence and Experience are discordant; they are melodically contrapuntal; the Real, Anti-Romance, and Experience are the base notes or the primary melodies, enriched and vitalized by dissonance and counterpoint--not "pure," not strictly "harmonious"--not even musical (or literary), some critics complain, yet distinctive, mysterious, knotty, and, at least when properly classed or set in context, gratifying. For purposes of criticism we cannot assume that the two "voices" involved in Menippean satire are "undifferentiable"; we must understand that they are "interdependent"--comprising a whole--but also that they are "contrary." They are twins, twined, but rivals.

NOTES

[1] Enck interview, p. 12. Morrell identifies the "somebody" mentioned by Barth as Philip Young. Either Barth was improvising numbers or Enck misquoted him, because Lord Raglan (The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama [London, 1936]) actually lists 22, not 25 prerequisites--acknowledging that this is an arbitrary number, of course. Morrell

(pp. 99 ff.) and Tatham (pp. 204-207) both list Raglan's prerequisites and show the Gilesian parallels. I will not duplicate their work, but I will list Raglan's prerequisites here (pp. 179-180 of The Hero):

(1) The hero's mother is a royal virgin;
(2) His father is a king, and
(3) Often a near relative of his mother, but
(4) The circumstances of his conception are unusual, and
(5) He is also reputed to be the son of a god.
(6) At birth an attempt is made, usually by his father or his maternal grandfather, to kill him, but
(7) He is spirited away, and
(8) Reared by foster-parents in a far country.
(9) We are told nothing of his childhood, but
(10) On reaching manhood he returns or goes to his future kingdom.
(11) After a victory over the king and/or a giant, dragon, or wild beast,
(12) He marries a princess, often the daughter of his predecessor, and
(13) Becomes king.
(14) For a time he reigns uneventfully, and
(15) Prescribes laws, but
(16) Later he loses favour with the gods and/or his subjects, and
(17) Is driven from the throne and city, after which
(18) He meets with a mysterious death,
(19) Often at the top of a hill.
(20) His children, if any, do not succeed him.
(21) His body is not buried, but nevertheless
(22) He has one or more holy s[e]pulchres.

[2] Phyllis Meras, "John Barth: A Truffle No Longer," New York Times Book Review, August 7, 1966, p. 22.

[3] "Heroic Comedy," Newsweek, LXVIII (August 8, 1966), 82.

[4] Parenthetical references are to Volume (I), Reel (i), and Chapter (7). This chapter is called "His Maximizing" in the Contents. Giles is symmetrically and pseudo-religiously divided into two Volumes of three Reels each, each Reel containing seven chapters.

[5] Interestingly, Chapter 7 of Reel iii, Vol. I is entitled "Scapegoat Grate" in the Table of Contents of the Fawcett-Crest edition--a misprint.

[6] The Anatomy of Satire, p. 27.

[7] Alan Prince, "An Interview with John Barth," Prism (Sir George Williams University, Spring, 1968). Quoted by Morrell, p. 112. "John Barth: A Truffle No Longer" and "The Anonymiad" (in Lost in the Funhouse) contain similar references.

[8] Margaret Bieber (The History of the Greek and Roman Theater) explains how "goat" got into "tragedy": "The worshipers of Dionysus danced around the sacred goat, singing the dithyramb. They then sacrificed it, ate its flesh, part of which they gave to the gods. Then they made themselves a dress out of its skin. . . . Nourished and dressed by the sacred animal, they felt themselves to be goats (tragoi). . . . Tragedy, then, is the song of the holy thiasus in honor of the god. Hence it was only in the religion of Dionysus that the drama could be fashioned, for only by god-given intoxication could a man be changed into a thiasote, an actor. Tragedy, then, remains always, in this sense, a goat-song (tragic ode, tragodia)" (pp. 16-17).

[9] Hodgart, Satire, p. 23.

[10] Robert Graves's introduction to The Golden Ass, p. xiv. Graves discusses donkey lore at some length.

[11] The Fabulators, p. 167.

[12] Tristram Shandy, p. 266.

[13] The date is fairly well hidden. For clues see pp. 631, 703, and 745.

[14] Scholes was the first to discuss mirrors, etc. at length, in The Fabulators. See pp. 137-145, "'Giles Goat-Boy': Scopes and Vision."

[15] "Like Truth's last veils our wrappers rose: her eyes opened; I closed mine, and saw the Answer" (p. 730). WESCAC's belly is "the lightless place where I had seen, become myself, issued from to my post-Graduate Assignment" (p. 732).

[16] Scholes emphasizes the alternate meaning of do--the verb "do." Tatham emphasizes the octave--the cyclic aspect.

[17] The Open Decision, p. 299. Bryant is very vague about the 2nd Answer and nearly ignores it altogether.

[18] Tatham, p. 233.

[19] Cf. "Title" in Lost in the Funhouse, p. 108:"Mystics . . . turn contradiction into paradox" and "Heroic Comedy," p. 82: "I try to turn contradiction into paradox."

[20] Joseph, John Barth, Univ. of Minn. Pamphlets on American Writers, No. 91 (Minneapolis, 1970), p. 36. "Union of contraries" and "transcension of categories" are phrases used (facetiously, in part) by Barth in "Night-Sea Journey" (see p. 143, above), although Joseph does not publicize the fact. Their use together in "Night-Sea Journey" perhaps indicates that they are not so different as Joseph contends.

[21] "Heroic Comedy," p. 82.

[22] The POSTTAPE is in a sense merely a dramatization of Raglan's Heroic patterns (#16-#22). But Raglan himself notes the existence of a "romance" form of the Myth: "In these tales we are never told of the hero's death, but merely that he 'lived happily ever afterwards', which seems to suggest a desire to omit, rather than falsify, the latter part of the myth" (The Hero, p. 191). The myth is more "realistic" than the romance; Barth can thus mock the romance, or turn it into an anti-romance, by , in a sense, imitating the myth. But of course he never simply "imitates" the myth. It, too, is treated "satirically"--as Barth says in the Meras interview.

[23] "Giles Goat-Boy Visited," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, IX, i (1966), 108-112. Byrd uses Frye's four prose fiction categories (Confession, Romance, Novel, Anatomy)--discusses Giles as a combination of all four, but slights the Anatomy aspect--and does not seem to understand it very well. For example, he sees the parodies, the pedantic "glosses," and similar features as uncomfortable shifts from the Confession form.

[24] The Open Decision, p. 302.

[25] While writing Giles, Barth outlined his beliefs in a ten-page paper called "The Goat-Boy: Politics and Graduation," now on file at the Library of Congress. Morrell quotes from this paper, after qualifying the importance of such extra-literary statements. "Salvation in the individual," says Barth, "consists of the realization (brought about usually after a period of suffering, anxiety, and despair) of a transcendent reality beyond the particular visible world; union with it, release from conflicts of reason vs. passion; good vs. evil. Affirmation of wholeness of psyche and body; loving affirmation of unreason, passions, appetite, corporeity; freedom from vanity and selfishness; spiritual energy and 'lyric enchantment' with reality; a joie de vivre that accepts and exults its suffering or whatever else comes; that discharges the force of its personality in love (compassion and charity); which may include lustful appetite out of joy but will involve no cruelty or destructiveness" (Morrell, p. 121).

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