

Toshihiro Namba : Masks and Structure of Composition in *A Tale of a Tub*

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## I

*A Tale of a Tub* is a book of discursive segmented satire with a centrifugal design. The central theme of the discourses is the variety of corruptions in religion and learning, which we find repeated in the "Apology" by the author. But the impression one gets from reading it for the first time is that confounding state of the discourses mainly caused by the lack of such uniforming devices as are found in the *Gulliver's Travells*. The *Travels* also treats various aspects of social or moral problems, but it affords the audience a steady point of view, because Swift represents Lemuel Gulliver as the narrator of the experiences he underwent through the four voyages. If a work of literature is to be valued only by the extent to which it is in coherent unity, we may say that the *Travels* is a far greater literary achievement. And indeed, Swift owes the work the reputation he has enjoyed in the history of literature. Every critic might agree that if the audience fails to see through the outward surface the fierce point of satire on human life, the interest could be sustained by imaginary events happening to the characters in fantastic places. However gloomy the topics in the work might be, when viewed as realistic burlesque, yet they are comic and humorous in themselves to such a degree that they can, as a fairy tale or a fable, easily take children's fancy. To return to the craftsmanship of the *Tale of a Tub*, it may be concluded that Swift is a moral writer than a literary artist, in that he is more concerned with moral view of man than with representative methods.

A satiric work, like other works of literature, has two dimensions : one is that of intention, and the other, that of craftsmanship. It is true that the moral intentions as a commentator on the individual or social follies are indeed indispensable, but a satire must be artistic in representation before they are appreciated. Whatever intentions are lying in a satire, the total effect, which we see sometimes is contrary to and different from the final purpose intended, lies in the style in expression, language and imagery chosen by the author. On the other hand, artistic formulas, the episodes the point of view, from which they are delivered, and the patterns in which they are arranged, are all contrived or adopted in order that the satiric forces of language and imagery may be effective. The form of the *Tale* being inconsistent, what benefits do these variety of topics and narrators give to the writer, if they are contrived as artistic devices? And to what extent Swift's intentions are fulfilled? Such questions will simultaneously arise in the reader's

mind.

## I

There are seventeen separate sections and these are supposedly written by different writers : the person composing "Apology", the bookseller, the modern writer, the author of "Digressions", and the historian who tells about "three brothers". In addition to these obvious characters of whom the last two are of major importance, another "author" is referred to in the "Apology" and finally one more person appears, who only cuts his figure for a few moments in the "Preface" but is felt throughout every part that ensues. He is nobody but the satirist himself presiding over the entire sequence of comic scenes. Were it not for the occasional interjection of the latter's voice the reader should sometimes, as in the "Diressions on Madness", lose the track of the irony.<sup>1)</sup>

Irvin Ehrenpries's examination of the work tells that Swift's original scheme of composition did not contain the "Notes", the "Apology", the "Dedication to Lord Somers", and the "Bookseller to the Reader". Despite of Swift's remark about the date of the composition 1696 in the "Apology", the true period of his writing seems to range from the return to Ireland in 1694 to 1697, or to 1698 as shown from the signs which the "Introduction" and the "Conclusion" bear. In addition to these facts, there is a legendary statement given by Lyon that Swift produced the allegory while he was at Trinity College and that he showed sketches of it to friends there or in Kilroot.<sup>2)</sup> These facts are all in agreement with Swift's assurance given to "those gentlemen who have taken pains" to understand the author's intentions,

that his Discourse is the Product of the Study, the Observation, and the Invention of several Years, that he often blotted out much more than he left, and if his Papers had not been a long time out of his Possession, they must have still undergone more severe corrections.<sup>3)</sup>

What seems a confusion at the first glance, or something to check the consistent unity of interest, may be properly owing to the long period of composition in which he used the observations of the current social problems, and the variety of voices also show not only "what they call Parodies, where the Author personates the Style and Manner of other Writers, whom he has a mind to expose,"<sup>4)</sup> but each voice makes the reader conscious of the various frames of mind in which Swift wrote such passages.

The formless form of *A Tale of a Tub* is not of Swift's own device, but according to the author's comment, an imitation of the manners of "modern writers", and the allegory

of the magical legacy of three brothers is modelled after the fashion of the *Three Rings* which was common in folk lore and literature.<sup>5)</sup> The essential part of the story is that among the three rings only one is genuine and that its owner is predestined to own the whole world. According to the accepted interpretation of the allegory, Father is identified with God and the children stand for the Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan faiths. The moral is that they should, regardless of their churches, strive through charity to deserve God's blessing. Herbert Davis, in his introduction of the earliest works of Swift, points out the similarity with a German play of the seventeenth century and a sermon delivered by John Sharp, later Archbishop of York.<sup>6)</sup> The plea for charity was an aggressive defence of the Church of England against the dissenters. Yet, Swift did not leave any evidence to explain about his adaption of the plot, and therefore it would be better to agree to the attitude of Herbert Davis not to "exercise our minds as to his sources." However, because the observations and studies of Swift's own have been employed and perversely expressed from the viewpoint of the assumed "author", the form of the *Tale* is none the less important, and it is nowhere but in the perverted or inverted opinions that Swift could express himself.

The use of impersonation for satiric and literay purposes was very popular in the later years of the seventeenth century and continued into the eighteenth. There are two characteristics to be noted about Swift's employment of the device : he seems to have been able to use or discard it as the occasion demanded, and, secondarily but it is more significant, he never employ any mask a second time and was never harassed to create persona.<sup>7)</sup>

Swift was not only perfectly free and good at creating persona but also he recommended impersonation. He told the Duchess of Queensbery in a letter dated August 12, 1732, "In writing you are too lazy to give yourself the trouble of acting a part." Though the biographical evidences are not sufficient to know this whole character, yet it may be believed that Swift enjoyed his assumed poses in everyday life. Alexander Pope's appellation of him was usually Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, and Gulliver ; these four well-known titles Swift may have heard very proudly. His enthusiasm and capacity for acting a part, it has been reported, went so far as, to the shock of the people present, to accuse a lady of stealing a bottle-crew of his because she was the least wealthy of the company at a dinner party. He is said to have written to Stella's suitor, urging him to fool her with telling a complete lie in a perfectly serious manner.<sup>8)</sup> In the *Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Ireland from being a Burden to their Parents or Country*, he assumed the

most cruel human creature, cannibalist, and in the same manner he employed this effective device so admirably that, restraint being co-mingled with passion or fury with farce in his writing, no English satirists ever before or since has come to his point of perfection.<sup>9)</sup>

The "supposed author" in the *Tale*, which contains several other voices, appears most definitely to be a modern Grub Street hack. The intellectual brilliance and energy of the satire result mainly from this personification, because it is the author that Swift has ridiculed for his headlong devotion to all contemporary things.

It is a great Ease to my Conscience that I have written so elaborate and useful a Discourse, without one grain of Satyr intermixt; which is the sole point wherein I have taken leave to dissent from the famous Originals of our Age and Country.<sup>10)</sup>

The pretension to no satiric vein in the statement and the dissension from modern hack writers are one end of the compass with which Swift draws the circle of inverted values. The other end lies in the "Section IX : A Digression concerning the Original, the use and the Improvement of Madness in a Commonwealth,"

...even, I my self, the Author of these momentous Truths, am a Person whose imaginations are hard-mouth'd, and exceedingly disposed to run away with his *Reason*, which I have observed, from long Experience, to be very light Rider, and easily shaken off : upon which Account my Friends will never trust me alone, without a solemn Promise, to vent my Speculations in this, or the like manner, for the universal Benefit of Human kind.<sup>11)</sup>

These two passages evidently show the characteristics of the "modern" discourses Swift had a mind to expose, sincerity and utility. If they are mixed in a harmonious manner as the would-be projectors profess, the two facets of the modern will surely promise human advancement. But it seems that Swift continued to doubt or warn his contemporaries against the notion of progress and that he ever insisted on harmonious stability.

### III

The published form of *A Tale of a Tub*, which contains the *Battle of the Books* and *A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* together, shows that Swift is not only a formalist but also a superb creator of masks. The narrator in the *Battle* is "possessed of all Qualifications requisite in an *Historian* and retained by neither Party."<sup>12)</sup> Through the historian-like description and the use of epic devices, the battle of ancient-

modern controversy is amazingly interesting, but small emphasis seems to have been placed on the personification. The *Mechanical Operation* is a letter to a friend and the subjects and the manner of writing suggest the author to be an experimental scientist; however, his character causes no trouble to the appreciation of its satiric intentions.

Different from and compared with these authors, the personifications of the author of the *Tale* are far more complicated and puzzling to the exact understanding of them. In his misuse of learning, his unwavering devotion to contemporary affairs, and his pride, we are first impressed that the author is composed to be an object of ridicule, and then we find that he speaks more of himself than any other masks Swift produced in the work. His allusions to himself particularly abounds in the preface and the introduction, from which we are able to construct his personal history and view of the world.

During his past career as a hack writer, it is told, he wrote "four score and eleven Pamphlets for the Service of six and thirty Factions under three Reigns."<sup>13)</sup> In the warfare between the ancient and the modern, he belongs to the side of the latter, but as a member of the Grub Street brotherhood, he has a hostile feeling towards the society of Gresham (the Royal Society) and that of Will's (successful poets and writers), for they are trying to "edify a Name and a Reputation upon the Ruin of ours."<sup>14)</sup> Yet his plan is to retire to make "Speculations more becoming a Philosopher," thinking of "his long life with a Conscience void of Offence."<sup>15)</sup> and "as most devoted Servant of all *Modern Forms*,"<sup>16)</sup> he has a mind to write panegyrics of the world.

As to his living, his poverty is such that he is forced to live in a garret, hunger-troubled.<sup>17)</sup> His pride lies in being witty in the sense that it is "certain common Privileges of a Writer" that any passages too difficult to understand "should be judged to contain something extraordinary either of *Wit* or *Sublime*."<sup>18)</sup> and what seems more important, he is so imaginative that his friends could not but think him to be a mad man.

This author has much contempt on the satirists prevalent in the present world for the following reasons: first, their misapplication of "reproof and correction" to "the *World's Posteriors*" --the most "callous and insensible Member" of the body, and then, the mistaken idea that "because *Nettles* have Prerogative to Sting, therefore all *other Weeds* must do so too."<sup>19)</sup> But he did not depreciate the value of satire as the cheapest way to get the worldly success, because "all the Virtues" to be mentioned in panegyrics are to be counted upon a few Fingers; whereas "Follies and Vices are innumerable; and Time adds hourly to the Heap."<sup>20)</sup> Besides, compliments and praises are apt to draw envy and malice from those who are not complimented, while satire is favourably accepted by the world,

for the reason that it is "levelled at all," and understood to have meant of others, not including the reader.<sup>21)</sup>

These notions of satire are partly in keeping with the author who has a partisan resentment to the arrogant success of the members of the Royal Society and of Will's coffee house, and partly in accordance with those of Swift's, for he has said in the preface of the *Battle* as follows :

Satire is a sort of Glass, wherein Beholders do generally discover everybody's Face but their Own; which is the chief Reason for that kind Reception it meets in the World, and that as very few are offended with it. But if it should happen otherwise, the Danger is not great; and I have learned, from long Experience never to apprehend Mischief from those Understadings, I have been able to provoke; For Anger and Fury, though they add Strength to the Sinews of the Body, yet are found to relax those of the Mind, and to render all its Efforts feeble and impotent.<sup>22)</sup>

Swift was ambitious of literary success, and the assumed author has fierce partisan resentment, especially against Dryden who is well-known to have denied Swift's poetic genius and future,<sup>23)</sup> and L' Estrange. The author complains not only of the "Stale musty Topics without the smallest Tincture of anything New,"<sup>24)</sup> but also the self-centered attitude of prefaces of the more successful brethren, in the dedication to "God-fathers,"<sup>25)</sup> who are desirous for fame and money by praising themselves and depreciating others.<sup>26)</sup> So, the author, being among them, is entitled to set Dryden and others at the target of satire by parodying them without violating the unity of his character which has "neither a talent nor an inclination for satire."<sup>27)</sup>

The special preference to the pulpit made of timber from the *sylva Caledonia*,<sup>28)</sup> and the mention to the prevalence of satire brought by "the first monarch from beyond the Tweed"<sup>29)</sup> are prepared for the introduction of the theory of Aeolism. So many quotations and sometimes misquotations of the ancient authorities make the author appear a man of erudition but also show what kind of knowledge he is likely to pursue. These preferences belonging to the mask come out from Swift's intention of mocking Bentley and Wotton, of whom he has made the theme in the *Battle*. At the same time he intends to illustrate what kind of the ancient writers are worshiped by modern dark authors who are Rosicrucians like Thomas Vaughan. A typical example of their preferences is the mystical significance of the numbers, seven, nine, and three.

These are rather outward features of the author as Swift depicts. The most interesting part in the Introduction is what makes us aware of the inner traits of the hack writer.

The greatest Maim given to that general Reception, which the Writing of our Society has formerly received (next to the transitory State of all sublunary Things), hath been a superficial Vein among many Readers of the present Age, who will by no means be persuaded to inspect beyond the Surface and the Rind of Things; whereas *Wisdom* is a *Fox*, who after long hunting, will at last cost you the Pains to dig out: 'Tis a *Cheese*, which by how much the richer, has the thicker, the homelier, and the coarser Coat; and whereof, to a judicious Palate, the *Maggots* are the best. 'Tis a *Sack-Posset*, wherein the deeper you go, you will find it the sweeter. *Wisdom* is a *Hen*, whose *Cuckling* we must value and consider, because it is attended with an Egg; But then lastly, 'tis a *Nut*, which, unless you choose with Judgement, may cost you a Tooth, and pay you with nothing but a Worm. In consequence of these momentous Truths, the *Grubaeon* Sages have always chosen to convey their Precepts and their Arts, shut up within the Vehicles of Types and Fables, which having been perhaps more careful and curious in adorning, than was altogether necessary, it has fared with these Vehicles, after the usual Fate of Coaches over-finely painted and gilt, that the transitory Gazers have so dazzled their Eyes, and filled their Imaginations with the outward Lusture, as neither to regard or consider the Person or the Parts of the Owner within. A Misfortune we undergo with somewhat less Reluctancy, because it has been common to us with *Pythagoras*, *Aesop*, *Socrates*, and other of our Predecessors.<sup>30)</sup>

From the point of view of the author, the depreciation of his writings by the world is the cause of his resentment against the more successful colleagues. But it is a solace to him that the ill acceptance of the world is not only owing to his poor or faulty talent when he thinks that the famous ancient authors are now undervalued by the world (though this is not true) because of people being too easily lured by the dazzling attractions of the superficial works of the moderns. Yet the transitoriness of popularity and the superficiality of popular understanding are indeed in the relationship where the former is the effect caused by the latter, while the transitoriness of "all sublunary things" may be favourable to the eye of the author, who has a partisan resentment and despises the popularity of other successful writers as well. And moreover, it is Swift's sentiment or at least the sentiment that presides over the "Epistle Dedicatory," to wish all transitory writings of no value to disappear as soon as possible. Here it is clear that Swift's moral sentiment is in keeping with the author's adverse presumption.

The accumulation of metaphors or parables about wisdom may seem, after these considerations, to mean that wisdom or the true worth of the book should be judged with

utmost care. And the necessity of "adorning with the vehicles of types and fables" is not only that of the Grubaeian way but also that of the literal representation whose aim is to teach by entertaining. But what is more important is that the last sentence is an example of very confounding passages, where Swift departs from the author. Aesop is the popular moralist, though not orthodox, and Pythagoras and Socrates, killed by rebellion or ignorance of people, is the ancients whom Neo-Platonists admire. If the author is a materialist, as above considered, the statement is untrue for he is thinking in the manner of humanists who are involved in the intellectual conflicts continuing from the seventeenth century. The fact of Pythagoras, as experimentalist, being included among the ancients of his kind may mean the confusion of the learning of the author. Anyway, these predecessors were not so unpopular in their own times as the author thinks. This trait of his irrational inducement sometimes develops into the entire faulty logic, as seen in the previous accumulation of metaphors : wisdom is compared to a cheese, "whereof to a judicious palate the maggots are the best" or "a nut, which unless you choose with judgement, may cost you a tooth and pay you with nothing but a worm." And this trait becomes later the means by which Swift makes the parody of Bentley in the "Digression Concerning Critics."

He embodies all the bad features of experimentalists, educational reformers and materialists—"modern intellectuals"—and then in a true sense of the word, he is "a Leviathan, who tosses and plays with all schemes of Religion and Government, but whose task assigned by the Grandees of Church and State is nothing but to divert" the troop of his fellows by *A Tale of a Tub*. It is illogical but natural to his inclinations that he expresses himself thus :

My Genius being conceived to lie not unhappily that way, I had the Honour done me to be engaged in the Performance.<sup>31)</sup>

With this image of the author in our mind, Swift's basic intention of the structure of the *Tale* may safely be said to make intricate satire in the manner of a biblical axiom, "And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."

As to the other impersonations of less significance it is not necessary to mention much of them. In the "Apology" the writer defends himself as with the custom, but he is less in keeping with the character of the author, above treated and considered, than with Swift himself. In spite of these words, "I havn been told," or "when he says," etc, the "I" sometimes becomes identified entirely with the presiding Swift.

The Dedicatication to the "Right Honourable John Lord Somers," and "Bookseller to the



Reader" are intended to be taken as composed by the same Bookseller who is ignorant and unintellectual. He might be at the same time the author of the "Epistle Dedicatory to his Royal Highness Prince Posterity." Among these the "Dedication" and the "Epistle" are the most interesting and worth considering, though not in regard to the process of impersonation. However, The "Aopology" induces us far more to pay attention to it, for it gives many clues to understanding Swift's intention, manner and process of the composition of the *Tale*. In short these are all considered as segments of a whole, preparing the reader's mind for the right perusal of "the vehicles of types and fables" of the *Tale*.

#### IV

Next to the impersonations, we notice the main features of the *Tale* which are "A Tale of a Tub" and the allegory of three borthers (a fable of Christian history) and the four digressions on learning. A list of the sections is useful for considering the interrelationship of these two streams of the contents.

- I . The introduction : three edifices in the air, etc.
- II . ..... : the three brothers
- III . A Digression Concerning Critics
- IV . ..... : brother Peter becomes insufferable
- V . A Digression in the Modern Kind
- VI . A Digression : brothers Martin and Jack
- VII . A Digression in Praise of Digressions
- VIII . ..... : the Aeolists and Jack
- IX . A Digression Concerning the Original, the Use and Improvement of Madness in a Commonwealth
- X . A Further Digression
- XI . ..... : a character of Jack
- The Conclusion

Just as the "Preface" begins with a dissertation on the meaning of the title "A Tale of a Tub," so the "Introduction" first describes three oratorical machines ; the pulpit, the ladder, and the stage-itinerant. The manner of introduction is so perplexing and so amusing with images eccentric that the reader feels as if he were in the whirlpool. The three machines are meant to be three types of conveyances of prejudices which disturb the unity of religion and learning ; the pulpit signifying dissenting enthusiasm, the ladder and the stage-itinerant, which are all the contemptible aspects of modern men of letters and politics. It is here, to use the words of Ricardo Quintana, "muffled beneath the brilliant

crazy orchestration that the central double theme of the *Tale* is first announced.<sup>32)</sup> The appearance of the theme is not obvious indeed against the background of an inflated style of other topics, which are sometimes sensational and mechanistic as the frame of mind of the modern is intended to be. No matter which of the machines the orator chooses to mount, both the manner in which he works upon his auditors and the foolish posture of those who listen in fanatic trance are always the same. Whether it is the manifestation of religious enthusiasm or of a false judgement the modern frame of mind falls into, the outward postures are caused by a certain wind or madness within, which prevent the normal function of reason. This explanation is named the "theory of Aeolism." The second half of the "Introduction" has nothing to do with religious problems to be treated in "A Tale of a Tub" but it tells about the Society of Grub Street and their "splendid" productions as well as the portrait of the author.

As it is shown by the table at the beginning of this chapter, the rest of the *Tale* is divided into two groups; sections given to religion and those to learning. The structural triumph of the work lies in the gradual approach of these groups to one another, until at last, in the later sections -VIII and IX- of madness in the commonwealth of empire and learning, they are described as one under the single aspect of universal irrationality.

Herbert Davis supposes that the scheme of the allegory was formed when he was in Kilroot and that Swift wrote in the *Tale* about the actual state then in Ireland.<sup>33)</sup> The "Digressions" were hardly intended at that time. For, it is the ancient-modern controversy that inspired Swift to make a piece of satire on the new tendency of studies of classics. Temple's *Essays on Ancient and Modern Learning* appeared in 1690, and Wotton attacked it in his *Reflections* in 1694, which may have first called Swift's attention to the academic studies in contrast with the formerly accepted appreciation of classics, and thus the possibility of enlarging his satire encouraged him. In 1695, Boyle attacked Bentley and carried the dispute further. In May, 1696, Swift came back to England and began the writing of the *Battle* in 1697 with the view to the assistance of Temple. In the meantime, the controversy was continued between the moderns, Bentley and Wotton, and Temple. A second edition of Wotton's *Reflections* appeared in June 1697, and to this Bentley added an "Appendix" --*Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*,<sup>34)</sup> to answer to Boyle's attack. Bentley depreciated the value of the epistles which Temple had praised. In spite of the latter's hesitation, Dean Atterbury prepared an amusing reply which appeared in March 1698 under the title of *Dr. Bentley's Dissertation...examined by the Honourable Charles Boyle Esq...* In short, so far as the controversy is concerned, the ancient party won over

the modern and the victory made it possible to publish successively three editions of Atterbury's work within a year.

Prof. Davis considers that the success might have aroused Swift's ambition and have formed the design to mix satire of the moderns with the religious allegory. As the result, *A Tale of a Tub*, formerly conceived as a defence of the Church of England, turned into an attack on the disturbing enthusiasm, which was prevalent both in religion and learning, but the whole work was so composed that the original design might be left in harmony with the new scheme. The fanaticism is made to fit for the function of linking the corruptions both in religion and modern learning, because the dissenting corruptions are accelerated by possessors of the same temperament. This is the double theme of the *Tale*, of which every portion of the work is one or another a variation or developing statement.

In the *Gulliver's Travels*, the uniforming device is the sailor and surgeon Lemuel Gulliver, while in the *Tale*, the function of uniting is assigned to the theme, the temperament of the corrupted people. In other words, the unity of interest, which is indispensable not only for Swift as formalist, but also for the consistency of the work as artistic presentation of moral assessment in "types and fables", is thus preserved in a far more complicated manner than in the *Travels*. And if a further inducement be allowed, the author of the *Tale* is no other than the device of cohesion of segmented centrifugal composition just in the same way as Lemuel Gulliver is, since the assumed writer is nothing but the target of satire in so much as the scheme of the work was conceived by Swift.

The fable of three brothers is an allegorical sketch of Christian history and Swift divides it into five pieces with satirical motives in each of them. Out of the five sections, the first four seem to have symptoms that they were composed earliest.<sup>35)</sup>

A father has three sons : Peter, Martin, and Jack ; they are readily identified with the Roman Catholic, the Church of England, and more radical dissenters. To these sons the father bequeaths on his deathbed three coats, which will grow they grow, and will never need alteration. After advising his sons to observe his will for wearing and management of the coats, and to live always in good terms under one roof, the father dies.

In a short time the three sons come up to town and in spite of all their accomplishments they find themselves scorned by ladies they meet because of the simplicity of their coats. For it happens that the town is ruled over by a sect who worships the image of a tailor as their Deity, and taught that the universe is a large suit of clothes and that "Man himself is but a *Micro-Coat*, or rather a compleat Suit of Cloaths with all its Trimmings."<sup>36)</sup> By Peter learned in the doctrines, the faculties of the mind are interpreted this way ;

embroidery is wit; gold fringe, agreeable conversation; gold lace, repartee; a huge long periwig, humour; a coat full of powder, good raillery. Those practices are so universal that those a little out of fashion are abhorred.<sup>37)</sup>

The three brothers manage to be equal to the occasion by forcing a wishful construction of their father's will; "*Shoulder-Knots* were made clearly out to be *Jure Paterno*." With all their contrivances, however, the mode, which quickly changes, makes the scholastic Peter entirely tired of forcing interpretations of the will, and he finally locks it up so that they may alter their coats at pleasure (*ex cathedra*)<sup>38)</sup> in keeping with the fashionable world. The clever Peter usurps the house of certain lord who has received him to teach his children,—i. e., forging a donation from Constantine the Great. At this point (Section IV), Peter begins to assume a superiority over his brothers. He becomes a projector, and virtuoso who invents such things as a remedy for worms and a whispering office—i. e., penance, absolution, the confessional and holy water. Before long he is so arrogant with pride that he can no longer endure his younger brothers and he kicks them out of doors—i. e., the Reformation. But they do not fail to copy the will.

After the open rupture from Peter (Section V), Martin and Jack repent the sins and follies they have committed, consult a true copy of the will, and begin a reformation of their liver by stripping all the false adornments off their coats. Now that they are free from Peter they begin to show their different natures by the ways they go to the work of reducing the coats to the original simplicity. It is Martin who first pulls points and fringes off, but he refrains himself from taking away all adornments since the anger with the false Peter has already abated. On the contrary, Jack goes as far as his fury allows him to, so that he is "honoured with the title of zeal", —i. e., Calvin, Jack of Leyden, The Huguenots, Gnosticism, and John Knox.

In the last two sections (VIII and XI), all is devoted to Jack but Peter scarcely appears, since in the previous sections he has already been exposed in the most ridiculous way, and the satirist's attitude remains "purely intellectual and quite lacking in the emotional savagery which Swift always entertains when truly aroused."<sup>39)</sup>

The section VIII introduces the curious sect of Aeolists, who believe "the Original Cause of all Things to be Wind."<sup>40)</sup> and "the Gift of BELCHING to be the noblest act of a Rational Creature."<sup>41)</sup> The fanatic Jack is depicted, after the introduction of Aeolists' system, origin, and way of teaching, as the only and most important believer in the present time.<sup>42)</sup> Jack being the perfect example of Aeolism and zeal, his actions are meant by Swift to recall those of Puritan dissenters and also to show a very curious resemblance between him and

Peter; to use Swift's own words "the Phrenzy and Spleen of both have the same Foundation."<sup>43)</sup>

From the point of view of analyzing the structure, it is time to consider the innerrelation between the digressions and the allegory. "A Digression concerning Critics" has something to do with the misuse of the scholastic knowledge of Peter. The "true" criticism lies in proving "beyond contradiction that the very finest Things delivered of old, have been long since invented, and brought to Light by much later Pens; and that the noblest Discoveries those ancients ever made, of art or of nature, have all been produced by the transcending Genius of the present Age."<sup>44)</sup> The "true" critic being a "*Discoverer and Collector of Writers' Faults,*" "*their Flesh was not to be eaten, because of its extream Bitterness.*"<sup>45)</sup> On the contrary, what is needed by an author is "*the Mirrors of Learning,*"<sup>46)</sup> for "whoever designs to be a perfect Writer, must inspect into the books of *Criticks*, and correct his inventions there, as in a Mirror,"<sup>47)</sup> and the two principal qualifications of a true modern critic are duration and reflection from his genuine nature—a character embodied in the Spider in the *Battle*.<sup>48)</sup>

"A Digression in the Modern Kind" (Section V) is a Swiftian parody of the criticism which was in current among the moderns. There is obviously the perverted assumption of the modern eminence, but the logic in these statements is quite out of place.

A critic who observes the rule of instruction (utile) and diversion (dulce) makes Homer a writer of complete ignorance of experimental science and other modern inventions. He boasts that while an ancient "genius like Homer is entirely in ignorance," while the moderns have become very wise and full of knowledge by the aid of "secret drug (arcanum)." The moderns despise artistic inventiveness which comes from wide acquaintance with the best that has been written,—a trait of the *Bee* in the *Battle*, and are satisfied to draw their matter from modern Knowledge," a Baconian idea of the laws of nature. So it follows that any literary composition in this age should be simplified. The sole aim, according to the moderns, is to confine "an universal System in a small portable Volume of all Things that are to be Known, or Believed, or Imagined, or Practiced in Life."<sup>49)</sup>

The sections VII and X should be considered along with the section X. But they are not so brilliant as the sections thus far examined, since the inverted logic of the author is not so frequently ridiculed and not so impotent a narrative impulse of the composition is found in it. The section VII "A Digression in Praise of Digression" is assigned to a satire towards the modern kind of learning. What is required to be learned is to gather quotations and set them in alphabetical order, and to consult critics and commentators but scarce-

ly if ever authors and their works. This is called "the *Sieves Boulters* of Learning," but the bathotic effect comes from the fact that they do not know whether they should "value that which *Passed through* or what *staid behind*."<sup>50)</sup>

Fame comes to deceased writers; as the explanation for this, says the author, it is not "the worth of the work but the time and circumstances to decide" whether a man becomes popular or left in oblivion: a repeated notion for which the Grubean writers expect much of the posterity.

'Tis true, indeed, the Republic of *dark* Authors, (i. e. rosicrucians) after they once found out this excellent Expedient of Dying, have been peculiarly happy in the Variety, as well as Extent of their Reputation. For, *Night* being the universal Mother of Things, wise Philosophers hold all Writings to be *fruitful*, in Proportion they are *dark*; And therefore, the *true illuminated* (that is to say, the darkest of all) have met with such numberless commentators, whose *scholastick* Midwifery hath delivered them of meanings, that the Authors themselves, perhaps, never conceived, and yet very justly he allowed the Lawful Parents of them:<sup>51)</sup>

This is one of the manners in which commentators like Wotton is attacked in the section X, and footnotes on the same pages show how these annotations are given which are sometimes erroneous and far more eloquent than is needed.

The most direct connection to the allegory (the satire of Jack) is the section X, "a Digression concerning Madness." It has been pointed out that the muffled double theme unites the stream of digressions with that religious satire. Here *A Tale of a Tub* reaches its climax. This effect is the result both of artistic execution and underlying thought of Swift, which combine to produce a dominant tone at once biting and somber. The theme is the universality of madness, but more interesting and worthy of noticing than this uniforming device of variety of satires we have seen in the previous sections both of religion and digressions, is that the author analyzes madness as psychological obsession, an evil self-imposed by man. Perhaps it is Swift's opinion that owing to it, man enjoys irresistible pleasures of self-deception. All eminent and outstanding achievements in the human activities, religions, academic, or military, are found with an acquisition of madness; it is pure madness that causes revolutions in empire, in philosophy, and in religion.

For, the Brain, in its natural Position and State of Serenity, disposeth its Owner to pass his Life in the common Forms, without any Thought of subduing Multitudes to his own Power, his *Reasons* or his *Visions*; and the more he shapes Understanding by the *Pattern*

of *Human Learning*, the less he is inclined to form Parties after his particular Notions; because that instructs him in his private Infirmities, as well as in the stubborn Ignorance of the People. But when a man's fancy *astride* on his Reason, when imagination is at cuffs with senses, and common Understanding, as well as common Sense, is Kickt out of Doors; the first Proselyte he makes, is Himself, and when that is once compass'd, the Difficulty is not so great in bringing over others; A strong Delusion always operating from *without*, as vigorly as from *within*. For, Cant and Vision are to the Ear and the Eye, the same that Tickling is to the Touch. Those Entertainments and Pleasures are most value in Life, are such as *Dupe* and play the Wag with the Senses. For, if we take an Examination of what is generally understood by *Happiness*, as it has Respect, either to the Understanding or the Senses, we shall find all its Proprties and Adjuncts will herd under this short Definition : That *it is a perpetual possession of being well*  
<sup>52)</sup>  
*Deceived*.

This is followed by the encouragement of imaginative felicity which is more enjoyable than the exposure of man's weakness; romanticism is urged rather than realism. Then come the famous discourse about the credulity of the senses and the curiosity of reason, the didactic argument of which is very persuasive. The conclusion is that "he that can, with Epicurus, content his ideas with the films and images that fly off upon his senses from the superficials of things; such a man, truly wise." Only for philosophy and reason, the remaining distasteful things are presented. But in a sudden turn of logic, the sweet conclusion changes into the most miserable anticlimax of the human state :

This is the sublime and refined Point of Felicity, called, *the obsession of being well*  
<sup>53)</sup>  
*deceived*; The Serene Peaceful State, of being a Fool among knaves.

In the climax of the *Tale* the serene state of mind, which is to be supported by common sense, is described as transitory as any kind of delusion, —i. e. zeal, enthusiasm, fanaticism and madnss, since human mind is apt to be easily lured by any kind of artificial "tickling."

This ever-escaping logic, which makes the reader absolutely uneasy, may seem to belong to the faulty reasoning of the author, but here, though deceiving, the statement is, we believe, more fitted to Swift's mind which is ever inclined to cynicism and scepticism. The "Digression on Madness" reinforced with irrationalities of Aeolism, has now thrown a fatal blow full in the face of human beings. The satire, it seems, cannot go any further and indeed it does stop ascending the flight of stairs of ferocity, and we see at the top of it a shad eof Erasmus smiling.

## Notes

1. Ricardo Quintana : *Swift an Introduction* (Oxford, 1955) pp.61-2.
2. Irvin Ehrenpries : *Swift, Vol.1, Mr Swift and his Contemporaries*, pp.185-6.
3. Herbert Davis, ed. : *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, Vol.1, A Tale of a Tub with Other Early Works 1697-1707*, (Oxford, 1957) p.5.
4. *ibid.* p.3.
5. Ehrenpries : *op. cit.* p.186.
6. Davis : *op. cit.* pp. xxxi-vi.
7. William B. Ewald, Jr. : *The Masks of Jonathan Swift*, (Basil Blackwell, 1954) p.2.
8. *ibid.* p.3.
9. *Swift's Satire and Personal Writings*, ed. Wiliiam Alfred Eddy, (Oxford, 1932) p.20.
10. *Tale* p.29.
11. *ibid.* p.114.
12. *ibid.* p.145.
13. *ibid.* p.42.
14. *ibid.* p.38.
15. *ibid.* p.42.
16. *ibid.* p.27.
17. *ibid.* p.xx.
18. *ibid.* p.28.
19. *ibid.* p.29.
20. *ibid.* p.30.
21. *ibid.* p.31.
22. *ibid.* p.140.
23. *The Works of Samuel Johnson, Vol.12, The Lives of English Poets*, p.6.
24. *Tale*, p.30.
25. *ibid.* p.43.
26. *ibid.*
27. *ibid.* p.32.
28. *ibid.* p.35.
29. *ibid.* p.29.
30. *ibid.* p.40.
31. *ibid.* p.25.
32. Ricardo Quintana : *The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swit*, (Methuen, 1953) p.90.
33. *Tale*, xv-xvi.
34. Phalaris, according to the *Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*, is a tyrant of Acragas in Sicily, in the first half of the 6th c.B.C. He roasted his victims in a brazen bull, which was invented by a Perillus. The Inventor was the first to be put to death in it. R. Bentley proved the forgery of "Epistles" that had been attributed to Phalaris. Bentley's proofs of refutaion are in town names and other proper nouns, which were not in use or founded until long after the time of the tyrant; and he showed that the language of the letter is Attic, not Dorian Greek.
35. Quintana : *op. cit.* p.91.



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36. Emile Pons : Swift : *Les années de jeunesse et le "Conte du tonneau,"* (Strasbourg and London, 1925) quoted by Quintana in the *Mind and Art*, p.91.  
Quintana refutes Pons, saying, "This philosophy of clothes (l' esthetomorphisme) allows of universal appreciation and is a brilliant satire but it remains an impulsive sally in a direction where Swift's main objectives do not lie."
37. *Tale*, p.120~1.
38. *ibid.* p.47.
39. Quintana : *op.cit.* p.93.
40. *Tale*, p.95.
41. *ibid.* p.96.
42. *ibid.* p.101.
43. *ibid.* p.127.
44. *ibid.* p.59.
45. *ibid.* p.60.
46. *ibid.* p.63.
47. *ibid.*
48. *ibid.* p.149. The Spider pictures himself as "a domestic Animal furnisht with a Native Stock within himself," whose "castle is all built with his own hands" of "the marerials extracted altogether out of his own person."
49. *ibid.* p.78.
50. *ibid.* p.93.
51. *ibid.* p.118.
52. *ibid.* p.108.
53. *ibid.* p.110.