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From Eternal to Personal World Order: An Analysis of Milton, Swift, and Twain

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From Eternal to Personal World Order:
An Analysis of Milton, Swift, and Twain

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of English
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by
Marian O'Brien Paul
August 1979

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University
of Nebraska at Omaha.

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27 July 1979
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My eternal and personal thanks

to

Polly Kalliman Nimmer

whose generous gift of typing

helped to make this possible.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The particular mental concept through which an author views the universe which surrounds him and with which he must interact will, by extension, influence the way his literary characters relate themselves to the world in which he places them. It is of value to analyze the nature of that influence. If the author's vision of reality is consistent with that of the immediately accepted world viewpoint, he will probably embrace that concept in his writings. Another author who is aware of changes in the popular mode of viewing the universe may reflect these in what he writes, and the nuances of that reflection may presage the direction of future alterations in the original concept while a writer who is discontent with the particular spectacles his upbringing has provided him for world-viewing may reveal the evolution of his conflict, perhaps its eventual resolution, in the body of his writing. A comparison of the writings of John Milton (seventeenth century), Jonathan Swift (eighteenth century), and Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as Mark Twain, (nineteenth century) should demonstrate these ideas.

The span of centuries which separate these authors lends itself to an examination of the demise of one previously very important theory used to aid human comprehension of the rela-

tionship between man and the rest of the universe and to explain the existence of flaws in the nature of all created being. This particular world view, still current when Milton was writing, was later known as the Great Chain of Being, and its positive influence is easily detectable in Paradise Lost. Swift's Gulliver's Travels in the next century reflects changes in attitude toward that concept occasioned by scientific discoveries; thus, these two authors seem logically related in terms of this particular concept. The question then arises of how Twain's work is related to that of the other two authors since by the nineteenth century the "chain" concept was no longer a prevalent world view.

Certainly, one does not detect in Twain's work the presence of a popular viewpoint to which he subscribes. On the contrary, his rejection of an imposed Calvinistic view and the obvious development of his own personal one seem in direct contrast to any statement that might be made about the other two authors in relation to perception of man and the universe. In fact, Twain is representative of the antithesis in philosophical thought effected by the advent of modern technology. The world order presented him by Calvinistic Puritanism did not adequately account for discrepancies in the universe; indeed, it even labeled as evil, actions with which Twain could find no fault. His writing demonstrates the human need for some sufficient manner of ordering the universe

--of accounting for its evils. Thus, his relationship to Milton and to Swift is that of an example of what occurs in the mind of man when he is bereft of confidence in the meaning of existence in contrast to man when he is secure in a concept such as the Chain of Being. Therefore, the historical sequence apparent in the selection of these authors from three different centuries serves to delineate the movement from an explicit world order, the Chain of Being theory, to an implicit one, sans formula, illustrated by the development in Twain.

The human need to comprehend the whole of the universe is not a new one for those men who believe in the existence of an all-good, caring Being. A man, in this category, with his toehold in all the niches of being, could never be content solely to exercise those qualities characteristic of matter; his share in the spiritual realm, manifested by the exercise of his intellect, consistently preoccupies him. Because the nature of his intellect includes the desire to possess knowledge, this man finds himself inextricably involved in the quandary resulting from the presence of deficiencies, flaws, or evil existing in the universe. The consideration of these facts generated many attempts to formulate an hypothesis which would resolve said quandary. The Chain of Being was one of the most effective formulas in satisfying the need for that resolution. This effectiveness contributed to the theory's

lengthy survival and in turn to its permeation of literature traceable through numerous centuries. As a literary device, it was extremely useful, a familiar touchstone which would evoke predictable responses from the reader. Eventually, however, the personal as well as practical efficacy of the "chain" theory began to wane, per scientific advances. Unfortunately, science, because of its emphasis on empirical knowledge, did not adequately fill the void left behind. Deficiencies, evil, remained. Man, on his own as an individual, was left to struggle forlornly with the same old problems; representative of that struggle are the writings of Mark Twain.

Before proceeding with the analysis, some explanation of the "chain" theory seems relevant. This paper is not intended to be an influence study; nevertheless, it would be helpful to understand something of the thought which preceded that of the writers being analyzed in order to appreciate how any changes in that thought might be reflected in their writings. Arthur O. Lovejoy describes the inception of the Chain of Being theory, stating that the Greek philosopher Plato, either drawing on the ideas of earlier thinkers or conceiving the thoughts himself, first expressed the principle of plenitude: "If any eternal essences have temporal counterparts, the presumption was that all do so, that it is of the nature of an Idea to manifest itself in concrete existences."¹ Plato conceives his idea of the universe from the broadest perspective possible to him, feeling

that all the parts of the universe, even the most minute and ridiculous or disgusting, are in fact only pieces of the whole. Plato implies that "The entire realm of essence . . . lacked what was indispensable to its meaning and worth so long as it lacked embodiment."² Thus it was necessary for the original Idea to generate diversity in order to fulfill itself; this idea, then, explains the need for the deficiencies, the evils as well, since they belong as only a part of the greater scheme; thus their flawed natures appear so because the human intellect has difficulty perceiving on the grander scale.

Joined to the idea of plenitude was the thought of Plato's pupil Aristotle. Aristotle's God is self-sufficient, does not generate anything, is "the cause of all motion" and thus "of all the activity of imperfect being; but it [the Unmoved Perfection--God] is their final cause only."³ Nevertheless, the Aristotelian concept of continuity eventually was "to fuse with the Platonistic doctrine of the necessary 'fullness' of the world, and to be regarded as logically implied by it."⁴ Lovejoy quotes Aristotle's definition of this continuity: "Things are said to be continuous whenever there is one and the same limit of both wherein they overlap and which they possess in common."⁵ This idea of continuity is inferable from Plato's concept of plenitude. Aristotelian thought included the possibility of "zoological and psychological hierarchies" plus the idea of "an ontological scale":

only God is perfect; all else "has in it some measure of 'privation.'"⁶

From the combination of these thoughts evolved the vision of order in the world which was to dominate the thinking of "most educated men" until as late as the eighteenth century and which was known as the "Great Chain of Being": a chain that was "composed of an immense, or . . . of an infinite, number of links ranging in hierarchical order from the meagerest kind of existents, which barely escape nonexistence, through 'every possible' grade up to the ens perfectissimum"⁷ The influence of this body of thought proceeded down through centuries, appearing first "as fully organized into a coherent general scheme of things" in the third century movement of Neoplatonism wherein Plotinus echoes Plato's vision of plenitude.⁸ Invested with Christianity, the theory was transmitted through Boethius and Augustine in the fifth century to medieval Christianity.

Milton's concept of world order was the result of this body of thought. But Swift and Twain do not operate from the same perspective; therefore, it is necessary to find some framework in the context of which to examine the work of all three, a framework which will unify the analysis itself. Because some of the hierarchical aspects of the Boethian modes of perception seem to inter-relate with those of the "chain" theory, they will

be used in the analysis. But the interpretation of the works being analyzed is neither intended to be strictly a Boethian one, nor is it strictly based on the Chain of Being concept.

According to Richard Green in the introduction of his translation of The Consolation, Boethius was struggling with the age-old human feeling of victimization by powers stronger than man: Boethius, like Augustine, affirmed that God's foreknowledge of all that occurs co-exists with man's free will; he resolves the apparent inconsistency in these two assertions by distinguishing "between human and divine knowledge [a distinction]" which was to be authoritative for centuries to come."⁹ The levels of perception which Boethius explains relate in hierarchy to levels on the Chain of Being, beginning with certain sensate beings which do not possess mobility and ranging to the mode of knowledge intrinsic to divinity. He makes clear that perception through lower avenues, though accurate in itself, is limited; therefore, the more avenues, or levels, that are implemented, the greater the capacity to perceive.

Boethius then lists the ways through which something can be comprehended: "the senses, the imagination, the reason, and the intelligence."¹⁰ On the lowest rung of this ladder are the senses which type of perception is common to all perceiving beings above plant life. Shellfish which do not have locomotion perceive in this manner, but so do higher beings--a horse, a man, God. However, a shellfish cannot perceive through the imagination. Per-

ception here requires the ability to mentally visualize an image of form without direct sense perception. All mobile beings can do this, and the function includes dreams, memory, and instinct. Man and God can perceive in this manner as well as animals. Yet, just as the shellfish can sense but not imagine, the creature that has power of locomotion--the horse, for example--can imagine but not reason. "Reason . . . investigates by universal consideration the species itself which is in particular things."¹¹ Of material creatures, only man can reason.

Perception of pure form entails perception of the ideal as opposed to the real; thus, God can understand what man cannot, through the intelligence. Boethius explains this: "The intelligence knows the objects of the lower kinds of knowledge: the universals of reason, the figures of the imagination, or senses. With a single glance of the mind it formally, as it were, sees all things."¹² Thus, each step denotes not only a higher form of perception but can encompass the lower ones.

The thought expressed by this paper concerning reason is that man becomes accountable for his actions by virtue of his ability to reason; therefore, he needs to understand the limitations of his other perceptual powers and the nature of the control reason exercises over them. All men upon birth begin to experience the world through the senses. Imagination, too, is operative early in a man's life: the baby soon remembers the sound and feel of voice and hands that bring him comfort. The

small child's dreams can frighten or please him. But a few years must pass before the age of reason is conceded to have been reached. First, the child becomes familiar with his lower perceptual modes. Nevertheless, once reason is activated, careful development should ensue to ensure its responsible operation-- thus the years spent by parents, churches, schools in shaping young minds. It is this whole process of development or maturation that is to be explored in this paper in relation to Adam and Eve in Paradise Lost, Gulliver in Gulliver's Travels, and Twain in several of his works.

Boethius was trying "to justify the ways of God to men," according to Green.¹³ Just so was Milton attempting justification. Milton disagrees with the Platonic conception of necessity for essence to be embodied (p. 5 above), implying "that there appeared to be in the nature of things not only no reason why any world of imperfect creatures should exist, but every reason why it should not exist. . . ." ¹⁴ Because he takes issue with this concept, he, too, finds it necessary to justify God's ways to men. Nevertheless, C. S. Lewis has made the declaration that Paradise Lost "is not the writing of a man who embraces the Hierarchical principle with reluctance, but rather of a man enchanted by it."¹⁵ The ascending levels proffer a way back to God just as surely as they descend in degree of excellence. Milton ventures to explain why Adam and Eve, plainly innocent of evil at the moments of their creations, are pitted against

Satan, the supreme symbol of evil. As Boethius did, Milton demonstrates that God has higher purposes which man can not perceive and these purposes transmute the apparent evil.

Swift's Lemuel Gulliver of Gulliver's Travels advances through the Boethian modes of perception on his way to his incongruent conclusion involving his fixation on rationality in a horse. This piece illustrates the arrested development of perception in man which occurs when he focuses too narrowly on one aspect of being.

The analysis of Twain's work, however, will not be confined to only one piece because it is the feeling expressed in this paper that the perceptual maturation which is more interesting is the reflected one of Twain himself, discernible in the way his ideas evolve through the course of several works. For this reason, certain pieces will be singled out and analyzed in the light of one or another particular mode of perception, but the intent is not to imply that only one mode is working in a given work, merely that the work being examined seems rather the best example of that particular perceptual mode. For instance, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn seems to best exemplify sensory perception. This is not to say that imagination and reason do not occur in the work. In like manner, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court can be interpreted in the light of imagination, but this does not preclude some other interpretation, nor does it mean to imply that the protagonist perceives only imagina-

tively. Similar reservations are true for each of the other Twainian works which will be examined.

The concept of determinism with which Twain struggles in the form of pre-destination (negation of free will) is an "implication . . . not fully drawn out by Plato; but . . . it is immanent in the Timaeus" according to Lovejoy, and thus was a continuing problem for humanity.¹⁶ Twain's conclusion, strongly expressed in The Mysterious Stranger, that all things are not created by God for man nor that God is even concerned about man echos Liebnez whom Lovejoy quotes on this subject: "'we find in the world things that are not pleasing to us' since 'we know that it was not made for us alone.'"¹⁷ Man is not the center of the universe, even though the thought that he was continued as late as the eighteenth century. In The Mysterious Stranger, Twain certainly faces this unhappy fact.

Keeping in mind then that man, as identified above, apparently needs some formula to aid him in reconciling the discrepancies he encounters in his daily existence with his instinctive recognition that evidence of good in the world implies some original perfection, this examination will proceed. Hopefully, it will demonstrate that loss of perspective from the broader spectrum results in anxiety and the need to critically examine more focused viewpoints, revealing their inadequacies. Evil exists. So does good exist. If man does not possess some adequate means of resolving this paradox, he will develop one.

When he loses a time-proven one such as the Chain of Being, he will develop another; and if he is utilizing the totality of perceptive modes available to him, he will not be satisfied with an inconsistent means of world-ordering but will reject it and evolve a personal one, depending on the scope of his individual vision, so as to resolve those inconsistencies. As a result, this paper should demonstrate the move from eternal world order to remnants of that order visible in a process of "becoming."

Endnotes

¹ Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (1936; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 52.

² Lovejoy, p. 53.

³ Lovejoy, p. 55.

⁴ Lovejoy, p. 55.

⁵ Lovejoy, p. 55.

⁶ Lovejoy, p. 59.

⁷ Lovejoy, p. 59.

⁸ Lovejoy, p. 61.

⁹ Richard Green, translator, The Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Company, Inc., 1962), pp. xvii-xix.

¹⁰ Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, Richard Green, translator, pp. 110-111.

¹¹ Boethius, p. 111.

¹² Boethius, p. 111.

¹³ Green, p. xviii.

¹⁴ Lovejoy, pp. 160-161.

15 C. S. Lewis, A Preface to Paradise Lost (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 80.

16 Lovejoy, p. 54.

17 Lovejoy, p. 188.

Chapter II:

An Analysis of Man in Paradise Lost

In Paradise Lost, John Milton proposes to "justify the ways of God to men."¹ Despite Adam's and Eve's limited comprehension of what constitutes evil, an apparently disparate burden of guilt was levied against them for succumbing to evil. They are cast into existence by no request of their own, pampered, tempted by a being higher than themselves, and punished for not having recognized and resisted iniquity. The occasion of their sin is Satan, the fallen archangel whose own transgression against God predates theirs. Because he is a superior being, Satan's dupery easily confounds Adam and Eve in their innocence. Thus, "evil" does not originate with them, only human sin. Nevertheless, if one accepts that God is perfect, one must also accept the validity of His judgement against Adam and Eve. The issue, then, is to discover why Adam and Eve were held culpable--to discern at which point circumstance ended and their responsibility began.

Perhaps, initially, it would be wise to distinguish between flaws or deficiencies and evil. To be flawed or deficient simply means not to be perfect and is a characteristic of all created being since that which creates must be superior

to that which is created by it. Thus, the angelic host, including both constant and inconstant members, is imperfect; and so is man as well as all other pieces of the material universe. It appears that such imperfection was the intent of God and is, therefore, good. St. Augustine states this concept as follows: ". . . the things created, being different from God were inferior to Him, and yet were good, being created by none other than He"; and Augustine quotes Genesis, "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good" (i, 31), noting the numerous reiterations of this idea in relation to the work of creation.² To be imperfect, then, is not to be evil. Yet, evil and deficiency are related: when a deficient or flawed nature is falsely accorded the status reserved for perfection, evil occurs. Speaking of the angelic fall, Augustine said that the cause of their "misery will be found . . . in their not adhering to God," in "being enamoured rather of their own power, as if they could be their own good."³ The same misfocus by man results in similar misery.

Now incorrectly according "status," or misfocusing, requires that one first possess the capability of correctly perceiving the difference between good and evil as well as the power of will for choosing on which quality to focus. At this point enters the relevancy of the Chain of Being concept

and the hierarchically related levels of perception. According to C. S. Lewis, Milton wholeheartedly subscribes to the "chain" theory (see Introduction, p. 9). He sees man in terms of the descending hierarchy, one step below the angels in being. He recognizes that man cannot see through the eyes of God because the nature of a created being is to be less than its creator. Thus, Adam and Eve enter existence deficient in being. But they are not just created and abandoned. God provides them with the necessary tools for distinguishing between good and evil--sense, imagination, and reason--and specifically prohibits their eating the forbidden fruit. Their initial awakenings into the perceptual levels are described in Paradise Lost, and through the development of these modes, they should obtain sufficient information to encourage them to heed God's prescription and to choose good over evil. In the opinion of this author, what determines their guilt in the eventual fall, then, is failure of reason to effectively control the lower perceptions.

As mentioned earlier, evil already existed in the created universe when Adam and Eve made their debuts: Satan had defied Omnipotence, disputing the need "to bend/The supple knee" (V, 787-788) to the newly generated Son of God, Pride in his own position, ". . . being ordain'd to govern, not to serve" (V, 802), produced his decision to rebel against God. Satan had abused his own gifts of perception, questioning the command

uttered by the One who had given him the powers to receive communication, to intellectualize, and to question. Cast into Hell, Satan resolved to revenge himself on God's newest creature, man, ". . . to assay/If him [man] by force he can destroy, or worse . . ." (III, 90-91). Precariously, man enters being, ignorant of the characteristics of evil, unaware of the intense hatred directed at him by the Prince of demons, and unpracticed in the modes of perception. Yet, despite all the odds against him, man did enjoy a privilege which the individual members of the human race have sought to regain ever since: direct contact with the Creator, with All-Good. Granted, that contact was arbitrary, dependent upon the grace of the Creator for its occurrence. Man could request an audience, but it was God's prerogative to comply or not.

Nevertheless, prelapsarian moments of encounter with divinity do occur in Paradise Lost and require no intermediary: "One came, methought, of shape Divine,/And said, thy Mansion wants thee, Adam, rise" (VIII, 295-296). Then taking Adam by the hand, no less, the Creator serves as Adam's guide to Eden. Through the flesh of Adam's hand, mankind felt the warm touch of divinity. Adam and Eve, however, fail to appreciate that privilege and, as is man's wont to do, covet more than just the touch, the sound, and the filtered sight of the

Almighty. It is not that they are unaware of inferiority in themselves but that they view their position from the specific angle of superiority over all other material being. When petitioning for a suitable companion, Adam focuses on that superiority as well as on the exalted rank of divine "substitute" with which God has invested him, placing all creatures under his care: "Hast thou not made me here thy substitute/And these inferior far beneath me set?" (VIII, 381-382) asks Adam, a focus not unlike Satan's in substance. That his position was a boon and not an innate right were facts Adam did not adequately realize, and it was this failing which disposed Adam and Eve to fall.

To understand the human fall, one should know something about Satan, its agent. Milton describes a colossal, Satanic figure so magnificent as to attract human admiration. He exposes pathos in the Satanic dilemma when Satan wavers, temporarily suffers self-doubt and misery, but finally despairs: ". . . horror and doubt distract/His troubl'd thoughts, and from the bottom stir/The Hell within him . . ." (IV, 18-20); ". . . Now conscience wakes despair/That slumber'd, wakes/Worse . . ." (IV, 23-26). Satan argues with himself and admits that his own ". . . will/Chose freely what it now so justly rues" (IV, 71-72). But he rejects the idea of repent-

ance saying, "Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame /loss of face with his fellow demons/ . . ." (IV, 82). He feels that "never can true reconcilment grow/Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep . . ." (IV, 98-99). Thus, he condemns himself; bids farewell to hope, fear, and remorse, and declares, ". . . all Good to me is lost;/Evil be thou my Good . . ." (IV, 109-110). Confirmed in evil, he resumes his journey to ensnare mankind, that "secondarily" created material being whose existence threatens to usurp Satan's former position in heaven.

Adam, meanwhile, newly-born and yet adult, is being inundated with the data of the senses. Unaware that the future of mankind rests on the full development and adept exercise of the perceptual gifts to which he is now being introduced, Adam, the first human ever to do so, experiences what Colin Wilson calls "the extraordinary power we possess in being able to focus upon particular aspects of reality."⁴ The senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing, and sight compose the totality of this consciousness, and through them Adam initially perceives the world around him. "Heav'n" fills his eyes and induces a response from his deeper, spiritual being, an "instinctive" physical response translated as a leap of his material limbs toward the sky (VIII, 257-260). The

physical movement corresponds to the later human aspiration to divine insight which will culminate in the fall.

Once on his feet, Adam is distracted by a barrage of material beauty: "Hill, Dale, and shady Woods, and sunny Plains" are seen; living creatures move; "liquid Lapse of murmuring streams" and warbling birds are heard; the fragrance of "all things" pervades the air; and, finally, a feeling of "lively vigor" surges through the matter of his own body (VIII, 255-269). Yet, this first glimpse of the world is pale in contrast to Eden. Holding God's hand, Adam arrives to find a beauty that exceeds what he has so far experienced. Here, the sense of taste is tempted by the trees laden with delicious fruits. Here, Adam is given the charge of caring for and enjoying the garden. Here, he is given the command to "shun" the fruit borne on the "Tree whose operation brings/Knowledge of good and ill . . ." (VIII, 323-327). God has carefully clarified what things are Adam's and what are not. The one restriction seems minimal in contrast to the bounty spread before Adam, and that bounty seems nothing in comparison with the material object which succeeds in totally filling his senses--the one he presumes to request of God: a consort. Formed with incredible beauty, Eve's physical being attests to the wonder of sense perception. In fact, so powerful is Adam's sense of her beauty that her disappearance from

his sight immediately after her inception causes him to say that she "left me dark" (VIII, 478). Overpowered by the excess of the stimulus, his sensory perception is hampered.

God had considered Adam's plea for companionship and had tested him by suggesting that the other creatures might suffice or that Adam should emulate divine solitude. Adam's rebuttals to both suggestions pleased God: "Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd,/And find thee knowing not of Beasts alone,/ . . . but of thyself," noting that Adam has expressed the attribute of free will which marks him in God's image (VIII, 437-441). Because Adam had passed this minor test of his understanding, God happily rewarded him by creating Eve "exactly to . . . [Adam's] heart's desire" (VIII, 451). At this point, Adam is best practiced in sense perception which may explain the excess in "Ornament, in outward show" (VIII, 538) visible in Eve and apparently indicative of Adam's "heart's desire." The fact that his power of sight is negated when bereft of Eve as its stimulus--as well as Adam's own words, ". . . here passion, first I felt,/ . . . here only weak/Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance" (VIII, 530-533)--are a warning of the human imperfection, the human frailty to which man is subject and which will later lead to his fall. But so engrossed is Adam in Eve that he misses the

significance of this fact. He fails to take into account that Eve is more than flesh of his flesh; she is the mirror of his own desire, and that desire apparently is dangerous because it robs him of strength.

Eve's version of her primal experiences are also replete with the data of the senses. Rather than sight, however, which so impressed Adam at his beginning, sound exerts the strongest influence on Eve's senses: ". . . a murmuring sound/Of waters issued from a cave" (IV, 453-454). Sound lures her toward a narcissistic contemplation of her own image in a placid lake and will significantly figure in the future in her temptation by the devil. Her second sensation, sight, is strong enough to enthrall her on the bank of the lake where she afterward states that she would have "fixt/. . . [her] eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,/Had not a voice . . . warned [her] . . ." (IV, 465-467). She is released by the word of God from her mistaken "worship" of an image not only lesser than God but also lesser than her own self. She, too, has directly experienced Divine intervention, in this instance to aid her in attaining a balanced sense perception. Surely, she has been warned to question appearances and not to accept just the face value of what she perceives.

Adam and Eve spend their days in caring for the vegetative species of physical being which proliferates despite their

"lopping" and "scant manuring" (IV, 628-629). Indeed, so lush, so profuse is the vegetative growth in Eden that Adam and Eve seem in danger of being overcome by the sheer physical expansion of the plants. Because they are the caretakers of this portion of God's material creation, they must persistently focus on sense data, which persistence may tend to distort their perception. But both have received personal warnings from God, grace which was intended to strengthen them because, being omniscient, God knows their weaknesses and, being perfect, He will extend sufficient grace to help them in their need. The requisite here is only that they accept and use the grace. They, being free, may refuse the grace.

But sense, the lowest of the perceptive modes available to man, is not the only area he needs to learn to control with his reason. Both Adam and Eve have already experienced level two, imagination. As explained earlier in the introduction, this mode of perception includes dreams, memory, and instinct. Adam apparently perceives in such a manner almost immediately after his creation when he springs heavenward from the "flow'ry" bed in which he first discovers his being (VIII, 257-260). Although his sense of sight sees the sky, his instinct may be seeing something more attractive, resulting in the physical reaction of jumping to his feet. This initial impulse subsides and,

after some child-like romping around the vestibule of Eden thinking it glorious enough to be the inner sanctum and exhausting himself by trying to absorb the totality of individual sense stimulations, Adam falls into a "gentle sleep," his senses "drowsed," and the thought occurs that he "is passing back" to his "former state/Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve"; however, that thought does not seem to frighten him; rather, he is comfortable with the possibility (VIII, 286-291).

Indeed, he should be comfortable since in dreams, Adam is privy to divine audience and favor: he meets God in a dream--standing at Adam's "Head" appears "a dream," a "shape Divine" (VIII, 292-295); and he witnesses Eve's creation in a dream--his "earthly by . . . [God's] Heav'nly overpovr'd" (VIII, 453), during which dream God leaves "the cell/Of Fancy," Adam's "internal sight" open (VIII, 460-461). Dreams often prepare the dreamer for some event in the conscious world. When God transported Adam to Eden in a dream, the vision of luscious fruits arouses his physical hunger, a sensation which evaporates the dream to reveal the real world, laden with the very fruits Adam had dreamt of. The dream introduces Adam to the power of God who can not only induce the dream but can create the reality. Thus, when God places a prohibition on the harvest of a single tree, Adam does not

question the restriction; the dream has verified God's authority.

Eve's experience with God is a different one. She doesn't see Him in a dream, but instead, she is startled by His voice out of the trance-like day-dream which had been induced by her own image reflected in the lake water. Her imaginative perception is deficient because, newly created, she has no prior sense memory with which to compare the beauty of this image. In like manner, she exercises no "instinctive" leap heavenward. On the contrary, she immediately runs off into her surroundings, attracted by her sense perceptions. Where Adam first sought knowledge, she first seeks beauty. Even her contact with God is more nebulous since God took Adam by the hand but only leads Eve by His voice, "invisibly" (IV, 475). Of course, it would be well to remember that Eve was created to Adam's specifications who lacks imaginative practice, his attention being drawn constantly to the multiety of sense stimuli which surround him, and this may have contributed to the lack of imaginative perception in Eve. Not being foremost in Adam's mind, expertise in imagination may not have entered into his "desires" for Eve.

This deficiency may be what makes Eve's Satan-inspired dream loom all the more unique in the repertoire of her exper-

ience. It is significant that Satan approached her through the same faculty initially chosen by God as the avenue of his contact with her--hearing, next to sight, the closest to the intellect. Plainly, Satan can mimic God, making implementation of all human capacity to distinguish between them all the more important. So Satan is discovered, mimicking, but the shape he assumes signals his identity:

. . . there they found [/Satan/
 Squat like a Toad, close at the ear of Eve;
 Assaying by his Devilish art to reach
 The Organs of her Fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, Phantasms and Dreams.

(IV, 799-803)

There are similarities between Adam's first dream and hers: an ethereal being suggests the dreamer arise, "Close at mine ear [/Eve's/ one call'd me forth to walk . . ." (V, 36). As Adam had, she, too, experiences a strong physical sensation of hunger, ". . . the pleasant savory smell [/of forbidden fruit/So quick'n'd appetite, that I, methought,/Could not but taste" (V, 84-86). But there are important differences: Adam felt wonder in the presence of God while Eve feels "damp horror" (V, 65) at the audacity of the winged apparition who dares to pluck and taste the prohibited fruit. The sensation of hunger

had awakened Adam from a dream of bounty to its reality, but Eve's hunger does not awaken her; instead, it results in her own incredible, imaginary tasting of the fruit. No real gifts or favors accrue from her dream as they had from Adam's. Her desires are not sated as were Adam's (by God's creation of Eve); instead, arousal of anxiety, fear, and unrest are the effects of her dream. This dream does not proceed from God.

The most significant data to select from this comparison is the singular "horror" that chills Eve during the dream and the turbulent emotional aftermath produced by it. Certainly, these qualify as instinctive reactions, her first, and the dread they inspire can only be a warning. Even so, lured on by sight and sound, Eve will soon ignore the warning.

But the perceptive mode that should have prevented human transgression was the highest perception possible for man, reason. Like a newborn stretching its ungainly limbs, Adam has already manifested his propensity to reason. Satan, himself, had eavesdropped on Adam's monologue in which he activated his rational capacity in an attempt to comprehend the nature of his Creator by analyzing the goodness that must have motivated His creativity (IV, 412-439). Within that speech, which was directed to Eve, he reasons that the charge to abstain from the fruit of one tree was an "easy" one (IV, 421). Now, when Eve seeks security and reassurance from him, Adam con-

soles her by absolving her of willful collaboration with the phantasm in her dream, saying

. . . But know that in the Soul
 Are many lesser Faculties that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful Senses represent,
 She forms Imaginations, Aery shapes,
 Which Reason joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private Cell when Nature rests.

(V, 100-109)

In this response of Adam to Eve's dream, Milton is essentially agreeing with the Boethian tenet that reason should rule the other modes of perception, i.e. "Reason as chief." As stated earlier in this paper, Milton is representative of those persons who accepted the concept of eternal world order, among the proponents of which theory was Boethius. Milton's declaration concerning reason, then, supports the stated view of this paper that he accepts eternal order. In addition, the fact that Milton includes in Adam's speech a reference to "Fancy," a

faculty not included in the Boethian scheme, lends credence to the point also being made in this paper concerning the gradual change in world viewpoint from eternal to personal ordering. Where Boethius simply refers to "imagination" as a category including dreams, memory, and instinct, all of which occur in the mind as mental images, Milton distinguishes a faculty for generating all of these images. Even though Milton represents a relative adherence to the eternal order concept, his distinction between the image and that which generates it is an instance of the changes being explored in this paper.

Adam continues speaking to Eve, noting that when Reason sleeps, Fancy mimics her. In this way, Adam labels the dream false. He says he fears it was "of evil sprung" (V, 98). Nevertheless, he feels the evil cannot have been her fault since, "created pure," she couldn't "harbor" evil (V, 99-100). The invalid syllogism posited by Satan in Eve's dream had mimicked a logical one. Satan's argument itself was based on a tenet of the Chain of Being: ". . . why not [make] Gods of Men, since good, the more/Communicated, more abundant grows,/The author not impair'd, but honor'd more?" (V, 71-73). This apparently logical inference may have been aimed at Eve's lack of skill with reason, and Adam's reasoned absolution probably tended to lower her resistance in the later encounter with the tempter.

Perhaps Adam's and Eve's obvious unfamiliarity with the perceptual modes ought to excuse the grave sin they are about to commit; but God has given them even more than their natural access to the modes of perception to aid them in adhering to His command. He has given them grace: "Habitual or sanctifying grace is frequently called by St. Thomas [Aquinas] 'the grace of the virtues and the gifts.'"⁵ It is through this grace that man approaches most closely to union with God. In Paradise Lost, God personally extends grace to both Adam and Eve in the forms of gifts--the garden, each other; divine communication--conversations, the prohibition; and warnings such as the one carried by Raphael.

Raphael, messenger from God, visits them shortly after Eve's dream and affirms the ascending nature of being (V, 483-490). Adam replies, "In contemplation of created things/By steps we may ascend to God" (V, 512-513). Next, the angelic emissary clarifies the magnitude of human potential if Adam and Eve but persevere in fortitude saying, "Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit/Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd/Ethereal, as wee" (V, 497-499). He adds to this explicit requirement of time passage a reminder of God's prerequisite, in any case, for such advancement: "If ye be found obedient, and retain/Unalterably firm his love entire/Whose progeny you are," presumably, that transition will occur (V, 501-503). The conversation between Raphael and Adam illustrates the influence of the "chain" concept on Milton.

During his visit, Raphael listens to a multitude of praise heaped on Eve by Adam among which was the statement that "Authority and reason on her wait" (VIII, 554). Revealing his concern by a "contracted brow," the archangel gives Adam advice which includes an evaluation of true love as it should exist in a rational being. Evaluating Adam's duty on the level of reason, Raphael advised him that "In loving thou dost well, in passion not,/Wherein true Love consists not; Love refines/The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat/In Reason . . ." (VIII, 588-591).

In spite of this advice, when Eve on the day after the dream suggests a separation as a possible solution to the proliferating garden chores, Adam, although uncomfortable with the idea, finally allows her to reason him into compliance. Because she means so much to him, he lets invalid reasoning sway him even though he admirably refutes all arguments she offers; that he mistrusts her, that virtue would necessarily be vindicated if tested, and that God wouldn't leave them so imperfect as to succumb to their enemy. Even so, he volunteers the statement that for man, "within himself/The danger lies" (IX, 348-349). So saying he abdicates the responsibility of restraining her, and he justifies his letting her go by telling her, "thy stay, not free, absents thee more" (IX, 372). Although he had reasoned correctly and she not, his intense desire that all be well between them goads him into accepting her proposed arrangement.

Having given ground here, Adam will soon find himself in a worse situation when Eve returns from her adventure, forbidden fruit in hand.

Eve soon meets the real tempter foreshadowed by her dream and accepts his acts implying worship of her, his head-bowing and ground-licking, as reasonable responses to her own beauty and perfection. In doing so, Eve unwittingly accepts recognition due only to God. This flattery predisposes her to consideration of the serpent's leading question: ". . . will God incense his ire/For such a petty trespass [tasting the fruit], and not praise/Rather your dauntless virtue . . . ?" (IX, 692-694). He slyly imputes that God's restriction on the prohibited fruit is selfish since it had raised him (the serpent) from the level of brute capabilities to those of a human and thus could raise a human to the level of God's intelligence. Of course, the first premise is false, the opposite being the truth: not that a snake had risen on the Chain of Being but that Satan, embruting himself, had descended that scale.

Eve ignores all the information she has so far gathered by one or another of the perceptive modes. This body of data, if controlled by reason, should have sufficed to secure her from Satan's illogical reasoning. But she forgets the instinctive dread she suffered in her dream now that she is confronted with the real tempter. She has willfully separated herself from Adam's moral support despite her obvious reliance on him for

guidance, reassurance, and consolation. She has even brushed aside the supernatural grace sent by God via Raphael and intended to strengthen her in her hour of temptation. It cannot be denied that she has access to all natural as well as supernatural modes to withstand Satan's evil urging; therefore, it can only be through her own recklessness that she casts them aside.

She begins to yield to the temptation she had sworn to resist, and she begins to abuse her own reason by rationalizing that the solution to her dilemma lies precisely in the knowledge of good and evil, the key to which she has been denied by God's interdict and with which she is now presented by the serpent: "Here grows the cure of all . . ." (IX, 776). Thus, she rejects the natural ascendancy of the perceptual modes and opts for gratification of the lowest as a means to the highest:

Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
 Regarded, such delight till then, as seem'd,
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true
 Or fancied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge, nor was God-head from her thought.

(IX, 786-790)

The immediate clue to the fact that she really has not attained God-head, of which intelligence is an attribute, is

manifested in her subsequently voiced intention to devote herself to the care and praise of the trees, thus erecting a false god. Just as Satan and his fallen horde of cohorts had ceased "adhering to God," become "enamoured . . . of their own power" (page 16 of this section), and accorded the status of perfection to something lower than God, so Eve now errs. She calls the tree her "Best guide," supplanting Adam in that post, which action soon reminds her of Adam and the need to deal with him (IX, 799-ff). After claiming to reject selfishness, she selfishly decides to "share" with him her new-found knowledge lest, in fact, she die as a result of her transgression and Adam replace her with another Eve, her fear of death another proof of her culpability. Adam, once aware of the broken prohibition, is fully cognizant of the fatal nature of her action. Yet, despite his clearer perception on level three, reason, and his affirmation that disobedience is not the elevator to intelligence, he permits himself to descend through the memory of his former bliss with Eve to the sense level: ". . . Flesh of Flesh,/Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State/Mine never shall be parted . . ." (IX, 914-916). Lodging himself in sense perception, Adam thus denies his own individuality and accepts the deadly fruit because he is "overcome with Female charm" (IX, 999). Once again he has forgotten what Raphael had to say about love.

Consequently, the pleasures of sense become evils for Adam and Eve: they indulge in lust, drunken "with exhilarating vapor

bland" (IX, 1047). Their sleep is "grosser" and "with conscious dreams [*italics mine*]/Encumber'd" (IX, 1123-1124). Worst of all, their rational minds, far from having evolved to the higher level, have "dark'n'd." They soon degenerate, wracked with the passions of "Anger, Hate, Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord" and end in mutual accusation (IX, 1123-1124).

Plainly, the human portion of Paradise Lost is characterized by Adam and Eve making their separate but mingled journeys upward on the rungs of the ladder of Being via development of their natural perceptual capacities, only to have that final step by Eve, imitated by Adam, precipitate the rapid tumble down. But God does not, nor does Milton, leave them to wallow in their degradation. They remain there just long enough for them to learn their lessons. Man finally shows himself superior to Satan in managing to admit guilt, repent, and offer a humble supplication for God's forgiveness, things Satan had not the courage to do (pages 19-20 this section). But the process by which growth in perceptual maturity occurs is not an easy one.

In arriving at the wise decision to repent, Adam was at first tempted to deny free will, noting that he had not asked to be born, that no matter whether being was good or not, he still had not sought it; nevertheless, his insight, projecting a similar argument to be presented him by his yet unbegotten son, enables him to concede that God's punishment is just after all (X, 743-ff). From this point Adam reasons to the possibility of an eternal living

death for his spirit, which new idea instills a healthy fear of the potential extent of Divine justice. Adam is fully cognizant of his limitations as a rational animal now, and he declares, ". . . all my evasions vain/And reasonings, though through Mazes, lead me still/But to my own conviction . . ." (X, 829-831). Finally admitting his guilt with these words, he discovers himself edge-walking on the verge of despair. However, his passions serve him usefully this time, acting as a release valve to draw off the disabling vapors of desperation; angrily lashing out at Eve, he heaps blame upon her, belittling her for being no more than "a Rib/Crooked by nature . . ." (X, 884-885). Reduced to tears by this bitter tirade, Eve "at his feet/Fell humble, and imbracing them, besought/His peace . . ." (X, 910-913).

Because Eve acknowledges and deplores her fault, Adam is moved to "commiseration" and relents in the face of her submissiveness. His action foreshadows God's future reaction to their joint admission of guilt and petition for peace and forgiveness; assuredly, God cannot do less than His creatures. But before this resolution takes place, Eve, still a spiritual suicide, suggests material suicide as a means of preventing the visitation of their dire punishment on the unbegotten members of their progeny (X, 999-1002). But Adam reasons that God is not only just but also compassionate: ". . . lest Cold/Or Heat should injure us, his timely care/Hath unbesought

provided . . ." (X, 1057-1058). This realization determines them both to confess their disobedience to God's commandment and to beseech His pardon.

By the use of right reason, Adam and Eve have resumed man's natural position on the Chain of Being and need no longer grovel in animal sensation. It remains only for God to hear their plea and reinstate the spiritual life of their souls. If God is all-good, He must also be all-just; therefore, the sentence of death is not remanded, but it is tempered with the revelation through the archangel Michael of "what shall come in future days,/ . . ./My Cov'nant in the woman's seed renewed . . ." (XI, 114-116), this last because God is also all-merciful.

Clearly, even though Adam and Eve did not originate evil, they certainly originated human sin. By no means did God's creative urge carelessly spew forth and forget humanity. They were provided with reason to control sense and imagination and to help them know their cause for being; given a divine prescription to identify what they should avoid; and blessed with multiple extra graces. Adam and Eve were well equipped to resist temptation. Had there been no special graces, no divine interventions, no special warnings dispatched personally to them by God, one might have pleaded extenuating circumstances based on their limited experiences with operation of the modes

of perception. But this is not the case. They are, indeed, guilty. For Milton, the Chain of Being theory was a reality. If one accepts this reality, one will not abuse the gifts that go with his position on the "chain," nor will one lose sight of the Being Who originated the order, Who thereby deserves to be the focus of human attention. With this point of view as a basis, Milton has explained why Adam and Eve were responsible for their own lapse into evil.

Endnotes

¹ John Milton, "Paradise Lost," in John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose, Merritt Y. Hughes, editor (Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, 1957), I, p. 26. Further references to "Paradise Lost" will be identified in text.

² Saint Augustine, The City of God, Marcus Dods, D.D., translator (New York: Random House, Inc., 1950), pp. 366-367.

³ Saint Augustine, p. 380.

⁴ Colin Wilson, The Occult (New York: Random House, Inc., 1971), p. 60.

⁵ Thomas Donlan, O.P., Francis Cunningham, O.P., Augustine Rock, O.P. Christ and His Sacraments (Dubuque: The Priory Press, 1960), p. 148.

Chapter III:
An Analysis of Lemuel Gulliver's
Developmental Progress

As noted in the introduction, C. S. Lewis feels that Milton is "enchanted with the Hierarchical principle."¹ The summary of this principle is detectable in Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, but the tone does not seem to connote precisely "enchantment." Rather, as Lovejoy has commented, Swift tends to "dwell" on the "general nastiness of things."² The atmosphere in which elements of the Chain of Being may be discerned has begun to vary at this time from the elevated acceptance of the theory that informs Paradise Lost. The contrast occurs partially because of the different forms--epic poetry on the one hand and satiric prose on the other--and partially because of viewpoint: "The Hierarchical idea [Chain of Being] is not merely stuck on to his [Milton's] poem at points where doctrine demands it; it is the indwelling life of the whole work, it foams or burgeons out of it at every moment."³ Milton lived in an era that accepted the theory, but Swift, born in the year Paradise Lost was published, is representative of the effect of developing science on the theory.

The previously unobserved niches on the lower levels of the Chain of Being had been steadily filling due to the advances in microscopic technology since Zacharias Janssen's invention of the first compound microscope in 1590 and Anton van Leeuwenhoek's simple microscope in the seventeenth century.⁴ These advances and what they revealed "seemed at once to give fresh empirical corroboration to the principles of plenitude and continuity, and in turn . . . received theoretical confirmation from them."⁵ But these microscopic revelations also unveiled "the ghastly spectacle of a universal parasitism, of life everywhere preying upon life, and of the human body itself as infested with myriads of tiny predatory creatures which made of it their food and sometimes--as soon began to be conjectured--their eventual victim."⁶ Swift informs Gulliver's Travels with this same sense of "teeming." He focuses on the swarm of moral and social evils to which man falls prey. As in Paradise Lost, the four perceptual levels are distinguishable because they are explicit; but the angles from which they are presented differ. Milton, on the initial end of microscopic discoveries, is God-centered in his thinking and accepts the positive side of the Chain of Being that these discoveries affirm while Swift, being man-centered and writing at a later date, has Lemuel Gulliver exploring some of the negative implications of these discov-

eries. This change in perspective is indicative of the transition occurring in world-view and knells the declining acceptance of the Chain of Being theory, the progressive demotion from the broader, more stable concept of eternal order to an insecure, volatile, and individualized need for becoming.

The protagonist of Gulliver's Travels, Lemuel Gulliver, is ostensibly caught in a web of adventures whose origin is chance or fortune; and many of these adventures seem very unfortunate, indeed. Yet, as Lady Philosophy clarifies in Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy, "Good fortune deceives, adverse fortune teaches."⁷ Up to a certain point, the result of Lemuel's adverse fortunes is the exhibition of definite changes in his thought which imply perceptual maturation, hence, learning. In each episode, he encounters phenomena which cause him to exercise different approaches to reality and that correlate to the ascendancy in the Boethian epistemological summary of hierarchy in being: sense, imagination, reason, and intelligence. It is therefore possible to use these modes as a gauge with which to measure Lemuel's developing perceptive abilities, to determine to what stage they advance, and to draw some conclusions as to the nature of this advancement in comparison with that of Adam and Eve in

Paradise Lost. The Boethian levels of perception are thus applied to Gulliver's Travels with these ends in view.

Milton had traced the perceptual developments of Adam and Eve through growth in awareness, downfall, and re-direction by submission to the will of God. Swift, on the other hand, traces Gulliver's developing awareness to the point of his downfall and leaves him to languish in the ludicrous hell devised by Gulliver's own misperceptions. Thus, the voyages to Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the Land of the Houyhnhnms all become way-stations in the changing perspective of the hero, Gulliver, through whom Swift hopes to influence the reader.

When Gulliver lands by chance in Lilliput to begin the first fateful step of his adventures, his fortunes are low, but his self-concept is extremely high. It seems almost superfluous to point out that this concept is reflected in the scale of his physical size as compared to that of the Lilliputians, and it is a result of his sense of perception of himself: feeling tired after the exertions occasioned by the swim to shore after the lifeboat overturned, as well as because of the "Heat of the Weather, and about half a Pint of Brandy" drunk as he departed the sinking ship, Gulliver slept, only to awaken to find himself captive: "Arms and Legs were strongly fastened . . . Hair . . . tied down"⁸

His perceptions are reduced to those of sense. He feels the ligatures, the heat of the sun, and the brightness of its light. So far he can see nothing but hears sound, "a confused noise about me"; then finally, after feeling gentle movement of some unknown, living creature which proceeds from his leg to near his chin, he is with difficulty able to see a human who is only one-half foot tall (GT, p. 5). Most of the contact here is in the realm of feeling--the sense of touch--from his restraining bonds to the arrows with which he is peppered when he succeeds in breaking a few of the "ligatures" that hold him. His excessive focus on sensation is similar to the first mode of perception used by an infant in his beginning acquisition of knowledge about himself and the world around him. In like manner, the sense of hearing quickly follows, though the sounds are unintelligible for a long time. Once Gulliver's head is freed at the order of a "Person of Quality," he requests food and drink by sign language. The satisfaction of hunger and thirst necessarily involve the sense of taste--the wine "tasted like a small Wine of Burgandy but, much more delicious" (GT, p. 7). The last sense, smell, is noted later when Gulliver, in his new-built house, "disburthens" his body of the "uneasy load," one of "the Necessities of Nature" after which deed he says, "When this Adventure was at an End, I came back out of my house,

having Occasion for fresh air" (GT, p. 12). Gulliver has been perceiving himself as affected by his surroundings through the senses, the lowest rung on the ladder of perception.

The tone having been set, the motif of sense perception seems to permeate the rest of this particular adventure. Even though, once Gulliver learns the language, there is a discussion with the more educated Lilliputians concerning the politics and customs of Lilliput, for the most part, this section of Gulliver's Travels is dominated by physical feats indicative of the manner in which Gulliver sees himself. From his handkerchief and some sticks, he constructs a stage for the Emperor's best horse troop to perform on; he wades across a channel to circumvent a Blefuscuan invasion by drawing home their bathtub-boat-size ships. Obviously, Gulliver, like a child, is enjoying his physical being, playing with such toys and with the doll-size people who are his captors. He only leaves when the fun of playing captive wears thin, much to the relief of both the Lilliputians and the Blefuscuans who in turn had paid a steep price simply to physically maintain Gulliver. The last fact seems to reinforce the contention that Lilliput provides a good example of sensory perception, naturally not to the exclusion of the other modes.

The second voyage, to Brobdingnag, demonstrates Gulliver's perception on level two, imagination. Although there is a good deal of sense perception taking place, it does so within a new context. Upon experiencing the initial, reverse impression of

reduction in size, Gulliver begins to remember himself as he was in Lilliput. Now he is the "Lilliputian," and he experiences the Brobdingnagians as the Lilliputians had experienced him. The sense impressions occur in the painfulness he notes, despite cushioning, in being transported from place to place; the coarseness of the cloth; and "the most hateful sight of all . . . the Lice crawling on their [the beggars'] Cloaths . . ." (GT, p. 84). Gulliver comments on the Queen's maids of honor: "a very offensive Smell came from their Skins . . . [but] was much more supportable than when they used Perfumes . . ." which caused him to faint (GT, pp. 88-89).

The magnification of reality which coincides with Lemuel Gulliver's comparative reduction in size allows the concentration on the unpleasant aspects alluded to by Lovejoy. But for all the discomforts, the experiences are positive ones for Gulliver because they activate perception on the next level of reason by inducing mental comparisons which result in value judgements by Gulliver. Initially, he faces a reversal of his social position:

In this terrible Agitation of Mind [when he first realizes his size in proportion to the natives of Brobdingnag] I could not forbear thinking of Lilliput, whose Inhabitants looked upon me as the greatest Prodigy that ever appeared in the world . . .

what a Mortification it must prove to me to appear
as inconsiderable in this Nation as one single Lilli-
putian would be among us. (GT, p. 62)

These remarks delineate the context into which all his subsequent sense perceptions are received, the awareness of the comparative memories from Lilliput.

This distortion of perspective, because it is so great, shakes Gulliver's self-confidence. He really is a captive now and is forced to re-evaluate not only his physical capabilities but also the society which spawned him. The Brobdingnagian king assesses the Europeans described to him by Gulliver as so much "Vermin," an especially powerful image now that Gulliver has had the microscopic view of the lice; the king then rejects Gulliver's offer of instruction in the art of war with gun-powder, horrified at the description of its efficacy (GT, pp. 102-103). Gulliver cannot ignore the implications of this distorted perspective because of the magnitude of those who force him by this contrast to remember his past. His reason takes his present impressions and compares them to his memories. On this contrast, he bases his value judgments.

Having perceived the frailties of some of his prior concepts through this Brobdingnagian comparison, Gulliver should be ready to make a choice for his own personal way of life. With this

dilated perspective, he arrives in Laputa to begin his third adventure; and it is this alteration which occasions the detached mode of observation he employs during his visit here. Just as in Brobdingnag his ability to perceive imaginatively had incorporated sense perception as well, so here he begins to operate on level three, reason, incorporating both the senses and the imagination. Once again he is on a hot rocky beach feeling discomfort; then he sees people moving on something which resembles a cloud but which turns out to be a magnetically controlled floating island-in-the-sky; he hears a strange dialect, their language. All these impressions occur through the senses. Then, almost immediately, he is forced to perceive on levels two and three because of the distorted personal appearances of the natives: he instantly makes a mental comparison with the images he has known previously and notes that he had "never till then seen a Race of Mortals so singular in their Shapes, Habits, and Countenances. Their Heads were all reclined either to the Right, or to the Left; one of their Eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the Zenith" (GT, p. 124); not to mention the fact that they needed servants who "flapped the Mouths and Ears of those who stood near them" since those receiving such ministration needed the arousal from the lethargy of their "intense Speculations" in order to enable them to take part in any conversation (GT, p. 124).

Gulliver spends most of his time here marking distortions. Because he recognizes the flaw in the thinking process of the

natives, and because he is not made insecure by being above or below the natives in stature, Gulliver does not equate himself with them. He is able to make rational judgements on their conduct, to note the loss in quality that occurs in their production of material objects due to the Laputan false exaltation of reason which sacrificed accurate sensate and imaginative perception: they cannot hear without a "flapper," and they produce objects which do not compare well with the images in their minds--their food was cut and shaped to resemble geometrical shapes or musical instruments (GT, p. 126), and clothing was "ill made" (GT, p. 127), and their houses "ill built" (GT, p. 128).

The caricature drawn by Swift of the irrational focus on reason displayed by the inhabitants of Laputa (Spanish words which translate as "the whore" and which Barrett relates to Luther's assessment of reason)⁹ should not mislead one to conclude that reason itself is being condemned. On the contrary, Swift "repeatedly extolled the virtues of reason, but it was always down-to-earth and practical reason that he had in mind. He had little taste . . . for the more abstract exercises of reason."¹⁰ This Swiftian conviction is exemplified by the fact that Gulliver feels his own perception is acuter, more superior than that of the Laputans, and he feels free to criticize theirs in comparison. He is able to leave Laputa freely, going to Balnibarbi, the island below it. Here the situation is similar, and he caustically describes the ludicrous semblance of rationality indulged in by

the Balnibarbians; in the grand Academy at Lagado, Gulliver sees "projectors" attempt to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, reduce excrement to its original food, build houses from the roofs down, to mention only a few of the strange preoccupations (GT, p. 143).

Gulliver is able to assess these antics for what they are and, still seeing clearly, continues his journey to Glubbudrib, where he finds the inhabitants' perception again distorted and the emphasis this time on level two, the imagination: specters serve the food at the Governor's table; and once Gulliver gets over the initial shock, he is treated with the visitations of historical personages who correct some misrecordings or reveal some ancient trivia to which their ghostly shapes lend credence (GT, pp. 156-157). While the governor exercises a kind of "monovision," Gulliver exercises his reason, becoming "disgusted with modern History" after realizing that "the World had been misled by prostitute Writers, to ascribe the greatest exploits in War to Cowards, the wisest Counsel to Fools, Sincerity to Flatterers, Roman virtue to betrayers of their country, Piety to Atheists, Chastity to Sodomites, Truth to Informers" (GT, pp. 159-160). Both his criticism of the Laputans and the Balnibarbians as well as Gulliver's conclusions about modern history are all a result of his ability to reason, achieving a "poly-vision"--by comparing images of what he had previously seen to present objects; to compare information previously assumed correct with newly verified information; and to draw conclusions, making decisions about what

he presently perceives based on the combination of all this data. Gulliver seems to have done substantially well in the growing development of his ability to perceive the things around him and, to some extent, himself as well.

But in book four, Gulliver meets his downfall and essentially becomes guilty of what he has perceived and criticized in others. This is probably due to the fact that he cannot perceive on level four (not being God), but is not happy with his limited self-perception on level three. As with Adam and Eve in Paradise Lost, it is on this level that the question of good versus evil arises as it personally involves the individual. Gulliver's use of reason has, thus far, instilled harmony into his life and has aided in the process of self-determination. This is as it should be; this is a good. But evil occurs when those capable of reason reject it, opting for the lower levels of which they are also capable. Unfortunately, Gulliver ends up doing just that. The need to resolve the discrepancy between good and evil causes a rejection by Gulliver of his own species. A similar but temporary rejection by Adam and Eve of each other occurred in Paradise Lost following their indulgence in evil and coinciding with their reluctance to acknowledge individual responsibility for their actions. But Gulliver's refusal to recognize the evil in his final erroneous perception causes a more permanent rejection than Adam's and Eve's. Gulliver clings to the false perfection of the Houyhnhnm, the horse, which he reveres for its "intelligence" and whose

"excellence" he is unable to emulate no matter how hard he strives to do so. He rejects as representatives of abhorrently vulgar evil the members of his own human race because they appear to him in the form of the Yahoos, inarguably repulsive. The permanency of this ostracism prevents his achieving the resolution that Adam and Eve succeeded in, and Gulliver's perceptual development is, in effect, arrested.

The mutinous sailors who leave Gulliver behind on the shores of his last adventure-land foreshadow his coming mutiny against his own species. Here the first beings he meets are the Yahoos, depicted as human beings minus the rational powers which normally distinguish them from animals. Consequently, they are worse than animals in behavior. They are the composite of the flaws in the human race that Gulliver has so far observed. Understandably, he rejects a personal connection with them and, at first, refuses to recognize any of their human characteristics. It is his self-concept now that begins to undergo appraisal although, initially, he is unaware of it.

It seems one of the Yahoos recognizes Gulliver's similarity, perhaps by instinct (level two--imagination), and attempts to approach but is repulsed with blows. The rest of the Yahoo group then retaliates by chasing Gulliver and leaping into a tree under which he seeks shelter and from which they "discharge their Excrements" upon his head, the traditional seat of reason (GT, p. 182). Perhaps this is a comment on the inordinate self-pride Gulliver

has developed for his own ability to reason. In fact, when a horse, the Houyhnhnm, seems to frighten the Yahoos off and exhibits apparently intelligent behavior, Gulliver is "amazed to see such Actions and Behaviour in Brute Beasts," and falsely assuming the horses are mere property, he presumes that the human owners of such admirable animals "must needs be the wisest People upon Earth" (GT, pp. 182-183).

The flaw in this reasoning is obvious to the reader long before it is to Gulliver. It is the reader in this instance who enjoys the broadest perspective. He can see the total picture and can deduce that what Gulliver is seeing now in both the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms is himself. The Yahoos represent the ugly side of human nature which Gulliver had slowly come to perceive through his three earlier adventures. His process of perception should now focus inwardly upon himself; but his pride will not allow him to see such qualities in himself; so it will not allow the Yahoos rationality because, if it did, Gulliver would necessarily be one of their number. On the other hand, he finds it difficult to admit that rationality can exist in an animal when he finds it in a horse although he prizes the rational powers of his own half-animal nature. Thus, the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms are the two sides of the same Gulliver--his animality encountered in his experiences in Lilliput and Brobdingnag, its meanest potential now confronting him as a Yahoo--and his intelligence which he came to value during his sojourn in Laputa,

strangely existing in a horse because that is exactly what it is doing in Gulliver, existing in a rational animal.

On the second level of perception, instinct, Gulliver is forced to recognize his own worst enemy, himself--thus he resorts to hiding behind his own clothing: "I had concealed the Secret of my Dress, in order to distinguish myself as much as possible, from that cursed Race of Yahoos . . ." (GT, p. 192). He continues to prefer the rational side of his nature so begins to revere the horses because they are rational but is unable to admit to himself that the horses also share his own animality. Because of this disproportionate reverence for one part over the whole, he misses the horses' coldness of purpose when they reject him, "exhorting" him to leave. In fact, Gulliver, in explaining to himself the reason for the term exhort and noting that the Houyhnhnms "have no conception how a rational creature can be compelled, but only advised, or exhorted . . . ," actually utters the words which condemn himself: ". . . no Person can disobey Reason without giving up his claim to be a rational Creature" (GT, p. 229).

Gulliver has done so. His reason tells him that he is an animal who can perceive through the senses and through the imagination as an animal can. It tells him that he is just as human as those individuals in whom he began to perceive distortion during his visit to Laputa and that he, too, is vulnerable to and even guilty of the unpleasant things he had perceived and noted

in the human race in general. His reason exhorts him to accept personally the synthesis of the two diversities within his own being. But he "disobeys Reason" thus "giving up his claim to be a rational Creature." This is deducible from his subsequent behavior upon his return to England where he treats even his own wife and children with the abhorrence he cannot direct at himself.

If Gulliver had been able to perceive on the fourth level, intelligence, perhaps the self-condemnation might have led to self-acceptance. But Gulliver has indulged in the same evil indulged in by Eve--self denial through denial of reason, self-worship, and, therefore, idolatry. Since Gulliver has already met and recognized evil through his other adventures, he has an advantage Eve had not; therefore, when he aspires to "horse-hood," which is synonymous with "God-head" for Gulliver, he defiles his own rationality, losing a perceptive mode necessary for regeneration. A person who had simultaneously developed a subjective as well as an objective viewpoint, a balanced perspective, would have maintained the broad perspective necessary to avoid the trauma which unsettled Gulliver. Unfortunately for him, he lost that correlation when he began to focus on and criticize the radical deformities present in Laputa and Balnibarbi, ignoring the concurrent evil of his own faults.

It is no longer Gulliver who is developing perception by the time he reaches the Land of the Houyhnhnms. The point of view has shifted, and Swift tosses the task of development into the lap of the reader who now sees what Gulliver did not since the

reader can see the problem within Gulliver. In Gulliver's Travels at this point, the possibility of return to a stable perspective no longer exists for the character, Lemuel Gulliver, but instead is extended to the reader. Swift leaves his protagonist in a state of fixation. In contrast to the perceptual mobility in Paradise Lost that provided Adam and Eve hope for redemption, Gulliver is left to dally indefinitely with the "evil" he despises. It is for the reader to provide the movement toward a normal order by correctly assessing Gulliver's lesson, extracting its meaning, and applying it to the conditions of the real world which Swift has satirized.

Calling attention to evil is, of course, an aim of satire and is precisely what Swift has done in Gulliver's travels. The levels of sense, imagination, reason, and intelligence that are visible in the adventures lend themselves to that process of self-examination which Swift has produced in his audience. Coupled with the physical insights provided by technology via the microscope, the intellectual insights available to the reader through the step-by-step progression in the Chain of Being theory are invaluable. It requires not much to concede, then, that the ladder of hierarchical being is clearly visible in Swift's Gulliver's Travels and that an analysis of the work through these same modes has proven not only feasible but--in spite of Swift's dwelling on the "general nastiness of things" as noted earlier--also

enlightening. Although the hierarchical idea is not the "in-dwelling life" of this work as it is in Paradise Lost, it is still very explicit, providing the succeeding levels of awareness within which Lemuel Gulliver dwelt.

Endnotes

¹ C. S. Lewis, A Preface to Paradise Lost (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 80.

² Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (1936; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 238-239.

³ Lewis, p. 79.

⁴ C[ecil] E[dwin] H[all], "Microscope," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1969 edition.

⁵ Lovejoy, p. 237.

⁶ Lovejoy, p. 238.

⁷ Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, Richard Green, translator (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1962), p. 40.

⁸ Jonathan Swift, "Gulliver's Travels" in Gulliver's Travels: and Other Writings, Ricardo Quintana, editor (New York: The Modern Library, 1958), p. 5. All further references to Gulliver's Travels will be referred to as GT and will be identified in text.

⁹ William Barrett, Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1958), p. 107.

¹⁰ Barrett, p. 108.

Chapter IV:

An Analysis of Selected Works by Mark Twain

Sense and Imagination

Since Adam and Eve first stumbled over it, evil has continued to waylay mankind. Some men yield to it while others are so spiritually strong that their inward struggles are imperceptible to the casual observer. Still other men vociferously resent the apparent injustice of the fact that evil is present in the universe. Such a man was Mark Twain, the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who loudly deplored the disparate reality that evil co-exists with good. Centuries earlier, a man like Twain could have turned for solace to the theory, resolving the problem through its broad perspective. Unfortunately for Twain, that viewpoint had declined before the onslaught of technology. A tendency to specialize in all areas of thinking was generated by this interest in science and splintered the broader viewpoint into numerous narrow perspectives, not only in science but also in philosophy and religion. Twain inherited one of these fragments, the religion of Calvinistic Puritanism. The tenets of this religion were deficient for ordering the incongruities of existence. Its restrictive doctrines included the concepts of the total depravity

of man; the lack of free will and consequent doctrine of pre-destination which involved limited, irresistible grace given to a select few; and the obvious visibility of those who were elect through the grace which had been earned by the Christ-event. Conversely, those not elect were equally visible. If Twain were to accept these doctrines, his conclusion could only be that he was unelected since he failed on occasion, as do most men, to persevere in holiness. Therefore, the only sensible course open to him was to reject the Calvinistic viewpoint as non-viable for ordering the vagaries observable in reality. Consequently, Twain gradually develops his own personal viewpoint, one adequate to the task. That such a growth in his perceptual maturity actually occurs can be proven by using the Boethian modes of perception to analyze a selection of his works that spans his writing career.

Nevertheless, the old saw, "as the twig is bent, so grows the tree," is an apt one since the early religious influence on Twain caused a dichotomy which disturbed his entire life, leaving its tracks trailing step-by-step through his writing. The resolution of this quandary is slowly arrived at and is achieved through Twain's increasing ability to use those very modes of perception which Boethius had summarized and which parallel the perceiving portions of the Chain of Being. Although no one work can be classified as solely representative of one or another mode, one mode often seems to predominate in a work.

This chapter will examine pertinent works which seem to be indicative of the author's changing perspective, proposing that Twain resolves his dilemma by evolving a view met earlier in history: that the universe of material being proceeds from an original, eternal Thought. But Twain's viewpoint is distinctive. Paring away the inconsistencies for which he deems it responsible, Twain exposes this thought devoid of its imaginations and capable of rectifying the wrong it had done when it allowed evil to enter existence. It is through this vision of pure thought that Twain comes to terms with the problem of evil.

Among others, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn seems a logical choice for a Twainian example of the first level of perception, sense, because of the youth of the protagonist and the profusion of sense images that enhance the tone of the novel. Reason operates throughout the novel, of course, but the intent here is primarily to examine sense perception. For the second kind of perceptual development, imagination, both A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court and "The Great Dark" will serve as examples. An early and clear expression of level three perception, reason, can be found in "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg." It is symptomatic of Twain's internal struggle to comprehend the reason for evil existing in the world, and in it Twain maintains an objective, logical viewpoint. But this viewpoint is unsustainable, judging from the increasing bitterness developing in the satire of later works which also manifest the level of reason. These latter works

include "Letters from the Earth," "Letter to the Earth," A War Prayer, and "The Damned Human Race." Finally, Twain's vision of level four, intelligence, occurs in the conclusion of The Mysterious Stranger--no matter that the bulk of the published version did not originally belong to that particular conclusion. Again, the author of this paper is well aware that the perceptual modes inter-relate in the works and merely wishes to separate them for purposes of analysis.

Sensory impressions permeate Huckleberry Finn beginning with the "Explanatory" preceding the novel where Twain calls attention to the seven dialects of English he uses in the work, lending support to the suggestion that sense impression and sense-tied evaluations are dominant portions of the story. Much of the evaluation derives from Twain's contrast of subjective sense perceptions: early in the story, Huck differentiates those physical comforts he prefers from those preferred for him by the Widow Douglas: he would choose his "old rags" rather than the "new clothes" in which the Widow confines him--an imprisonment which extracts prodigious amounts of sweat from his body due to the lack of ventilation in the new garments.¹ A large part of Huck's discomfort results from his inability to process the situation on any other level than that of physical sense; he has had no similar experience prior to the present; therefore, he has nothing with which to compare the present one.

He is better able to handle relatively minor differences between "victuals" which had all been cooked separately and those which were "odds and ends" that "get mixed up, and the juice kind of swaps around, and the things go better" (HF, p. 38). But discomfort returns in his yearning for the "smoke" from which he is prohibited. This desire combines with the stiff clothes to make him squirm and occasions "fidgety" movements of 'gap/ping/ and stretch/ing/' (HF, p. 39).

However, when Huck is finally released to his room, the sensations change, and so does the tone of the chapter, to a "lonesome" sadness:

The stars was shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods ever so mournful; and I heard an owl, away off, who-whooping about somebody that was dead, and a whippowill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die; and the wind was trying to whisper something to me and I couldn't make out what it was, and so it made the cold shivers run over me.

(HF, p. 40)

Huck is on the verge of adventures which will widen his concept of good and evil. He senses this, perhaps, through instinct, but nothing is clear yet, hence the physical reaction of shivering.

Twain's sense level description of Pap's appearance when he is found in Huck's room vividly contrasts with Pap's assessment of Huck: Pap's face has a pallor, "a white to make a body sick, to make a body's flesh crawl--a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white" (HF, p. 59). With his "tangled and greasy" hair, his rags, his toes sticking out of a "busted boot" (HF, p. 59), he condemns Huck for "a sweet-scented dandy" (HF, p. 61). Certainly, this does not tally with Huck's self-evaluation, a "dandy" being the last thing he would consider himself.

In fact, when Pap kidnaps Huck, the pleasant freedom to get dirty, smoke, and cuss--all considered symptoms of evil by the widow and Miss Watson--is nearly worth the un-pleasantness of Pap's "hick'ry" though Huck ends up "all over welts" from it (HF, p. 61). No doubt the two women would have thought him justly rewarded, and except for the fact that the whippings were not meant as a deterrent for those vices, they were probably very similar to those administered in many a woodshed by righteous parents attempting to control such waywardness in their children. On the other hand, Pap's drunken rages, in which his higher nature is blinded by overindulgence in the senses, certainly don't inspire more than apparent submissiveness in Huck who finally flees--his life endangered by his father who had debauched reason through his abuse of the senses. Because he is more adept than Pap at weighing values, Huck

remains on the island where Pap has taken him until the pain outweighs the pleasure; he is in better command of his other modes of perception than Pap who has darkened his own imagination and reason. Pap escapes his unhappiness only through death, an escape which would be a dubious one in view of the eternal damnation so graphically promised to sinners by many of the religions of the day.

Twain has indeed spent time setting up physical contrasts, examining abuses of sensation in both extremes--from the narrow-mindedness of Widow Douglas and Miss Watson, which coincides with a Calvinistic viewpoint, to Pap at the opposite extreme. Huck seems to be somewhere in the middle, not willing to give up pleasures that someone else has arbitrarily named evils yet not willing, either, to give up his potential for broader perspective, not that he literally chooses the former over the latter in so many words but that fear for his life acts as a catalyst to some instinctive as well as sensible, rational choices, primary among which is flight.

The superstition that abounds in Huckleberry Finn seems, as Pap's loss of reason through alcohol, to be related to a focus on sense perception: hair balls that talk (HF, p. 57), snake skins one ought not to touch (HF, p. 99), and cures for rattlesnake bite that include eating part of the snake's meat and tying its rattles to one's wrist (HF, p. 100) to name a few. In each instance, the meaning is supposedly carried in the

physical object; but, in fact, the meaning is not logically related to the object. Superstition is an error in the reasoning of the superstitious individual who seeks security from the unknown by attaching it to concrete, empirical being. Such clinging to sense data is an indication of the immaturity of the superstitious individual.

Man is partly an animal. Even so, because he is more than that, he must rationally order his perceptions. Jim, the runaway slave accompanying Huck on his voyage, experiences insecurity and confusion when Huck deceives him saying that Jim has only dreamed that he, Huck, had been separated from their raft in a fog, lost, and maybe drowned. Jim does not remember a dream; he only remembers what really happened; yet not until he discovers sense data to correlate with what he remembers does he regain confidence in his own perceptions despite anger and disappointment at Huck's deception. Jim's trust in Huck had caused him to waver toward belief since he had nothing concrete to prove otherwise. Only when he sees the "leaves and rubbish on the raft, and the smashed oar" does he regain confidence in his own memory (HF, p. 121). Only then does he confidently assess the wickedness in Huck's lie. Fortunately, Huck is not recalcitrant and readily repents his uncharity: "I didn't do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn't done that one if I'd knowed it would make him feel that way" (HF, p. 121). This does,

however, leave open the possibility that Huck would not have hesitated to repeat his small crime had Jim not reacted as he had. Huck's realization that the real Jim who confronted him there on the raft did not match with the image in Huck's mind resulted in his attitude change. Huck is able to distinguish between good (Jim is a human being worthy of respect) and evil (it is wrong to deceive someone who trusts and loves the deceiver). Huck effectively used his reason to aid him in choosing good in this instance, albeit belatedly.

Twain introduces Huck to increasingly stronger sensations, juxtaposing preconceived notions with reality, posing choices that aid Huck in formulating his own view of what is real in the world; and whether or not that reality conforms with society's concepts of good or evil does not determine Huck's conclusions. Beatings inflicted by Pap, hurt registering in Jim, and bloody deaths impress themselves on Huck's consciousness. From a distance he had witnessed the cold-blooded murders of two of the young boys with whom he lived for some time after a raft accident. These boys were not strangers to him, and their brutal deaths sicken Huck: "I wish I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them--lots of times I dream about them" (HF, p. 174). This memory was branded permanently in his imagination because he went after dark when it was safe to pull the bodies from the

water in which they lay on the river edge, and he covered their dead faces (HF, p. 175). The touch of his hand recorded a sense impression which was much more concrete than the sight or sound of the slayings.

But, as any good writer, Twain knows when to alleviate the crescendo of intensifying sense impressions, and he provides passages like the following which act like a foil as well as provide the hero with recreative time between those more lesson-fraught episodes on his journey:

. . . we slid into the river and had a swim to freshen up and cool off; then we set down on the sandy bottom where the water was about knee deep, and watched the daylight come sometimes the bull-frogs a-cluttering a pale place in the sky . . . the river softened up . . . little dark spots drifting along . . . and long black streaks . . . a sweep screaming; or jumbled up voices . . . a streak on the water . . . the mist curl[s] up . . . the east reddens . . . nice spring breeze . . . fanning . . . so cool and fresh and sweet to smell, on account of the woods and flowers . . . and next you've got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going it! (HF, pp. 177-178)

No shivers chill this scene; the senses are warmed by it.

But all this emphasis on sense perception does not preclude other types of perception in Huckleberry Finn. Certainly, the superstitious attempts to invest the unknown with concrete body and the dream/reality question Huck teased Jim with are tentative exercises on level two, imagination. Limbering exercises on level three, reason, occur through the soul-searching and rationalizing with which Huck wrestles, worrying about possible retribution exactable from him in the hereafter, about his damnation to the flames of "everlasting fire" (HF, p. 290). These he was not so sure existed; yet he was not sure enough they did not exist to dismiss the possibility of becoming their victim. His conclusion that Jim's being his friend was more important than his being black and a runaway slave incurred tremendous guilt recriminations based on the value system of his society which plainly labeled things good and bad by criteria dissimilar to his own. Obviously, Huck is drawing some excellent conclusions, and no desire to ignore these was intended by the examination of Huckleberry Finn as an example of sensory perception.

With A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, published five years after Huckleberry Finn, Twain begins to focus on level two, imagination. A dream-like atmosphere introduces the story giving the impression of a dream--although there is room for speculation that it is a hallucination precipitated by the crowbar which struck the skull of Hank Morgan, the protagonist, "knocking"

a different sort of "sense" into him. The themes in this novel are multiple: "A parody of medieval chivalry and romance, an invective against social inequality and political injustice, an attack on human ignorance and superstition . . . at the same time [written] as if it were for children."² The dreamlike form chosen for communication unites this variety of opinions.

But the scope of Hank Morgan's world view is a relatively small one despite the span of time and space he has crossed between nineteenth-century America and sixth-century England. In this work, Twain restricts himself to those conclusions educible from his hypothetical wedding of technology to chivalry: when a people not sufficiently evolved perceptually have the technological advances of a more developed people thrust upon them, the result is catastrophic anarchy. When the natural order becomes unbalanced, it destructs; therefore, one must advance slowly up the scale of knowledge to avoid that evil.

The first chapter opens with a simile: "It was a soft, reposeful summer landscape, as lovely as a dream . . ." (CY, p. 19). Hank, not consciously recognizing that he is in a dream, instinctively comments that he "moved along as one in a dream" (CY, p. 20). Anxiety appears when he is forced to consider that he has been transported through time and space, but he quickly assesses his immediate companions and determines that no matter if he is confined in a lunatic asylum or in the sixth century, his per-

ceptual talents exceed those of the natives, ensuring that he will soon "boss that asylum or know the reason why" or at least "have the start of the best-educated man in the kingdom . . ." (CY, p. 23). Later, he notes that "brains weren't needed in a society like that, and, would have marred it, hindered it, spoiled its symmetry--perhaps rendered its existence impossible" (CY, p. 27). In these words he forecasts the eventual doom to be delivered by himself as he appeases his appetite for power. Power, of course, feeds pride, inordinately enlarging it until it obstructs the function of reason; and the sixteenth-century Englishmen unfairly suffer the consequences of Hank's prideful folly.

Many of the innovations, nevertheless, are good ones: churches and schools provide enlightenment and freedom of choice, and working conditions and techniques are improved (CY, p. 64). Hank Morgan swashbuckles his way through medieval England meting out political reform in one spot, economical reform in another, and social reform elsewhere--all by applying, to the world in which he found himself, the information retained in his memory, thereby reconstructing a nineteenth-century replica of America in the England of the Middle Ages. From his vantage point, he considers some historical reform failures which could have been avoided, had the instigators known then what he knows now. He reasons, "I knew that the Jack Cade or the Wat Tyler who tries such a thing [reform] without first educating his materials up to revolution grade is almost certain to get left" (CY, p. 85). Since Hank knows the

outcome of those attempts, he proceeds with his reforms accordingly. Though ostensibly for the improvement of the lot of the human race--a given good, Hank's reforms are also intended to elevate his own status in the community.

But all the gymnastics which occur in Connecticut Yankee do not accomplish anything more positive in the final analysis than war: "The thirteen gatlings began to vomit death we fifty-four were masters of England! Twenty-five thousand men lay dead around us" (CY, p. 317). These men are the casualties of imagination only, of nightmare, but a nightmare that is quite real to Hank. Twain, shortly after, has the legendary Merlin mesmerize Hank for thirteen centuries, till he awakes back in the reality of the nineteenth century (CY, p. 318). There he finally encounters the narrator of the frame story in the Connecticut Yankee to whom he bequeaths his tale and in whose spare room he ceases to be in the present, drawn back in death to the dream. Nevertheless, through most of the story, Hank was conscious of the reality that he had initially lived in the nineteenth century. His activities in sixth-century England were determined by that consciousness, and it is only in the very end that he allows himself to be immersed in the dream.

It remains for Henry Edwards in "The Great Dark," an unfinished piece published posthumously, to entrench himself in a level two perception, refusing to perceive reality through any

mode other than imagination (dream). As Swift was drawn to the microscopically revealed realm of being and all its uglier implications that he has Gulliver examine in Brobdingnag, so Twain sends Henry Edwards on an exploration of the supposedly extended vistas offered by science via the microscope. What he discovers is not a broadening of viewpoint but a reduction in perspective and the resulting magnification of horror caused by material being which had only moments earlier evoked "oh's" and "ah's" of interest from Henry as he viewed these entities swimming in a drop of water on the glass slide of a microscope. Once again, Twain has a character embark on a dream journey, and again he causes a protagonist to tamper with the order in reality on a physical as well as on an imaginative level. Just as Hank had introduced the products of modern technology (the telephone, for example) into medieval England, so Henry interferes with natural order by asking his wife to introduce a drop of "Scotch whiskey" into the diminutive, watery world on the slide in order to "stir up" the inhabitants.³ But Henry's dream gives no breadth to his perception. His god-like intervention in the lives of the microscopic beasts inverts his own being, contracting it as he is pulled from the reality by the suction of imagination.

The Superintendent of Dreams engineers the dream experienced by Henry. He cuts through Henry's observations with the voice of an oracle, flatly telling him that his perspective of reality

is warped: to Henry's evaluation of the "animals" in the drop of water--"I'm not afraid of the ugliest," the Superintendent replies, "You think so now, with your five feet eight, but it will be a different matter when the mote that floats in a sun-beam is Mont Blanc compared to you" (TGD, p. 187). Henry denies the data of sense perception, refusing to credit what he hears until eventually, submerged in the dream, drawn deeper and deeper into it by the Superintendent, he is forced into accepting dream for reality:

. . . we consider with pride our mental equipment with its penetration, its power of analysis, its ability to reason out clear conclusions from confused facts . . . then comes a rational interval and disenchants us . . . lays us bare, and we see that intellectually we are really no great things; that we seldom really know the thing we know

(TGD, p. 204)

He continues, verifying that the "life" he "had lived before . . . seemed distant, indistinct, slipping away and fading out in a far perspective exactly as a dream does . . ." (TGD, pp. 204-205). Indeed, he is losing his hold on reality.

When Henry had first become fascinated with the world disclosed by the microscope--"An ocean in a drop of water" (TGD, p. 187), he was in control of that vision and of the angle of its focus. When he relinquished that control in order to enter himself into the vision, he lost the scope of that vision; thus his reality and his dream change places with each other. William Barrett notes, "The more specialized a vision the sharper its focus; but also the more nearly total the blind spot towards all things that lie on the periphery of this focus."⁴ How very like Henry's experiences is this evaluation by Barrett of the effect of specialization in modern philosophy.

Twain did not finish "The Great Dark," and intriguing as the story is, it is this author's opinion that the confinement of the dream framework was becoming too constricting to communicate the complexity of Twain's own evolving vision. According to Bernard DeVoto, "Quite clearly, 'The Great Dark' was, psychologically, a stage on the way to 'The Mysterious Stranger.'"⁵ DeVoto feels "both the difficulty he [Twain] had writing 'The Great Dark' and the obstinancy with which he kept coming back to it suggest that it meant more to him than a mere story, that its basic fantasies were extremely important to him."⁶ Perhaps it is understandable, then, that Twain, restricted by the level of dream itself, kills off all members of Henry's family--they die in the scorching heat and light of the Great White Glare, the area of the slide which

is illuminated by reflected light to enable the microscope viewer to examine a minute portion of the totality of the tiny drop of water, and in which the Superintendent of Dreams, per Henry's request, had suspended the entire Edwards family. This plan for the characters is contained in Twain's final notes for the uncompleted part of the story and is discussed by DeVoto in his editorial notes.

Abruptly following the imaginary family deaths, Twain thrusts Henry back into the larger perspective outside the water drop: "It is midnight. Alice and the children come to say good-night. I think them dreams. Think I am back home in a dream" (TGD, p. 277). In Connecticut Yankee, Hank Morgan was drawn back from the real world to the dream which he embraced in order to return to one he loved (CY, p. 320); Henry, conversely, having accepted the unreal world when he rejects the real one is thrust out of the dream back into it even though reality meant the return of all those he held dear. Because man's intellectual progress--his perceptual maturation--occurs individually if at all, Twain's vision could not be worked out through Henry who honestly believes he has lost his family. So strong was the grip of Henry's imaginary sorrow that it was a barrier to his return to reality. Just as Adam was influenced by Eve, as Gulliver was entranced by the apparent rationality of the horse-beings, so Henry is entrapped. But unlike Adam, his emotions do not shock him into reality; and unlike Gulliver, he never proceeds past the level of imagination.

Reason and Intellect

Nevertheless, the perceptual development in Twain's works does not just traverse sense and imagination. As noted above, in Huckleberry Finn, and no doubt earlier, Twain was wrestling with those problems of choice between good and evil alternatives, a struggle compounded by the fact that his definitions of those qualities derived from his own intellectual assessment and differed from those promulgated by church and society. In "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," Twain employs another stranger to test the value of adhering to such patented beliefs, of accepting them without question. Hadleyburg is a town full of people who are very like in innocence to Adam and Eve because they have not done a corrupt or dishonest deed for the span of three generations.⁷ Unfortunately for the latest generation, their virtue has never been tried, making their inordinate pride in themselves decidedly illogical. Since they scarcely recall what the reality of corruption entails, they recognize no evil in themselves. With skillful intent, Twain uses the townspeople to illustrate the irrationality of accepting a label, however complimentary, which the individual has not himself earned.

A stranger who had experienced uncharitable treatment at the hands of one of the inhabitants takes exception to the town's ill-founded pride and schemes at length a revenge that will unseat

the residents of Hadleyburg from their sanctimonious misconception. This stranger appears one evening on the doorstep of one of the townsfolk, depositing with the good wife he finds there a sack containing one "hundred and sixty pounds four ounces" of gold and a note of explanation (TMTCH, p. 246). The author of the note claims to have been treated well by one of the residents who had supposedly aided him as well as having spoken some words of wisdom which had changed the recipient's life for the better. The note prescribes the process by which the alleged do-gooder may be identified and duly rewarded with the contents of the sack; the proper person will be able to repeat what he originally said to the stranger, to be verified by a "sealed envelope containing that remark" (TMTCH, p. 247).

Although honesty seems to prevail at first, cracks in its veneer soon are visible, the earliest evidence of flaw in character obvious in Mrs. Richards who runs to lock the door and pull the shades as soon as she has determined that the sack is full of gold. The deterioration of Hadleyburg's previously inviolate conduct rapidly escalates, exposing the frailties that all humans are prone to possess as well as illustrating the fallacy inherent in the preconceived notion that immutable integrity was a birth-right of the citizens of Hadleyburg. Faced for the first time with temptation, the lack of practical experience proves their downfall; they discover that a hallowed reputation provides no

safeguard. Numerous individuals succumb, indulging in deceit in their attempts to procure the golden treasure. Nineteen pillars of the community have claimed authorship of the following words before the event is over: "You are far from being a bad man; go, and reform" (TMTCH, p. 266). The multiple duplication of deception, engineered by the stranger's calculated interferences, induces hilarity in the observers and anger and humiliation in those whose lies are thus made public. The audience creates a song, a moralizing Greek chorus, sung to the tune of the "Mikado," which they sing with "booming enthusiasm" (TMTCH, p. 274). But this emotional catharsis seems healthy; in sparing Mr. and Mrs. Richards from humiliation, the reader of the letters (who purposely neglected to include Mr. Richards' equally deceptive note) inadvertently denied them that same catharsis. As a result, the Richards sink into deep depression, delerium, and, ultimately, death. Certainly, as Adam and Eve sadly discovered, Twain reiterates in this short story the age-old axiom that the wages of sin are death--unless they have somehow been expurgated by public redemption. The story is a disclaimer of value in untempered innocence; virtue's strength is determined only by the flame of temptation to which it is exposed.

Other of Twain's works compare with the sometimes caustic satire of Swift. The satire is mild, however, in "Letters from the Earth" in which Twain outdoes Swift's Brobdingnagian scope by focusing on divinity:

The Creator sat upon the throne, thinking. Behind him stretched the illimitable continent of heaven, steeped in a glory of light and color; before him rose the black night of Space, like a wall. His mighty bulk towered rugged and mountain-like into the zenith, and His divine head blazed there like a distant sun. At his feet stood three colossal figures, diminished to extinction, almost, by contrast--archangels--their heads level with His ankle-bone.⁸

The creative action that ensues and the conversation that follows between Michael and Satan are reminiscent of Paradise Lost, also a creation story. But Satan's banishment in Twain's story lasts no more than a day (albeit a celestial one) and the punishment carries no more sting than the grounding of a naughty child to his room, exacting retribution for his disrespectful audacity. Satan still maintains friendship with Michael and slips notes under the heavenly gates in a clandestine communication from the earth. From Satan's notes can be extracted Twain's perceptual evaluations on level three of the absurdity observable in human logic. Man "is a sort of low grade nickel-plated angel . . . he blandly and in all sincerity calls himself 'the noblest work of God'" (LFE, p. 14). This latter statement echoes a common medieval

viewpoint supporting the belief that man was at the center of the Chain of Being. Twain's Satan terms this man's misconception--that God worries about man or even loves him (LFE, p. 15). The banished archangel exposes the idiocy he feels underlies man's impression of Heaven: a place of harp-playing and hosannahing to which questionable reward man illogically presumes despite his earthly preferences for sexual copulation (LFE, p. 18).

The letters detail the fallacious assumptions of mankind which are juxtaposed with heavenly knowledge that Satan is privy to, being a prior inhabitant of heaven. His analysis of Noah's part in the Great Flood--and, thereby, Noah's being the savior of the common housefly--is vitriolic. The fly is described as a "divine ambassador" that

. . . infests [man] in his cradle; clings in bunches to his gummy eyelids harries the sick man . . . even on his deathbed . . . wades in . . . sores [of persons inflicted with repulsive disease], gaums its legs with a million death-dealing germs . . . then wipes these things off on the butter and discharges a bowl-load of typhoid germs and excrement on [man's] batter-cakes. (LFE, p. 35)

Swift could have done no better. Certainly, Twain gluts the reader with the vocabulary of nauseous sense data that produces

an ugly scene in the imagination. Twain elucidates his conclusion through Satan--that God as conceived by man is an illogical concept, a manner of divinity which does not exist. Twain continues to explore such questions through several of his works--reasoning always to a similar conclusion: man's conceptions of reality are very often non-sense and verge on a sin against human nature.

In another work, "The Damned Human Race," Twain seizes man by the collar, thrusts him to center stage, and parades his demeaning attributes. In this diatribe, the darling, man, is demoted to the lowest level of animate creation per the irrefutable proof proffered by the nature of his daily deeds. Twain likens man's age on earth to the "skin of paint on the pinnacle-knob" of the Eiffel Tower (by which he represents the age of the world), sarcastically stating, "and anybody would perceive that that skin was what the tower was built for."⁹ Twain obviously feels that man errs if he perceives himself the center of created being, the concept religiously adhered to several centuries earlier.

Step by logical step, Twain relentlessly delineates the farce discernable in man's self-concept, remarking that no animal hoards to excess--squirrels, bees, birds store up only what they will need--but man is an unmitigated miser; "indecent, vulgarity, obscenity" are the province of man, other animals hiding nothing and having no shame; "Man is the Animal that Blushes. He is the only one that does it--or has occasion to"; man is the only animal

who "gouges out his prisoner's eyes . . . skins his captive alive," beats "his mother to death with a chair," and on and on (TDHR, p. 178). Thus, Twain builds the case and draws the only possible conclusion, given the facts that have been enumerated: the phenomenon labeled "man" in no manner occupies a position of ascendancy or honor but, in fact, resides on some ignominious level of being.

Twain's "Letter to the Earth" and The War Prayer also indicate the same conclusion, reasoning that a truly honest appraisal by man of himself will require him to condemn his own constant irrationality. Both of these pieces are short and deal with essentially the same theme--the audacity implicit in the requests tendered God by man in the guise of holy prayer. Such orisons rocket aloft to bombard the celestial throne. They are devoid of any but self-love, invoking material blessings for the beseechers but divine vengeance for any persons not fortunate enough to be ranked as co-suplicants. The "Letter to the Earth" is an individual case which serves to point out illogical inconsistencies in the petitioner's requirements; for example, the recording angel notes that one Abner Scofield applied for "some form of violent death to neighbor who threw brick at family cat, whilst same was serenading (request #6."¹⁰ But this conflicts with a "Family Prayer" of about the same date in which Mr. Scofield implored that God "be mercifully inclined toward all who would do us offense in our persons or our property" (LTTE, p. 105). The angel matter-of-factly metes out

what malevolence is feasible after adjustment of the requisitions for this and similar incompatibilities.

In contrast, The War Prayer is a poetic, more vitriolic version of the same perceptive analysis. This poem-prayer involves a church congregation which belongs to a country imploding "in every breast" with "the holy fire of patriotism."¹¹ This internal immolation is the result of the country's having embarked on the violent tide of war. The particular church group chronicled in the poem offers a "passionate pleading" in "moving and beautiful language" for the protection of its country's soldiers by "an ever merciful and benignant Father" (TWP, ll. 85-90). Suddenly, a stranger (another in Twain's growing list of strangers who carry messages of truth) enters the scene, listens to the petitions of the preacher, then touches his arm, introducing himself as a messenger from God sent to verify not only their desires but that they fully comprehend the consequences of what they seek before their prayers are irrevocably rendered reality by divine power. This necessity, of course, once again arises from the ambiguity in their prayer. The angel, a latter-day Raphael who like his original carries clarification and caution from the Almighty, forces the group to hear the other side of their own words. The atrocity of the resulting transposition slashes at the mind with the sharp edge of its insight, stabs the conscience with its first-person delivery. The stranger translates the congregational plea as follows:

. . . help us
to tear their soldiers
to bloody shreds
 . . .
to drown the thunder
of the guns
with the shrieks
of their wounded,
writhing in pain;
 . . .
to wring the hearts
of their unoffending widows
with unavailing grief
 . . . to turn
them out roofless
with their little children
to wander . . .
the wastes
 . . . blast their hopes,
 . . . stain the white snow
with the blood
of their wounded feet!
We ask it,
in the spirit of love

(TWP, 11. 213-266)

Swift was content to have Gulliver charade for his readers, leaving them to draw the hoped-for conclusion concerning rationality/irrationality in man, his good and evil genius. Twain seems not so content. He not only parades men's offenses before their eyes, hiding these with no veil, but also employs his stranger to verbally reinforce his message with his first-person delivery. The acerbity of Train's poem is a much stronger tincture than that of Swift's fable simply because men identify more easily with unworthy men than with unworthy horses.

"A stranger" takes a more dominant role in the posthumously published The Mysterious Stranger than in any of Twain's prior works. Again, Twain uses this particular stranger, Philip Traum (otherwise known as Satan) to juxtapose his own vision of reality against traditionally presupposed conceptions of the same, once more taking exception to patented viewpoint as a criterion for judging good and evil. Traum's presentations of a reality which is diametrically different from what Theodor had accepted prepares Theodor for the conclusion Traum discloses to him in the end. It is through this conclusion, couched in the words of Traum, that Twain most closely reveals his personal vision of divinity.

Certainly, it must first be noted that the published text of The Mysterious Stranger is "an editorial fraud perpetrated by Twain's official biographer and literary executor, Albert Bigelow Paine, and Frederick A. Duneha of Harper and Brothers publishing

company."¹² Of the four versions Twain attempted, Paine--among other manipulations--"grafted the final chapter of the third manuscript to the broken-off first manuscript version" to produce the spurious version published in 1916 (Gibson, p. 2). Important as this fact is to any interpretation of the work as a whole, it does not interfere with conclusions drawn about Twain's own perceptions when those conclusions are based on several of his writings. The bulk of The Mysterious Stranger as originally published and despite its fraudulent construction represents still another expression of perceptual development on levels two and three, imagination and reason. The dream imagery that informed "The Great Dark" and which usurped priority as the prime manner of perception in that work is modulated here, better balanced with the other modes of perception. In the face of Traum-revealed reality, the human mind again strives to discover the rationale in the co-existence of good and evil and to differentiate between valid and invalid reasons. The conclusion of the published work, as already suggested, approaches the sacrosanct boundaries of level four, intelligence. All four perceptual modes, in some manner, operate in this particular work, and Philip Traum (meaning literally lover of dreams¹³) is the agent who precipitates the operation.

Doubtless, Twain senses the potential of dream since he has toyed with the technique in several of his works, but thus far the main characters, although the dreamers, do not seem to be in control

of the dream, thereby precluding their ability to reach an unbiased interpretation of what they themselves dreamt. Now through Traum, himself a character, Twain chooses a much more subtle way to present the mode of dream than he did in "The Great Dark." The information that Theodor Fischer receives from Traum is, by the same token, more difficult to analyze; therefore, it behooves Theodor to exercise the fullest potential of all available modes of knowledge in making his decision because his final choice concerning the nature of being differs from the totality of his prior experience; by all which measures, the command uttered by Traum in the tacked-on finale of The Mysterious Stranger would ordinarily have been itself condemned as evil. The disclosures that all experience is "a dream" and that Theodor is "the maker of it"¹⁴ verge on blasphemy according to commonly accepted, moral precepts. Theodor must base his decision, of whether or not to accept this statement, on the multiety of experiences which have been presented to him by Traum. The combination of this with his previous experiences concerning society's viewpoint will require excellence in the development of sensory, imaginative, and rational perceptions to enable Theodor to correctly interpret what Traum, dream, is proposing to him. An analysis of these stages in The Mysterious Stranger is, therefore, appropriate.

The images in this story are sometimes very concrete on the sense level. There is certainly no dearth of sense perception in

this tale as there was in "The Great Dark," restricted as it was to the mere separation of water and dark from an eternal, burning light (truth, so to speak). These constitute most of the medium for sense perception in the latter story. In The Mysterious Stranger, the fire Traum breathes into the pipe bowl, for all its unorthodox origin, very really burns and ignites the tobacco; the puddle from which Traum takes water is as real as the leaf he cups it in; and the ice into which he converts the water with the other side of his breath is a definite, tangible, frosty piece of ice. Just so do the apples and oranges and grapes, sweets and cakes which he materializes tantalize the tongue; the life-informed clay squirrel visibly runs while a dog, similarly generated, audibly barks. Henry in "The Great Dark" had no such solid sense links to steady his objectivity because the sense data he encountered tended to support the illusion--the "boxing gloves, and foils and masks" he found stored in the locker under the sofa precipitated a flood of unexplained familiarity for Henry who, thereby, was drawn more deeply into his dream (TGD, pp. 212-213). As a result of this lack of trustworthy empirical data on which to base his reasoning, what conclusions Henry reasoned to were flawed. On the other hand, Theodor and his friends retain the advantage of contact with the physical both in and out of Traum's extraordinary conjurations. The ignitable tobacco, the puddle, and the leaf all existed familiarly in the real world prior to being acted upon by Traum. The result of the actions was the provocation of the

rational tendency to question, to seek cause, to know why. Thus, the mode of sense here acts, as it ought to, as an instigator of reasoning.

Certainly, dream is emphasized in Twain's study. He has perfected the use of dream through the course of several works. In this final encounter with dream, Twain does not submerge Theodor in the subconscious dream-world as he had done with Henry Edwards in "The Great Dark," but he definitely establishes a dream atmosphere, starting with the misty description at the opening of The Mysterious Stranger: ". . . Austria was far away from the world, and asleep, and our village was in the middle of that sleep, being in the middle of Austria. It drowsed in peace . . . news from the world hardly ever came to disturb its dreams . . ." (Blair, p. 306; Gibson, p. 35). Later, visits with the old castle serving-man, Felix Brandt, are described and these reinforce the dream atmosphere. Brandt tells stories "about old times and strange things" while the boys "smoke with him . . . and . . . drink coffee," the latter a pleasantry to which Brandt had been introduced by the Turkish prisoners when he fought in "the siege of Vienna" (Blair, p. 309; Gibson, p. 43). The combined references to smoking, Turkish prisoners, and ghost tales conjure up visions of exotic coffee houses complete with hookahs (water pipes) and hallucinated "pipe dreams."

But, as previously stated, Twain doesn't exile Theodor in dreamland. In fact, he carefully protects his character from that

possibility by assigning the generation of phantasmagorical elements to the talented Philip Traum who is definitely a more developed character than his predecessor in "The Great Dark." Theodor retains the detached objectivity that Henry Edwards lost when he physically entered into the scope of what he had first only observed under his microscope. Colin Wilson's remarks seem relevant. Detachment is a quality of divinity, and, according to Wilson, "the human lack of detachment" ought not to be since "humans are able to achieve quiescence, 'breathing space' in which we can take a detached point of view. If it was a life or death importance that we learned by these moments of insight, men would quickly become something closer to being godlike."¹⁵ Theodor and Traum are separate entities in this story; thus, Theodor is able to take a detached point of view toward Traum's revelations, making his evaluations of them more accurate and drawing him closer to the quality of divinity. Theodor is the main character, and, although he does care about them, he is not tied by his friends to narrow perspectives as was Henry by his family. What had most convinced Henry that his dream was the reality can be identified as his wife's assertion that it was. The tie being so very intimate, like Eve's to Adam ("bone of my bone"), exercised a much stronger influence on Henry than did the tie of friendship on Theodor who is more objective. Thus, Theodor's rational faculties are not distracted from constantly assessing and evaluating the conflicting data logged into it by the perceptual apparatus of sense and imagination.

Some of Traum's magic manipulations educe horror and disgust from Theodor: when Traum transports Theodor at the latter's thought to the interior of a jail, executioners are seen in the process of driving "splinter after splinter under . . . [a heretic's] nails"; to Theodor's declaration that "it was a brutal thing," and he rebukes Theodor for insulting innocent brutes (Blair, p. 334; Gibson, p. 72). Traum attributes the cause of this misbehavior in Theodor to the Moral Sense, the very criterion for labeling good and evil with which Twain had long struggled.

As if to verify the strength of this Moral Sense, Theodor feels constrained "to reform Satan [Traum] and persuade him to lead a better life" (ironic in view of the final admonition by Traum in the conclusion), suggesting that Traum "consider the possible consequences of a thing [in Gibson: "an act," p. 112] before launching it in that impulsive and random way of his;" by which advice Traum is only "amused and surprised," denying any random quality in his deeds (Blair, p. 350; Gibson, p. 112). He further delineates the disparity between Theodor's and his own perception of his actions which Theodor has presumed to judge:

Man's mind clumsily and tediously and laboriously patches little trivalities together and gets a result--such as it is. My mind creates! . . . anything it desires--and in a moment . . . and out of the airy nothing which is called Thought.

(Blair, p. 352; Gibson, p. 114)

Thus, succinctly does Twain, through Traum's criticism of Theodor, describe what seems to be his own stumbling acquisition of knowledge--this in the very first version, manuscript form, of the various ones Twain attempted. One can conclude as a result of its location that, although the manuscripts of The Mysterious Stranger are all abortive, the direction of Twain's developing thought is even now tending toward the conclusion he voiced in the third manuscript. Even though the written versions are not unified, the body of thought is.

Twain has Traum/Satan jolt Theodor's mind with fantasies and visions. Traum presents not only a side trip into the future of an industrialized France but also a panoramic vision of all history, the most extensive of imaginative flights Theodor experiences. The conclusions to which Theodor reasons as a result of these vistas are depressing because Traum has stripped the world he reveals to Theodor of a compassionate God, obliterating any logic in the idea of a Moral Sense, removing all hope of reward for effort, all hope of love, all hope of retribution for injustice. But Twain's first manuscript never gets much further than the "razz-ma-tazz" of magic and a soured aftermath of humanity disparaged.

It is no wonder, then, that Paine yielded to the temptation to tamper with Twain's aborted manuscripts to achieve the whole toward which, obviously, Twain had been laboring (not to excuse Paine's fraud but merely to view it objectively). Nonetheless, it is in that grafted conclusion that the mind of Twain achieves its

own personal vision of God. It is Traum (called "44" in Twain's third manuscript) who does the verbalizing: "Life itself is only a vision, a dream" and "Nothing exists save empty space--and you!" He continues:

"And you are not you--you have no body, no blood, no bones, you are but a thought I am but a dream, creature of your imagination"

"I am perishing already you will be alone . . . forever--for you will remain a Thought, the only existent Thought, and by your nature inextinguishable, indestructible Dream other dreams, and better!" (in Blair small "t" for thought, pp. 387-388; Gibson, p. 404)

Divested of body, liberated to thought, elevated to the height, the uniqueness of the only Thought existing out of time and space infinitely, all reality explained away as foolish emanations of this original Thought toying with its own power, the mind of Twain blazes forth his vision--GOD-HEAD! Yet, only for a moment does this flash of insight flame through the void, this glimpse of man as God. In the end, Twain needed only a page or two to record what all his years of perceptual groping had led him to.

The "creature of . . . imagination," Traum, Theodor's and, therefore, God's dream, has already begun to fade out as the perceptual climax is reached. This creature represents the other self, like the part of himself that forced Twain to know the difference between good and evil no matter how incongruently society may have chanced to bestow these labels. It was this other self in Twain that had tortured him all those years, goading him on past brief reflection, chasing as he fled into imagination, and now still thrusting the barb into him even as he exorcizes its presence by writing his manuscript: "And You are but a Thought--a vagrant Thought, a useless Thought, a homeless Thought, wandering forlorn among empty eternities!" (Blair, p. 388; Gibson, p. 405; again, in Blair "You" and "Thought" are not capitalized). Once recognized, the purpose of the other self is fulfilled and it can disappear.

Significant, perhaps, is the fact that capitalization is an accepted convention when referring to God. It may be that Paine, besides deceiving Twain's readers, has also diminished the power of Twain's original meaning in demoting those two key words to lower case. Nevertheless, with that final twist of the barb, the stranger vanishes--be he named Traum, Satan, 44, or even conscience, leaving Theodor (August in the third manuscript) "appalled," knowing "that all he had said was true" (Blair, p. 388; Gibson, p. 405).

If all Traum said was true, several implications of that truth must be considered. Traum says that Theodor is an indestructible

Thought, the only Thought. This is an acceptable definition of God; therefore, Traum/dream is saying that Theodor (meaning "gift of God") is God. Traum/dream also says that he himself is Theodor's/God's dream. If Theodor is God and Traum is God's dream, what Traum says can be termed divine revelation. Theodor is right to accept the dream, then, since by this analysis it is divinely revealed. When God pays attention to His own dream, He is appalled, lonely, and forlorn because of what His dream has made Him see about the things His thinking has created. Through Traum, Theodor's/God's dream, Twain has forced God to re-evaluate His own thinking.

The same thing has happened to Twain's God that happened to Henry Edwards in "The Great Dark." He, like Henry, had been drawn down the tunnel of the microscopic focus He created and become embroiled in that narrow perspective. Once within that focus, He lost both the scope of His broader vision and the control of the narrower one. Through Traum/dream, Twain has God recommending to Himself that he draw back out of the drop of matter He had created and regain control. From that vantage point, He can presumably re-dream, re-think, re-create, eliminating the evils and injustices to which Twain so objected. Thus, in a few lines of a fragmented manuscript, Twain presents his most provocative thought, and through its presentation, resolves his years of struggle with the problem of evil.

For Twain, that problem had its origin in the deficiencies of the Calvinistic God, the irrational God, the hard-hearted,

cruel, non-compassionate God to Whom Twain was introduced in his childhood. That narrow vision of God resulted from the loss of a concept of eternal world order and was the product of the contracted perspective of modern man. Twain had no formulated theory, such as the Chain of Being to aid him in his search for understanding. But the tools with which he became proficient, the modes of perception, circumvented that deprivation because inherent in them is the idea of ascendancy--from the lowest to highest perception. Certainly, Twain developed his power of literary expression through exploration of these modes--as attested to by the examination in this paper of selected samples of his writing. In the process of that development, without the security and stability of a formula for eternal world order to use as the foundation for his perceptual development, Twain succeeded in coming to terms with the contrariety of evil co-existing with good.

Endnotes

¹ Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, editors Hamlin Hill and Walter Blair in The Art of Huckleberry Finn, (1962; rpt. Scranton, Pennsylvania: Chandler Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 37-38. Further references to be identified in text as HF.

² Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (New York: New American Library, 1963), p. 321. Further references to be identified in text as CY.

³ Mark Twain, "The Great Dark," editor Bernard DeVoto in Mark Twain: Letters from the Earth (1938; rpt. New York: Perennial Library, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 186. Further references to be identified in text as TGD.

⁴ William Barrett, Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1958), p. 4. Further references to be identified in text as Barrett.

⁵ DeVoto, editor, Letters, p. 236.

⁶ DeVoto, p. 239.

⁷ Mark Twain, "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," editor Walter Blair in Selected Shorter Writings of Mark Twain (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 245. Further references to be identified in text as TMTCH.

⁸ Mark Twain, "Letters from the Earth," in DeVoto's Letters, p. 11. Further references to be identified in text as LFE.

⁹ Mark Twain, "The Damned Human Race," in DeVoto's Letters, p. 166. Further references to be identified in text as TDHR.

¹⁰ Mark Twain, "Letters to the Earth," in DeVoto's Letters, p. 103. Further references to be identified in text as LTTE.

¹¹ Mark Twain, The War Prayer (1923; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1971), ll. 3-4. Further references to be identified in text as TWP.

¹² William M. Gibson, Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 1. Further references to this text and to its various versions of The Mysterious Stranger will be identified in text as Gibson.

¹³ James Livingston, "Names in Mark Twain's The Mysterious Stranger," American Notes and Queries, 12 (March 1974), pp. 108-109.

¹⁴ Mark Twain, The Mysterious Stranger from The Mysterious Stranger and Other Stories (1916; rpt. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962, editor Walter Blair, Selected Writings), p. 388. Further references to be identified in text as Blair and correlated with Gibson (Gibson, p. 405).

¹⁵ Colin Wilson, The Occult (New York: Random House, Inc., 1971), p. 88.

Chapter V: Conclusion

That John Milton in his Paradise Lost exemplifies author acceptance of the Chain of Being theory, the world view prominent in the seventeenth century, has been noted in the foregoing examination. That this view not only formed a solid foundation for the epic but enhanced it as well has also been pointed out. By the eighteenth century, obviously, this world view was in the process of change--a modification inadvertently instigated by the advances of science--notably the advent of the microscope. Jonathan Swift put the attributes of the latter discovery to good use in his Gulliver's Travels, magnifying as well as telescoping his characters. In so doing, he was reflecting developing interest in specialized, limited vistas as opposed to an all-inclusive vision of eternal world order. At the same time, he exposed the folly of men who masquerade irrationality in the guise of reason. His challenge of traditional views harbingered Mark Twain's nineteenth-century dispute with the restrictive religious viewpoint he inherited, a legacy of the Protestant Reformation. As William Barrett explains, ". . . Protestantism fitted in very well with the New Science . . . unveiled nature as a realm of objects hostile to the spirit . . . [helped] to strip man naked . . . of all the mediating rites and dogmas . . ." ¹ Thus,

the God to whom Twain was introduced was not the God that Milton knew, nor was Twain comfortable with this God. The selection of Twain's works surveyed in this paper illustrates Twain's exploration of the modes of perception, a tenuous connection to the "chain concept," now fallen into disuse. Although these modes parallel the higher links in the Chain of Being, they cast only a shadow of that comprehensive concept. Nevertheless, through analysis of the use of perceptual modes in samples of Milton's, Swift's, and Twain's writing, it has been shown that man, when he is excluded from a comprehensive view of the universe such as Milton had, may at first be distracted by the sharpness in a lesser vision, like the vision focused on by Swift, but will eventually be goaded to search for fuller answers, as Twain was, to explain the deficiencies and evils in the universe which the focused viewpoints do not adequately account for.

In the fifteenth century, Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola "declared that man was only a little lower than the angels, a being capable of descending to unclean depths, indeed, but also having it in his power to become godlike."² In contrast to this potential, man found himself inextricably involved in the quandary occasioned by the presence of imperfections, of evils, which obviously exist in the universe. In the presence of such evil, Adam and Eve, the heroes of Milton's Paradise Lost as well as of the creation myth, met their moment of truth.

William Barrett in Irrational Man spoke of the ancient Greek philosophers who propounded "a total vision of man and the cosmos in the light of which the individual's whole life was to be lived" (Barrett, p. 5). By the light of such a vision, Milton illuminated his epic recording of Adam's and Eve's encounter with evil. That scope of "total vision" is inherent in the Great Chain of Being concept, and its achievement by human beings is facilitated by their power to advance step-by-step up the levels of perception to produce the most complete comprehension possible to them of God and His intentions for the universe.

Mirandola, in the Middle Ages, had said that ". . . smitten by ineffable love as by a sting, and like the Seraphim born outside ourselves, filled with the godhead, we shall be no longer ourselves, but the very One who made us."³ It was to this godhead that Eve and then Adam, like Satan, aspired--but not through ineffable love for their Creator which way, according to Mirandola, would have been acceptable. On the contrary, they tried to abridge the process, disrupting their perceptual prowess and, in effect, denying the Chain of Being. Although Adam and Eve seemed innocent dupes in the hands of the wily Satan, who assessed their weakest points in order to there infect them with evil, the analysis demonstrated that they ought not to have contracted that deadly disease. They not only had access to heightened perceptual faculties by virtue of their

as yet unblemished innocence, but they also were blessed by extraordinary graces from God to strengthen their natural powers. It was proven that they were guilty of transgression against God because they opted to exalt something lesser than Him Who had created all things. This sin was in nature very like Satan's who through pride exalted himself though he was only a created being.

Adam and Eve turned their backs on their Creator to concentrate on the lowest perception available to them--sense. But they were not discarded by God. As Milton verified, the "chain," of which they were part, permitted mobility and, thus, the possibility of return to Divinity from the ignominy of their animality. They underwent rigorous self-recrimination which eventually reopened the other perceptual avenues to them and earned them the promise of future redemption and, ultimately, reunion with God. Plainly then, the idea of a Chain of Being provided the cornerstone of stability in Paradise Lost, and it is through the perceptual modes that both Adam and Eve--and the reader as well--comprehend the security this "chain" offered.

But when science began to subvert the natural development of perception by its focus on the material aspect of man, on the senses as routes to knowledge and on the power of human reason to analyze sense data, the upper end of the Chain of

Being--province of divine perception (intelligence)--began to diminish in importance, the lower end deposing it. Thus was generated the satirical indictment of man by Swift in Gulliver's Travels, of man engrossed in the magnificence of human rationality, misled to abjure his own species, to adulate an apparently rational species of horse.

This mis-vision mired Gulliver in irrationality where he forfeited all the progress he had made in developing his sensory and imaginative capabilities. Gulliver's visits to Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa and its surrounding areas, and, finally, to the country of the Houyhnhnms were instrumental in sharpening his faculties of sense, imagination, and reason. In Lilliput, Gulliver's magnified size demanded a child-like focus on the impressions received by his sense. Because his body loomed in gigantic proportion to those of the Lilliputians, the simple process of caring for it assumed major importance, necessitating mobilization of the tiny community to surmount the difficulties of the project. Such emphasis on physical needs and proportions resulted in Gulliver's concentrated awareness of sensory perception.

The move to Brobdingnag telescoped his dimensions, conversely magnifying the size of the inhabitants of that country and forcing comparative observations from Gulliver which served to expand his familiarity with his imaginative as well as his sense powers. His next sojourn introduced him to the Laputan's

irrational elevation of pseudo-reason and honed the edge of his own rational perception. Nevertheless, he soon blunted that keenness in the Houyhnhnms' land where the display of reason by horses infatuated him with those animals. The attenuation of perceptual development which thereafter precluded Gulliver's full comprehension of reality was characteristic of the effect wrought by technology's obsession with the particular as opposed to the universal. In this author's opinion, it were ~~better for~~ Gulliver--and the race of man--had they heeded an earlier Boethian admonition:

The human race alone lifts its head to heaven
and stands erect, despising the earth. Man's figure
teaches, unless folly has bound you to the earth,
that you who look upward with your head held high
should also raise your soul to sublime things, lest
while your body is raised above the earth, your mind
should sink to the ground under its burden.⁴

Had Gulliver raised his soul in that manner, he would not have mistaken reason for intelligence. As it was, his groveling in the stable of his own home represents the inverse alternative.

Although the biological revelations of the microscope had spurred discoveries which at first had seemed welcome evidence that a chain of being truly existed, as remarked above, the

discoveries themselves became the focal points of study and were no longer used to support the Chain of Being theory. The theory, jettisoned on the periphery of study, no longer was relevant to the contracting field of vision. Russell Kirk in the introduction to Pico Della Mirandola's Oration alludes to "the modern notion that 'man makes himself' and that an honest God's the noblest work of man."⁵ Indeed, by the nineteenth century, man was busy making himself. Factories, steam ships, "progress"--man certainly seemed to be reshaping the world.

Discussing the changes in the modern world, Barrett says that science, Protestantism, and capitalism were "at the gateway that leads from the Middle Ages into the modern world" (Barrett, p. 27). His comments on the stripping of man by science and Protestantism occur at the beginning of this chapter, and his further notation concerning Protestantism and capitalism is equally revealing:

. . . Protestantism was much in accord with the spirit of capitalism For several centuries the two went hand in hand, ravaging and rebuilding the globe Even in the midst of the nineteenth century, when capitalism had also succeeded in erecting the worst slums in human history, the Englishman Macaulay could comment smugly that the Protestant nations are the most energetic and prosperous

(Barrett, pp. 29-30)

This was the world into which Twain was born; and the strain of Protestantism which he inherited was of the strictest vein--Calvinistic Puritanism.

But eventually, even modern man begins to notice that the changes he has produced in the world are not as good as when he first conceived them, that he has forfeited some greater vision for a smaller one, and that religious viewpoints of good and evil do not always agree with the truth in his heart. Here entered Twain, representative of the rare modern man who has discerned that humanity, perhaps, has erred. As a result, Twain rejected the botched and biased half-visions, laboriously producing a vision of his own, and demanded of himself the creation of what Kirk phrased, "an honest God."⁶ Twain produced several literary pieces in working out this conclusion.

The novel, Huckleberry Finn, provided excellent examples not only of Twain's acute sense perception (an ability which some men, entrenched in imagination or reason, have forgotten) but also of his ability to express these perceptions. In A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court and in "The Great Dark," Twain explored the domain of imagination from decidedly different angles, growing more and more familiar with the potential of this mode for expressing his discoveries about reality. "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" was a sedate expression in comparison to the increasing acrimony of "Letters from the Earth," "The Damned Human Race," "Letter to the Earth," and The War Prayer. But the

apocalyptic indictment couched in the conclusion of The Mysterious Stranger was the climax of Twain's long contention with the evils resulting from man's manipulation of the universe.

Lovejoy in discussing residual remnants of the defunct Chain of Being theory quotes Oken who says,

Man is the creation in which God fully becomes an object to himself. Man is God represented by God. God is a man representing God in self consciousness Man is God wholly manifested?

This is the God Whom Twain finally confronted, accusing Him of His gross errors. This is the man whom Twain confronted with the same accusations. Yet, be that God, man, or that man, God,-- the greatest impact derives from the affirmation that that being can and should "dream better dreams" (Traum to Theodor in The Mysterious Stranger). From eternal world order, man has moved to the concept of an order still in the process of becoming. If man has no formal concept by which to view the whole of the universe, he will first falter, then set out to develop one of his own.

Endnotes

¹ William Barrett, Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1958), pp. 27-28. Further references to be identified in text as Barrett.

² Russell Kirk in his introduction to Oration on the Dignity of Man by Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola, translated by A. Robert Caponigri (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1956), p. xiii.

³ Mirandola, Oration, p. 27.

⁴ Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, translated by Richard Green (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1962), p. 114.

⁵ Kirk, p. xiv.

⁶ Kirk, p. xiv.

⁷ Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (1936; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 321.

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