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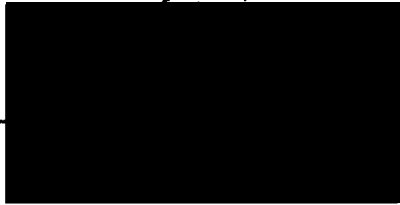
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Machine-Age Satire

English Literary Satire Between the Wars

by



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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at Dalhousie University, 9 January 1982.

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Abstract

This thesis examines various examples of English literary satire written between the two World Wars. It discusses satire's perennial concern with the dangers inherent in mechanical delusion and the horrors attendant upon a machine-based existence, and considers the ways in which this traditional theme occupies satirists of the inter-war period. It finds the modern satirist less concerned with the castigation of human vice and folly, or with the exposure of false individual or coterie values, and more intent upon alerting mankind to dangers which threaten to destroy his whole existence. Man's mechanical tendency is seen as having gained control of his destiny to such an extent that human identity itself, and the values which should inform human life, are now in doubt. The thesis identifies some of the ways in which the characteristic forms and tones of inter-war satire reflect the satirists' perceptions of a new and dangerous human predicament.

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Introduction

"We are probably on the threshold, according to all the signs and portents, of a great period of imaginative satire--the times are propitious." Wyndham Lewis' pronouncement appeared in Men Without Art (1934).¹ This thesis deals with literary satire between the two world wars. It attempts to identify the generic qualities characterizing satire written during that period in Britain and to assess in what way the inter-war years witnessed a resurgence of satiric art. Hence, it looks at writing about "the times," at writing which discusses the relationship between satire and "the times," and at various examples of literary satire produced between the wars.

The thesis is organized around a presiding motif: the image of the machine. The machine has been important as a reductive metaphor in the satire of many periods. In the literary satire written between the wars the machine is particularly prominent. An examination of its frequent and varied employment reveals a concerted attempt to provide a direct literary response to the exigencies of "the times." The machine image is often used to suggest the prevailing cultural tendencies of the whole inter-war period. The time between 1920 and 1940 is often referred to as the "Machine Age."² Hence, in the satire of these years, the image of the machine, which had previously been a reductive device--part of the satiric arsenal against epidemic vice and folly--becomes a way of characterizing a chronic ailment destroying a whole civilization.

The satirists included in my discussion do not all use the machine

image to the same extent. Nor do they all articulate the belief that their satire is intended to combat the hostile, inhuman forces of the Machine Age. But I do believe that they exhibit common preoccupations and fears about "the times," and that these common concerns affect the generic qualities of the satire which each writes. In the arrangement of the thesis I have tried to reflect differences in emphasis as well as to show prevalent trends.

Chapter I, "Machine-Age Anxieties," attempts to identify those preoccupations of the Machine Age which are important for my subsequent examination of satiric theories and satiric practices. My principal sources for this chapter are journal essays, books of "culture criticism" and imaginative writing which appeared between the wars. But I have not hesitated to turn to earlier adumbrative writing or to later works of commentary for helpful comparisons, signposts and summaries.

Chapter II, "Satiric Responses to the Machine Age," tries to trace the prevalent Machine-Age preoccupations identified in Chapter I in a wide range of satiric writing. My selection of examples is not intended to be exhaustive, but I have tried to be as eclectic as possible in my search for recurrent themes and attitudes. I am well aware that some of the examples I have chosen might not even be regarded as satire by a purist. I make no apology for this because it is part of my argument that "pure" or "traditional" forms of satire were, and were perceived at the time to be, inadequate for the demands of the Machine Age. I have tried to choose examples from the work of satirists of different ideological persuasions. However, I am conscious of the fact--and this is also true of the thesis as a whole--that there is a preponderance of work from what might be called the "Literary Right." This imbalance does not

reflect personal sympathies with ideologies of the Right. If, as some theorists believe, satire tends to be a conservative art, such a bias may be inevitable in any survey of satiric modes. I also hasten to add that the examples I have chosen are not all of equal literary merit.

Chapter II is necessarily superficial in its concern with broad trends. Chapter III, "Wyndham Lewis and the Machine Age," is an attempt to introduce some depth into the discussion. I regard Chapters III and IV--both on Wyndham Lewis--as the heart of the thesis. Chapter III is concerned with Lewis' provocative critique of the Machine Age which appears throughout the series of polemical books he produced between 1925 and 1933. The Art of Being Ruled (1926), Time and Western Man (1927), Paleface (1929), The Diabolical Principle (1931), The Doom of Youth (1932), and The Old Gang and the New Gang (1933) require a separate chapter for several reasons. To begin with, Lewis' diagnosis of Machine-Age ills in these works is comprehensive and illuminates the whole period. Lewis is deliberately contentious and fiercely idiosyncratic in these books, but he provides us with a study of what I feel are wide-spread anxieties about English, indeed Western, culture at that time. Secondly, some summary of these polemical books must be made before going on to discuss Lewis' theory and practice of satire. The polemics are reference books which help us to understand better Lewis' difficult satires. They also enable us to see why, as Frederic Jameson points out in his Fables of Aggression (1979), satire is not for Lewis merely "one mode of discourse among others," but amounts to a "whole world-view."³

Chapter IV, "Lewis' Satire," is concerned with Lewis' theory and practice of satire. It examines Lewis' claim, made in Men Without Art (1934), that he had revamped the genre to make it an effective antidote

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for "the times." It also compares some of the principal effects found in Lewis' satiric fictions with the tenets laid down in his satiric theory. No attempt is made to offer comprehensive critiques of The Childermass (1928), The Apes of God (1930), Snooty Baronet (1932), or One-Way-Song (1933). I merely select various qualities in these works which are relevant to my discussion and try to gauge their strengths and weaknesses as satires.

Aldous Huxley is another writer who, between the wars, repeatedly criticized Machine-Age culture. He also produced fictional works which might loosely be called satires, and which were a deliberate literary response to the Zeitgeist. Huxley's various essays, written during the 1920s and 1930s and, for the most part, collected in Proper Studies (1927), Do What You Will (1929), Music at Night (1931) and The Olive Tree and Other Essays (1936), in no way match the originality of Lewis' "culture criticism." But I treat Huxley in the same way that I treat Lewis in order to bring out parallels and divergences between the two. Hence, Chapter V, "Aldous Huxley and the Machine Age," is concerned with Huxley's evaluation of Machine-Age culture, while Chapter VI, "Huxley's Satire," looks at Huxley's fictional response to "the times." As with Lewis, I compare Huxley's statements about literary genre with those satiric fictions in which he puts his theory into practice. Once again, my intention is not to offer a thorough critique of Crome Yellow (1922), Antic Hay (1923), Those Barren Leaves (1925), and Point Counter Point (1928). I select some of the qualities of these works which are relevant to my general discussion and attempt some assessment of their success as satires. My basic point is that Huxley's novels of the 1920s are indirect attacks upon the Machine Age and preparation for the head-on assault on Machine-Age culture that comes in Brave New World (1932).

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I see no point in debating at length the question of whether Brave New World actually is a satire, or in noting in detail its well-known quantities. The book so obviously supports the general import of my argument that it matters very little whether the work is a satire or belongs to the related anti-utopian genre, examples of which span the period and which, as I discuss in Chapter I, contribute so much to the character of "the times." I am thinking here of E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops" (1909), Yevgeny Zamyatin's We (1924), Brave New World (1932), and Orwell's 1984 (1949).

Chapter VII, "The Satire of D. H. Lawrence," is a brief coda that needs some justification. We do not usually think of Lawrence as a prominent satirist and his small output of verse satire hardly seems to justify singling him out and placing him together with Lewis and Huxley. But, I hope it will be clear, it is not my intention in this thesis to establish a hierarchy of satirists or to quantify the production of satire. Had this been the case, the natural third member of the triumvirate would be Evelyn Waugh. But, it will be noticed, I have rather disrespectfully included Waugh in my general survey of satiric responses in Chapter II. There I quote extensively from Decline and Fall (1928), Vile Bodies (1930) and, to lesser extent, from A Handful of Dust (1934). I confess that Black Mischief (1932), Scoop (1938), Put Out More Flags (1942), and Brideshead Revisited (1945) do not fit neatly into my discussion. Nor do they contradict or invalidate my argument. The satirists in my discussion tend towards what Northrop Frye calls the "Menippean tradition" in their concern with the conflict of ideas rather than with character.⁴ Although broad cultural disturbances are present in Waugh's satiric novels of this period, he is less inclined than are Lewis and Huxley to overload his fiction with conceptual criticism of culture and overt intellectual debate.

Lawrence, on the other hand, is, like Lewis and Huxley, a self-appointed interpreter and scourge of mass civilization and the Machine Age. Also, although I am only concerned with the verse satires in Pansies (1928) and Nettles (1929), Lawrence's satire is of a kind which Auden, in The Dyer's Hand (1948), calls "prophetic denunciation," an epithet which is highly significant for my discussion and which is a helpful way of characterizing a great deal of Machine-Age satire.⁵ I bring him into my discussion because he concerns himself with many of the issues upon which I wish to concentrate and because certain generic qualities in his satire support my argument. But also, Lewis, Huxley, and Lawrence throw each other into relief by the stance which each takes towards the same cultural anxieties. The fact that they sometimes appear in each other's work is no coincidence. For example, Lawrence is attacked by Lewis in The Doom of Youth and parodied in Snooty Baronet. On the other hand, Lawrence is the model for Rampion, Huxley's paragon of positive values, in Point Counter Point. Huxley is satirized in The Apes of God by Lewis, and his work is the butt of Lewis' infamous 'Taxi-Cab Driver's Test for "Fiction"' in Men Without Art.

In my conclusion I attempt a summary of various qualities which I believe are to be found in the satiric literature I have discussed, and which make the inter-war years something of a distinct period of satire. My main point is that the preoccupations and characteristic tones found in the satires written between the wars reflect deep anxieties on the part of modern satirists. There is less confident debunking of individuals and coteries or strident condemnations of human vices and follies. Instead, we find an anxious inquiry into the human condition by writers who feel that civilization has fallen prey to forces which threaten human existence and human identity itself.

Notes

- ¹ Wyndham Lewis, Men Without Art (1934; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), p. 160.
- ² Siegfried Giedon, Mechanization Takes Command: a Contribution to Anonymous History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 41-2.
- ³ Frederic Jameson, Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist (London: University of California Press, 1979), p. 136.
- ⁴ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 308-14.
- ⁵ W. H. Auden, "Notes on the Comic," The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays (New York: Random House, 1948), p. 385. This essay was reprinted in Thought, XXVII (Spring, 1952), 66-9, and also in Ronald Paulson, Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1971), pp. 202-4.

Chapter I

Machine-Age Anxieties

We designate the period between the two World Wars as the time of full mechanization . . . at one sweep, mechanization penetrates the intimate spheres of life. What the preceding century and a half had initiated . . . suddenly ripens and meets life with its full impact. . . . It impinged upon the very center of the human psyche, through all the senses.

The opening scene of Chaplin's Modern Times (1935), shows "sheep rushing through a gate, and is immediately followed by shots of workers rushing out of the subway on their way to work."² The closing scene shows Charlie and his girl alone on a country road, "with undiminished courage, walking arm in arm down the road toward the horizon" (Huff, p. 261). In these two contrasting scenes we are presented with popular dualisms--the mass and the individual, city and country, automatism and free will, anonymous impassivity and personal emotion--which tell us how we ought to respond to the critical point which the film makes. The satire of Modern Times, Chaplin tells us, grows out of an impulse to "say something about the way life is being standardized and channelized, and men turned into machines" (quoted in Huff, p. 256). Chaplin's sense of outrage is rationalized quite explicitly in the two scenes in terms of a system of alternatives which he knows his audience will understand because they share his assumptions concerning the relative values of each alternative. It is often said that satiric humour and satiric attack "depend on certain conventions which are assumed to be in existence"³ before the satire begins; Chaplin would find it impossible to be critical or humorous if his

audience did not share his assumption that "the human" is more valuable than the "mechanical" or the "animal." So Chaplin is using well-established satiric conventions. Indeed, the film's presiding motif of human beings imitating the movements of "wood and rubber machinery painted to look like steel" (Huff, p. 252) is a satiric device "as old as the satiric tradition itself."⁴ But it is also part of a tradition of oracular and apocalyptic dismay concerning the machine's extinction of the human, which reaches a high level of intensity between the wars, and which prompts many satirists to say that the kind of assumptions which underlie Chaplin's satire in Modern Times can no longer be made.

Anxiety about machines during "Full Mechanization, 1918-39"⁵ occurs at a time when traditional distinctions between human, animal, and mechanical spheres are in dispute. Not only is the surface of the globe threatened by the mesh of a "titanic apparatus," but the machine is also usurping areas of thought and behavior once considered uniquely human. Satire itself is affected by this blurring of distinctions and becomes part of a protest-- "as futile as it was widespread"⁶--against the encroaching mechanical forces.

In 1929 William McDougall claims that the modern argument over mechanism is "the most important and burning question that confronts the mind of man at the present time."⁷ The question of which he speaks involves both a reiteration and a modification of arguments that appeared on previous occasions when ethics, human behavior and social thought were seen to be threatened by "Newtonian mechanism."⁸ But the modern debate is evidence of a much deeper uncertainty over the nature, origin, role and destiny of mankind. It includes discussion of the whole gamut of problems such as freedom of choice, the reality of human ideals and aspirations,

the value of moral effort and creative activity, and the pivotal concepts of individual purpose and responsibility. Satire has always been coloured by the particular stance which the satirist takes towards these questions; satire in the modern period continues to reflect assumptions drawn from this perennial debate. After the First World War the machine and the concepts which it spawns are seen as having won a practical victory, even though the time is rife with theoretical revolt concerning their status. This is so much the case that as early as 1917 John Gould Fletcher, in an essay in The Egoist, laments that "we live in an age when the machine is triumphant."⁹

Protest in the modern period inherits and modifies the "dark Satanic Mills" tradition of the nineteenth century. The indictments of Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold and Morris against new mass, commercial innovations focus upon the machine as the root and symbol of their grievances: "Figuratively, machinery was the predominant symbol of the age's harnessing of nature, and by easy extension it was also a symbol of social and political innovations" (Altick, p. 110). Rural memories feed nineteenth-century dissatisfaction with the new industrial society and its "utilitarian" mentality. The myth of the lost paternalist community sustains philippics against the application of "Newtonian mechanism" to ethics, human behavior and social thought. This same backward look is present in Chaplin's Modern Times, where it is diluted to a vague sentimentality. However, most modern satirists and thinkers believe that there can be no turning back.

During the course of the nineteenth century a line of thought is established which sees the physical instruments of production giving rise "in a direct and more-or-less compulsive way to new social relationships,

institutions, and cultural modes."¹⁰ The historical fact of the way machinery tends to order men's lives provokes a mode of literary consciousness which explores and extends the mechanical image, investing it with emotional and ideological trappings. Most famously, Dickens satirizes the spirit of Utilitarianism with his portrait of Gradgrind in Hard Times (1854), and Butler, in "The Book of the Machines" section of Erewhon (1872), exposes the Newtonian terminology which inspires the new ways of structuring human behavior:

"A man is the resultant and exponent of all the forces that have been brought to bear upon him, whether before his birth or afterwards. His action at any moment depends solely upon his constitution, and on the intensity and direction of the various agencies to which he is, and has been, subjected. Some of these will counteract each other; but as he is by nature, and as he has been acted on, and is now acted on from without, so will he do, as certainly and regularly as though he were a machine."¹¹

Nineteenth-century attacks upon the machine are a warning that in certain "Victorian habits of thought--not merely those of the Benthamites, which had a machine-like quality from the beginning--man and machine tended to merge" (Altick, p. 245). People begin to conceive of themselves and their social relationships in terms of the new machine-oriented language of the day:

The imagery and terminology of the machine, like that of finance, constantly crept into discussions of social topics, even religious ones. The machine's omnipresence and man's physical subjection to it had a psychic effect on people.
(Altick, p. 245)

By the modern period this process is seen as having reached its apogee.

The image of the machine is central to the feelings of apocalypse and social malaise that are ubiquitous between the wars. Mechanical

progress has corrupted the human mind itself until, as Henri Massis writes in 1926, "we are threatened with destruction by the very means by which we thought to live."¹² Arthur Penty laments that the confusion engendered by a century and a half of industrialism has brought "civilization to the verge of catastrophe,"¹³ and there is "no longer any concealing the fact that in the long run the uncontrolled use of machinery is a menace to organized society."¹⁴ Little can be done to avert disaster, a Criterion reviewer tells us in 1932, for "we are clearly overwhelmed and nothing short of a miracle . . . will avail to save us."¹⁵ Various books appear attempting to alert mankind to the dangers which the machine has engendered. In The End of Our Time (1933), Nicholas Berdyaev describes the machine as if it were a Frankenstein monster let loose upon the world,¹⁶ and Spengler, in his well-known The Decline of the West (1922), discusses the "mechanical drive" which so dominates modern man, as "part of man's nature which emerges at particular times in history."¹⁷ The state of western civilization is the outcome of an inevitable process in which the mechanical side of human nature has slowly but surely gained control of all of man's faculties:

The Scientia experimentalis, as Roger Bacon was the first to call nature-research, the insistent questioning of Nature with levers and screws, began that of which the issue lies under our eyes as a countryside sprouting factory-chimneys and conveyor-towers. But for all of them, too, there was the truly Faustian danger of the Devil's having a hand in the game, the risk that he was leading them to that mountain on which he promises all the power of the earth. . . . They listened for the laws of the cosmic pulse in order to overpower it. And so they created the idea of the machine as a small cosmos obeying the will of man alone. . . . Ever and ever again, true belief had regarded the machine as of the Devil.

(Spengler, p. 502)

In the shape of machinery the Devil is loose upon the face of the earth

and in the mind of man. Even staunch machine-critics, such as F. R. Leavis and D. Thompson writing in 1934, have to admit to a feeling of impotence in the face of this "progress" of the machine: "We must . . . realize that there can be no going back: it is useless to think of emulating the Erewhonians and scrapping the machine in the hope of restoring the old order."¹⁸

The anti-utopias which span the first half of the twentieth century are barometers indicating the degree of machine anxiety. Their nightmarish presentation of possibilities latent within the actual world shows how pervasive is the modern fear of machine-civilization. Forster's "The Machine Stops" (1909) adumbrates the totalitarian dismay which climaxes between the wars. Forster's hatred of machinery owes a great deal to Butler, and the humanist fears expressed in Forster's story are presented in terms that later become commonplace arguments against mechanization. Humanity has "overreached" itself, and has released a "Leviathan" upon the world over which there is no control. The machine is both the source and the symbol of these apocalyptic fears. Kuno, the rebellious and doomed hero of "The Machine Stops," makes the essential humanist plea:

'Cannot you see . . . that it is we that are dying, and that . . . the only thing that really lives is the Machine? We created the Machine, to do our will, but we cannot make it do our will now. It has robbed us of the sense of space and of the sense of touch, it has blurred every human relation and narrowed down love to a carnal act, it has paralysed our bodies and our wills, and now it compels us to worship it. The Machine develops--but not on our lines. The Machine proceeds--but not to our goal. We only exist as the blood corpuscles that course through its arteries, and if it could work without us, it would let us die.'¹⁹

Written before the deluge of the Great War, "The Machine Stops" can still present the hopeful backward look towards a past supposedly more commensurate

with human dignity than the mechanized present. Kuno claims that there is a remedy and this is "to tell men again and again that I have seen the hills of Wessex as Aelfred saw them when he overthrew the Danes."²⁰ Heroics are still possible; Kuno dies to stop the Machine. As he faces death he can reassure his mother that "humanity has learned its lesson" and that "we have come back to our own. We die, but we have recaptured life, as it was in Wessex when Aelfred overthrew the Danes."²¹

After the war the backward look loses its credibility and its adherents. The conditions of life under the Machine that Forster envisages are regarded as inevitable and inescapable. Yevgeny Zamyatin's We (1924) is another vision of the future based upon an extrapolation of certain present trends and is remarkably similar to "The Machine Stops" in the quality of life that it predicts. We are shown a "grandiose mechanical ballet" dedicated to "ideal nonfreedom."²² Man has been subordinated to the laws of mathematics and engineering. For instance, contemporary music is:

Crystalline chromatic scales converging and diverging in endless series--and the summarizing chords of the formulae of Taylor, of McLaurin; the full-toned, squarely-massive passages of the Pythagorean theorem; the pensive melodies of an expiringly oscillatory movement; vivid cadences, alternating with the pauses of Fraunhofer's lines--the spectral analysis of planets . . . What grandeur! What irrevocable regularity! (pp. 34-5)

Love, also, which "served the ancients as the source of countless silly tragedies" has been converted to a "harmonious, pleasantly useful organic function": (pp. 37-8) in this "perfect machine world" isolated from the "hideous world of trees, birds, animals" (p. 100). D-503, the book's hero, who has suspicious hair on the back of his hands and who is haunted by the

irrational "√-1," begins to develop more "human" characteristics as he moves towards the discovery of love and freedom. However, this time it is the Machine that wins. D-503 submits to the "Great Operation" which removes his budding human tendencies and makes him "perfect" and "on a par with machines" (p. 174). Unlike Forster's hero, Kuno, D-503 does not manage to penetrate the "Green Wall" back to the painful jungle of human values.

In Brave New World (1932), Huxley sees the chief danger to the "human" in mankind's capitulation to the mechanical logic of the biological and genetic sciences, but he obviously shares Zamyatin's fears concerning human enslavement to a world completely given over to the laws of technology. In 1984 (1949) Orwell shows us a totalitarian world in which the machine has joined forces with political ideology in order to expunge humanity. Both books are such well-known barometers of modern social anxiety that they need no explanation here. Orwell warns us long before 1984 that "the machine has got us in its grip and to escape will be immensely difficult."²³ The "process of mechanization is out of control" and its logical end is "to reduce the human being to something resembling a brain in a bottle" (p. 176). Orwell's most cogent statement of the nightmarish dangers latent in the machine occurs in The Road to Wigan Pier (1937), where he is concerned to defend Socialism from the "mechanical" charges laid against it. He draws convincingly upon traditional anti-machine arguments, but his suggestion that the "underlying ideal of Socialism; justice and liberty" (p. 189) will somehow prevent mechanical evils lacks conviction. He is certain that "the machine is the enemy of life" and that "it is only in our age, when mechanization has finally triumphed, that we can actually feel the tendency of the machine to make

a fully human life impossible" (p. 167). He obviously has a great deal of sympathy for those who complain of the "frightful debauchery of taste" that results from mechanization. Orwell is no "elitist," but he is convinced that "mechanization leads to the decay of taste, the decay of taste leads to the demand for machine-made articles and hence to more mechanization and so a vicious circle is established" (p. 180). Orwell, however, feels the need to be realistic about the situation and he acknowledges "the obvious fact that the machine has come to stay" and that it has "got to be accepted" (p. 178). Nevertheless, the image of the machine retains a mythological horror for him. He sees that "the process of mechanization has itself become a machine, a huge glittering vehicle whirling us we are not certain where, but probably towards the padded Wells-world and the brain in the bottle" (p. 182).

Orwell's tone, at times, recalls the author of "The Book of the Machines" in Butler's Erewhon (1872) who saw "no security . . . against the ultimate development of mechanical consciousness."²⁴ Other critics of culture between the wars express the same fear. F. R. Leavis and D. Thompson, for instance, emphasize that the machine has become an active agent in its own development and is beginning to establish its "spiritual dictatorship":

The great agent of change, and, from our point of view, destruction, has of course been the machine--applied power. The machine has brought us many advantages, but it has destroyed the old ways of life, the old forms, and by reason of the continual rapid change it involves, prevented the growth of new.²⁵

The fears concerning the obliteration of individuality and "human" worth expressed in the modern anti-utopias and by critics of modern "mass"

culture are fears over a mechanical world in which criticism and judgment are made meaningless. The machine aims at nothing except smooth-running self-perpetuation. What does not conform must be destroyed until, as D. H. Lawrence puts it, the machine spins in its "own Nirvana."²⁶ In such a world satiric criticism, based upon traditional norms of human behavior, is irrelevant. As Auden writes in "The Unknown Citizen," (1939), "Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd."²⁷

It is the all-pervasive nature of "Mechanism" which informs inter-war anxieties and makes them different from most nineteenth-century indictments. In the nineteenth century Carlyle complains that "our true Deity is Mechanism"²⁸ but he can still retain a "faith in the imperishable dignity of man" who can choose, if he wishes, to rid himself of the threat:

If Mechanism, like some glass bell, encircles and imprisons us; if the soul looks forth on a fair heavenly country which it cannot reach, and pines, and in its scanty atmosphere is ready to perish,--yet the bell is but glass; 'one bold stroke to break the bell in pieces, and thou art delivered!' Not the invisible world is wanting, for it dwells in man's soul, and this last is still here.²⁹

But modern Luddites confess to a "feeling of terrible impotence" in the face of the demon of mechanical progress. Karl Jaspers, for instance, writes in 1931 that "a feeling of powerlessness has become rife, and man tends to regard himself as dragged along in the wake of events which, when in a more sanguine mood, he had hoped to guide."³⁰

In a similar vein, Edward O'Brien, in The Dance of the Machines (1929), complains that the machine "disintegrates human nature, atomizes it, levels it, grinds all men and women down to the same standardized neutral character."³¹ Unfortunately, O'Brien tells us, the greatest threats occur

at a subconscious level, and men are just not aware of the advance of
 mechanism over their lives:

You have pinned so much faith on machines that you have largely surrendered your own minds and your own wills to them, so that your minds and wills are becoming less and less your own and more and more extensions of the machine. . . . If this tendency goes on much longer, you will begin to think in a machine-like way and to act entirely in a machine-like way, to organize yourselves as you have organized machines, to become more and more alike, and finally to reach the point where you will feel that there is not much difference between you and a machine.
 (O'Brien, p. 76)

The trouble with the machine is that it lacks responsibility to anything other than its own processes and this inadequacy "tends, by extension or contagion, to communicate itself to those closely associated with the machine" (O'Brien, p. 86).

Another typical argument is that the machine confuses means with ends and replaces qualitative with quantitative standards. This, Arthur Penty tells us in his 1931 essay, "Means and Ends," has inevitably led to social chaos. For the "present final stage" of social collapse produced by the machine is "but the logical consequence of its exclusive preoccupation with means to the neglect, not to say contempt, for ends."³² The machine has created a situation for man in which regimentation and discipline have replaced independence and self-reliance. Stuart Chase, in Men and Machines (1931), argues that man's sense of "personal liberty is aborted; his sensibilities blunted and debased. . . . He becomes a watcher and listener, rather than a creator--a second-hand man."³³ These are standard arguments against the machine and they add up to a general picture of the Machine Age which, as Victor Ferkiss has pointed out more recently, represents one of the great fears of "technological man." Man is "a cog in the machine, or

a product produced by it, or both. He is subject to forces beyond his control, just as are his fellows with whom he has become identical. Gone is freedom, gone is identity. Man is simply a machine in a society of machines, in a physical environment of machines."³⁴

Beneath the fear of the implacable onslaught of actual machinery which exists between the wars, there lies the suspicion of an inevitable interdependence between men and machines; a suspicion that the machine is concomitant with man; even that it is the outward manifestation of an inherent part of the human psyche. We find this notion, like others, adumbrated much earlier in 1872 by Butler's author of "The Book of the Machines," who explains that "man's very soul is due to the machines; it is a machine-made thing; he thinks as he thinks, and feels as he feels, through the work that machines have wrought upon him." This means, Butler's author tells us, that the machine's "existence is quite as much a sine qua non for his, as his for theirs."³⁵ Between the wars this feeling of inseparability is extremely prevalent. Many writers regret that, quite apart from the physical presence of machinery with which man has "begun to encrap the planet in a mesh of apparatus" so that we can "look forward to the day when the world will become one vast factory for the utilisation of its matter and energy" (Jaspers, p. 27), the machine has also realized a complete internal dominance. Mankind, we are repeatedly told, is experiencing a crisis which involves a struggle between opposing sides of man's own nature. In his influential Decline of the West (1922), Spengler, for instance, concludes that the mechanical side of human nature has gained a dangerous victory.

The years between the wars are also, Christopher Dawson writes in 1930, the "culminating point of the modern tendency to explain what is specifically

human in terms of something else."³⁶ This is another manifestation of the "Faustian passion" which, according to Spengler in The Decline of the West, "has altered the Face of the Earth" (Spengler, p. 503). The "Faustian inventor" is, for us, "in the blood" and it is he who has become "the slave of his creation". His number, and the arrangement of life as he lives it, have been driven by the machine on to a path where there is no standing still and no turning back" (Spengler, p. 504). Christopher Dawson acknowledges Spengler's diagnosis and notes in particular "the increasing acceptance of the mechanization of life which has characterized the last thirty years":

Above all, in the period since the war there has been a growing tendency toward the de-intellectualization and exteriorization of European life. The old fixed careers of social and moral conduct have been abandoned and society has given itself up to the current of external change without any attempt towards self-direction or the preservation of spiritual continuity.
(Dawson, p. 392)

A later commentator, Floyd Matson, tells us that the roots of the "Faustian passion" which led to this situation lie in the "vast perpetual-motion apparatus conceived by Descartes and perfected by Newton."³⁷ Their conceptions resulted in the "transformation of man himself, along with all of life, into the measurable and manipulable working parts of the great machine" (Matson, p. 11). Cause and effect replace notions of free will, purpose, and spiritual significance. Mechanical models are erected to account for what has previously been considered uniquely human. Newton's mechanical legacy can be detected also in Spinoza and Hobbes in whom "the mechanical philosophy came fully of age" (Matson, p. 11). Another precursor of Spengler's "Faustian inventor" was La Mettrie, who, in his L'Homme

Machine (1747), pleaded with mankind to accept mechanical concepts and to assume an ultimate material determinism controlling the whole of life. La Mettrie thought that there was nothing absurd in thinking that there are "physical causes by reason of which everything has been made, and to which the whole chain of this vast universe is so necessarily bound and held that nothing which happens could have failed to happen."³⁸ As one of La Mettrie's modern apologists has said, "the ghost of La Mettrie, during the past century and a half, has never been so much alive."³⁹ Although La Mettrie reached his conclusions "with the aid of mechanical analogues so relatively crude as . . . clock-like automata,"⁴⁰ the man-machine concept in the twentieth century has been raised to a new level of meaning and has entered on "its golden age."⁴¹ La Mettrie suggested that all distinctions between man, animal and machine should be abolished. Men are "at bottom only animals and machines" and we should "conclude boldly that man is a machine, and that in the whole universe there is but a single substance differently modified."⁴²

The nineteenth century saw man's "Faustian passion" for mechanical thought making massive strides in the form of "Utilitarianism" which was, as Élie Halévy has said, "nothing but an attempt to apply the principles of Newton to the affairs of politics and morals" (quoted in Matson, p. 18). Floyd Matson describes how utilitarian thinkers proceeded:

The first step, for James Mill as for Bentham, was to devise a mechanistic explanation for mental events (by means of associationism); next to do the same for social events; and finally to erect a scaffolding of moral and legal theory which would present not only explanation but vindication of the program on strictly scientific grounds.

(Matson, p. 18)

By the time of "full mechanization" between the wars, anxiety is caused by

a feeling that these tendencies of applied "Newtonian mechanism" have triumphed completely in men's minds, and have become generally accepted accounts of human behavior. They form the acknowledged base of all thought about government, social organization and human behavior to the exclusion of human and spiritual premises. Man has passively accepted his mechanical role and now assumes, Jaspers writes in 1933, that "his being consists primarily of his existence in economic, sociological, and political situations, upon whose reality everything else depends" (Jaspers, pp. 29-30). Although the "old ties of caste have been loosened," they have been replaced by the new mechanical tyranny which demands a "new restriction of the individual to some prescribed status in the sociological machinery." This means that "less than ever, perhaps, is it possible for a man to transcend the limitations imposed by his social origins" (Jaspers, p. 30). Men have begun to conceive of each other as various parts of a machine and this is revealed in the language that they are beginning to use. Edward O'Brien observes in 1929 that "it is significant that we are already beginning to speak about the 'malleability' of peoples," and invites us to search our "minds for other expressions which tend to be used with regard to human beings, although they are primarily mechanical terms" (O'Brien, pp. 188-9). And once again there is the feeling that man is helpless in the face of this invasion of machine-based thought. Man, declares Hermann Broch in a Criterion essay of 1932, is "helplessly caught in the mechanism of the autonomous value-systems and can do nothing but submit himself to the particular value that has become his profession, he can do nothing but become a function of that value."⁴³ Broch's views are echoed by Jaspers who feels that "we circle in a whirlpool which only discloses things to us

because we are dragged along in its eddies" (Jaspers, p. 37).

Of the new intellectual disciplines which writers between the wars single out for criticism, psychology assumes a particular importance. Freud laid himself open to attack in his early "Project for a Scientific Psychology" (1894) in which his debt to the machine-based concepts of Newtonian physics is quite clear in his basic terminology:

The intention of this project is to furnish us with a psychology which shall be a natural science; its aim, that is, is to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determined states of specifiable material particles and so to make them plain and void of contradictions. The project involves two principal ideas:--

1. That what distinguishes activity from rest is to be regarded as a quantity (Q) subject to the general laws of motion.
2. That it is to be assumed that the material particles in question are the neurones.⁴⁴

Even as late as Civilization and its Discontents (1930), Freud's basic assumption is still that he can explain human actions in terms of determinate psychogenetic causes. He insists that "it is very far from my intention to express any opinion concerning the value of human civilization," and continues:

I have endeavoured to guard myself against the enthusiastic partiality which believes our civilization to be the most precious thing that we possess. . . . I know very little about these things and am sure only of one thing, that the judgments of value made by mankind are immediately determined by their desires for happiness; in other words, that these judgments are attempts to prop up their illusions with arguments.⁴⁵ (emphasis added)

Psychology, in its neglect of human values, is as culpable as other new disciplines derived from the same mechanical base. Edward O'Brien, in 1929, insists that psychology teaches that man is the "puppet" of his subconscious

and thus detracts from the significance of human behavior by reducing it to inner drives and impulses over which man has no "conscious control." Freud "has broken down the sense of personal responsibility to a point at which industrialism can step in and assure man that he had best depute his responsibility entirely into the safe hands of the kindly machine" (O'Brien, p. 215).

Freud's account of human behavior is especially important for the satirists of the period. Satire has traditionally rested upon the assumption that the individual is responsible for his external behavior. But, as Floyd Matson has pointed out, Freud gives "no quarter to illusions of creative striving or freedom of the will, let alone to the notion of a responsibly reasoning ego" (Matson, p. 187). Freudian theory clashes with traditional satiric art because, ultimately, it relieves the individual of the autonomy and responsibility that satire says he must assume.

In the area of political thought Marx is the period's most prominent Faustian devil because, Christopher Dawson says in 1930, he has sacrificed humanity to an "inhuman economic whole" (Dawson, p. 392). Marx's commitment to machine-based concepts is clear in his preface to Capital (1867), where he claims that the ultimate aim of his work is "to lay bare the . . . law of motion of modern society" (quoted in Matson, p. 27). Engels announces in Anti-Duhring (1877) that "Marxian dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of Nature, human society and thought" (quoted in Matson, p. 256), and claims throughout his work that "dialectics reduced itself to the science of the general laws of motion--both of the external world and of human thought--two sets of laws which are identical in substance."⁴⁶ In condemning the whole of humanistic morality as bourgeois, Marx, Dawson believes, has

merely substituted the "machine, not only as the basis of economic activity, but as the explanation of the mystery of life itself" (Dawson, p. 392). Also, as Huntley Carter had insisted as early as 1915 in an Egoist essay, the tendency of Marxists to replace knowledge of individual beings with conclusions about mankind at large is a symptom of the mechanical times because it shows quantitative group concepts replacing individual values. Carter believes that "if human beings are to move significantly in any direction they must not be tied up in inseparable bundles called groups, guilds, and communities:"

Each must belong wholly to himself or herself. Each must be free to feel, act and choose a path of his or her own. The social or artificial restraint of differences in human beings is slowly but inevitably making for the destruction of the human soul.⁴⁷

The Marxist attempt to explain human consciousness as a function of a sociological situation, a mental superstructure erected upon the foundation of material realities, is seen by many as a misguided and dangerous bid to reduce all human life into the mechanical laws of matter in motion. Marxist thought is felt to have a great deal in common with La Mettrie's conception of man as "the living image of perpetual movements."⁴⁸ Edward O'Brien, for instance, in The Dance of the Machines (1929), sees the "ideology of machinery" reaching "fantastic heights in post-revolutionary Russia." He quotes Pokrovsky, "the great historian of Soviet Russia," explaining the significance of Lenin to the proletarian masses:

'We Marxians do not see personality as the maker of history, for to us personality is only the instrument with which history works. Perhaps the time will come when these instruments will be artificially constructed, as today we make our electrical accumulators. But we have not yet progressed so far; for the

moment, these instruments through which history comes into being, these accumulators of the social process, are still begotten and born in an entirely elemental way.'

(Quoted in O'Brien, pp. 181-2)

Inevitably, many of the charges of mechanical superficiality made against Marxism by critics such as O'Brien, are made by others against socialist thought in general. For instance, an anonymous reviewer in the Egoist in 1914 is confident that "all thinkers of any value have risen superior to the environmental conditions accidental to their age. It is a sufficient condemnation of the Socialist thinkers to state that they have not."⁴⁹ The socialist conception of the individual person as the mere product of a particular time and place robs man of the self-determination that other political creeds espouse as a justification for their social and economic policies. Hence the critics of Marxist theory, and socialist thought in general, draw attention to the mechanical analogues and the Newtonian laws of physical motion which they see as informing socialist dogma. Socialist thinkers fail to see that man is more than just the outcome of the general laws of motion which govern the material universe.

It is the theory of Friedrich Juenger that "an advanced stage of technology is accompanied by mechanical theories of the nature of man . . . and all things step by step assume the character of machinery, of a reality understood in terms of machine-like function."⁵⁰ This phenomenon and its inherent dangers are repeatedly commented upon in the period between the wars. K. E. Barlow, for instance, in a Criterion essay of 1938, notes how the change in conceptual imagery used by Darwin and Huxley to describe the process of evolution indicates the way the machine inevitably comes to structure human understanding. He points to the change from Darwin's "garden" metaphors to T. H. Huxley's "mechanical" analogies. Huxley's

interpretation, Barlow points out, "was translated into the language of the day, and the observed processes were cast in terms of the newly-grasped processes of the machine":

Nature ceased to have the character of a person or a God, and became a cold, unintelligent association of cause and effect similar in type to the material sequences which the machine had brought to life. In that movement the breadth, depth and beauty of the architecture of the organic world was lost sight of.⁵¹

Between the wars this tendency has produced a complete "Machine Age" in which, Barlow concludes, "we have the habit of believing . . . that man's part in life is to adjust himself to the current conditions."⁵²

An extreme and often-ridiculed example of this machine-pervasiveness in thought is seen in the "Behaviorist" theories of Dr. J. B. Watson, an influential American psychologist whose work was much debated in England between the wars. Watson's views, as Floyd Matson points out, "epitomize the outlook of a mass society over which mechanization had taken command-- whose ruling norms were those of industrial efficiency and technical proficiency" (Matson, p. 42). Watson's professed aims have a great deal in common with the vision that Aldous Huxley creates in Brave New World: "Mr. Watson states that the real goal of behaviorism 'is to provide the basis for the prediction and control of human beings'" (O'Brien, p. 219). It is Watson's wish to free the world from its history and tradition and to run human beings according to standards which are "materialistic, mechanistic, deterministic and objective" (Matson, p. 39). Behaviorism is, Edward O'Brien concludes in 1929, "an experimental attempt to substitute mechanical specifications instead of humanizing education in bringing up children and in disciplining adults" (O'Brien, p. 222). The fundamental

assumption of behaviorism is that all human behavior can be accounted for in terms of mechanical stimulus-response processes. Behaviorism's aim is to provide a precision instrument for social manipulation. Bertrand Russell identifies the links between behaviorist principles and the mechanical laws of Newtonian physics. He insists that behaviorism is nothing more than "an attempt to deduce ethics from a system based on physics."⁵³ Russell refutes the scientific, "objective" stance which behaviorists adopt towards the world and which they claim as a justification for their methods:

I find that behaviorism does tend, however illogically, to have an ethic in the proper sense of the word. The argument seems to be: since the only thing we can do is to cause matter to move, we ought to move as much matter as possible; consequently art and thought are valuable only in so far as they stimulate the motions of matter. This, however, is too metaphysical a criterion for daily life; the practical criterion is income.⁵⁴

Watson's method, Russell discerns, is to take the general assumptions behind the "spiritual dictatorship of machinery" and marry them to the "materialist" aspirations of the age. He quotes a typical example of Watson's thinking:

One of the most important elements in the judging of personality, character and ability, is the history of the individual's yearly achievements. We can measure this objectively by the length of time the individual stayed in his various positions and the yearly increases he received in his earnings.⁵⁵

Behaviorism illustrates the tendency for the machine to furnish more than a model for scientific investigation; the machine tends, as Matson says, "to become the dominant symbol of munificence and beneficence pervading the whole of life: the fountainhead from which all blessings flow"

(Matson, p. 42).

Critics of each of these trends emphasize the common mechanical base which they share "in conformity with the general mood of the time" (Jaspers, p. 158). The image of the machine has replaced "the human image which was once impressed so clearly on our western civilization, but which now has become disfigured and defaced" (Dawson, p. 395). They feel that the claims to objectivity which the new forms of knowledge make are no safeguard; "objectivity" is merely an invitation to exploitation by the mechanical processes of mass society. The "new knowledge" supplies the theoretical justification for the values spawned by mechanical progress. Jaspers summarizes the general opposition to the "new knowledge":

Marxism, psychoanalysis, and ethnological theory (eugenics) have peculiarly destructive qualities! Just as Marxism assumes all spiritual life to be no more than a superstructure erected upon material foundations, so does psychoanalysis believe itself able to disclose this same spiritual life as the sublimation of repressed impulses . . . all these . . . trends incline to destroy what has been of worth to man. Above all they are ruinous to whatever is unconditioned, since, as knowledge, they parade as a false unconditioned that which cognises everything else as conditioned. . . . The . . . trends in question are in conformity with the general mood of the time. (Jaspers, pp. 157-8)

Various attempts are made during the period to remove the root of the problem by attacking the basic premises of "Newtonian physics" which have, by process of analogy, provided the new disciplines with their theoretical base. In biology, for example, Eugenio Rignano, in his Man not a Machine, a Study of the Finalistic Aspects of Life (1926), argues that it is a fundamental mistake to regard any organism as a machine. This book brings a rebuttal from Joseph Needham called Man a Machine; in Answer to a Romantical and Unscientific Treatise (1927), in which he argues that although the mechanistic view of life is a "methodological fiction," it is

still necessary to insist that "in science, man is a machine; or if he is not, then he is nothing at all."⁵⁶ In the sphere of science generally Alfred Whitehead, in Science and the Modern World (1925), attacks the roots of mechanism in Descartes who, in assuming that bodies and minds are independent substances, initiated human degeneration. The "independence ascribed to bodily substances [carries] them away from the realm of values altogether. They degenerate into a mechanism entirely valueless except as suggestive of an external ingenuity."⁵⁷ This means, as Whitehead points out, the inevitable expulsion of the concept of purpose from the universe. A later historian of ideas, Floyd Matson, agrees with Whitehead that Descartes makes of nature "a machine and nothing but a machine; purposes and spiritual significance [have] alike been banished" (Matson, p. 6.). Herbert Read, in 1926, hails Whitehead's book as "the first attempt to issue out of a certain way of thought which has prevailed since Descartes' day."⁵⁸ New complexities in physics itself, Read feels, have completely shattered the "old orthodox assumptions" of Newtonian mechanics:

These complexities are, briefly, the theory of relativity which destroys the presumption of a definite present instant at which all matter is simultaneously real, and the quantum theory, which even more drastically, destroys the assumption of continuity in space. . . . Such discoveries cannot be reconciled with the concept of the world as a uniform mechanism, subject to all-pervading laws of nature.⁵⁹

In 1925 Whitehead makes the same point, declaring that science has reached a turning point because the "old foundations of scientific thought are becoming unintelligible":

Time, space, matter, material, ether, electricity, mechanism, organism, configuration, structure, pattern, function, all require reinterpretation. What is the sense of talking about

a mechanical explanation when you do not know what you mean by mechanics?⁶⁰

A. S. Eddington, another philosopher of science, points out in The Nature of the Physical World (1927) how conceptions of scientific law have been affected by the new discoveries. Determinism is removed and evolutionary materialism, which denies the possibility of purpose and free-will, is now seen to be the result of a hidden tautology. However, William McDougall in Modern Materialism and Emergent Evolution (1929) regrets that, although Whitehead and Eddington have destroyed the old mechanical shibboleths, the old habits of mechanical thought remain. The recognition of a need to break the grip of mechanism remains theoretical and literary: "The basic outcome of over a century of anti-industrial polemics in England was clear. No one was listening save the critics themselves."⁶¹

The fears for the future of the "human idea" which inform the academic debate emerge at a more popular level in indictments of "mass civilization" and its effects upon human values and human worth. Man's dependence upon machinery means the forfeiture of any notions of particularity. Free-will and individual purpose become fantasies, and the individual can no longer be considered ultimately responsible for his behavior. In the new concepts of "Mass" man and "Economic" man the individual is a calculable "unit" of economic society, no more consciously self-directed than any other component of the market-place. Physical and mental "apparatus" has reduced man to the status of a "function" in which he has no obligation to behave according to any standards other than those which the machine dictates to him. Reduced to the level of a thing and "harnessed" in an apparatus directed by an alien will, men do not exist, Jaspers laments, except in the "titanic

interlocking wheelwork of which each worker is one of the cogs" (Jaspers, p. 37).

C. E. M. Joad, in "The Babbitt Warren" (1926), calls modern man a "mere cog in a producing machine. What goes into the machine and what comes out of it are alike beyond his knowledge and control" (quoted in O'Brien, p. 26). The "Faustian passion," Jaspers concludes, has resulted in human "oblivion" because man's "outlooks upon past and present" have shrunk so much that "scarcely anything remains in the mind but the bald present." Man's life "flows on its course devoid of memories and foresights, lacking the energy derivable from a purposive and abstract outlook upon the part played in the apparatus" (Jaspers, p. 52). In such a world of "interminable mimicry" criticism and judgment of any kind cease to have a meaning or a function. Significant criticism is now "dispersed and decayed" (Jaspers, p. 83), and no longer has the means by which to offer guidance or judgment concerning human behavior. It is a world in which the possibility of choice between alternative modes of behavior has disappeared.

Spengler describes the "modern sorcerer" as being "a switchboard with levers and labels at which the workman calls mighty effects into play without possessing the slightest notion of their essence" (Spengler, p. 500). This "workman" or new "mass" man is both the victim and the embodiment of "Faustian passion." In a Cornhill essay entitled "The Omnipotent Machine" (1928), W. F. Watson asks his readers to "stand at any busy street corner and watch the set faces of the drivers of the public conveyances," and to note "the stiff mechanical actions of the arms and legs as they manipulate steering-wheel, gears, and brake" (quoted in O'Brien, pp. 30-1). It is the "mass" order which "brings into being a universal life-apparatus,

which proves destructive to the world of a truly human life" (Jaspers, p. 45). However, no one can escape because the mass order inevitably controls the activities and habits of everyone: "The masses are our masters; and for everyone who looks facts in the face his existence has become dependent on them, so that the thought of them must control his doings, his cares, and his duties. . . . He belongs to the masses" (Jaspers, p. 43). It is not only the machine-attendants who are the replaceable cogs in the wheelwork. It is also, notes the reviewer of Ortega y Gasset's The Revolt of the Masses (1932), the "professional experts, scientists, doctors, politicians etc.," who are "representative of the mass mentality."⁶² The knowledge which the experts use is "machine-spawned" because such fields as "sociology, psychology, and anthropology teach that man is to be regarded as an object concerning which something can be learnt that will make it possible to modify this object by deliberate organization" (Jaspers, p. 158).

The picture which emerges from this collection of indictments suggests that the horrors portrayed in We and Brave New World are an accurate reflection of inter-war anxieties. Critics of the machine feel that they are living in the shadow of a Frankenstein monster which, as Stuart Chase writes, "falls with sinister menace across the upward-reaching pathway of the race. We are all classified, standardized, regimented; while our human life and individuality are stifled and dwarfed."⁶³ Mankind has "released from the womb of matter a Demogorgon which is already beginning to turn against him and may at any moment hurl him into the bottomless void."⁶⁴ Frankenstein's shadow falls darkest in the American "Babbitt Warren" but, concludes F. R. Leavis in 1930, the "same processes are at work in England and the western world generally, and at an acceleration."⁶⁵

In April, 1921, Basil De Selincourt, in The Times Literary Supplement, announces that "everyone is agreed that machinery, in spite of all the advantages it has brought us, has greatly increased the difficulties of existence by its depressing effect on individual worth."⁶⁶ Anxieties continue unabated throughout the inter-war years. During the thirties, in various essays, Bertrand Russell asks whether "machines" will "destroy emotions, or will emotions destroy machines"? Russell is aware that "this question was suggested long ago by Samuel Butler in Erewhon, but it is growing more and more actual as the empire of machinery is enlarged."⁶⁷ When historians write that the most significant fact between the wars is "the rise of the masses"⁶⁸ or "the discovery that the individual no longer counted,"⁶⁹ they are documenting changing concepts of human behavior and new perspectives upon the individual's responsibility for his actions and his social worth. Satire, pre-eminently the art of criticism of human, social behavior, has to come to terms with these new concepts. In the following chapters I will discuss various satiric responses to the new Machine-Age conditions.

Notes

- ¹ Siegfried Giedon, Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 41-2.
- ² Theodore Huff, Charlie Chaplin (New York: Henry Schuman, 1951), p. 258. All further references to this book appear in the text.
- ³ Northrop Frye, "The Nature of Satire," The University of Toronto Quarterly, 14, No. 1 (October, 1944), 77.
- ⁴ Leonard Feinberg, Introduction to Satire (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1967), p. 47.
- ⁵ Giedon, p. 41.
- ⁶ Victor C. Ferkiss, Technological Man: The Myth and the Reality (New York: George Braziller, 1969), p. 66.
- ⁷ William McDougall, Modern Materialism and Emergent Evolution (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1929), p. 12.
- ⁸ Richard D. Altick, Victorian People and Ideas (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1973), p. 119. All further references to this book appear in the text.
- ⁹ John Gould Fletcher, "The Death of the Machines," The Egoist, 4, No. 3 (April, 1917), 45.
- ¹⁰ E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican Books Ltd., 1968), p. 209.
- ¹¹ Samuel Butler, Erewhon (1872; rpt. London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), p. 208.

¹² Henri Massis, "Defence of the West, 1," The Criterion, 4, No. 2 (April, 1926), 227.

¹³ Arthur J. Penty, "Means and Ends," The Criterion, 11, No. 42 (October, 1931), 1.

¹⁴ Penty, p. 1.

¹⁵ F. McEachran, review of The Revolt of the Masses, by Ortega Y. Gasset, The Criterion, 12, No. 46 (October, 1932), 146.

¹⁶ Nicholas Berdyaev, The End of Our Time, trans. Donald Attwater (London: Sheed and Ward, 1933).

¹⁷ Oswald Spengler, The Decline of the West, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson (1922; rpt. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1934), II, 500. This book was first printed in 1922 in Munich. The first English edition appeared in 1926. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹⁸ F. R. Leavis and D. Thompson, Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness (London: Chatto and Windus, 1934), p. 96.

¹⁹ E. M. Forster, "The Machine Stops," Collected Short Stories (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1954), p. 131.

²⁰ Forster, p. 131.

²¹ Forster, p. 146.

²² Yevgeny Zamyatin, We, trans. Bernard G. Guerney (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 22. All further references to this book appear in the text.

²³ George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (1937; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 185. All further references to this book appear in the text.

²⁴ Butler, p. 189.

²⁵ Leavis and Thompson, p. 3.

²⁶ D. H. Lawrence, "Oh Wonderful Machine," The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, eds. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 643.

²⁷ W. H. Auden, "The Unknown Citizen," Collected Shorter Poems, 1927-1957 (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 147. This poem first appeared in The Listener, 3 August 1939.

²⁸ Thomas Carlyle, "Signs of the Times," Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, 2, Vol. 27 of The Works of Thomas Carlyle, 30 vols. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1899), p. 74.

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³¹ Edward O'Brien, The Dance of the Machines (London: Jonathan Cape, 1929), p. 82. All further references to this book appear in the text.

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³⁶ Christopher Dawson, "The End of an Age," The Criterion, 9, No. 36 (April, 1930), 392. All further references to this work appear in the text.

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⁵⁷ Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World; Lowell Lectures, 1925 (1926; rpt. New York: Macmillan, 1946), p. 280.

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⁵⁹ Read, p. 582.

⁶⁰ Whitehead, p. 24.

⁶¹ Quoted in Ferkiss, p. 65.

⁶² McEachran, p. 144.

⁶³ Chase, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁴ Chase, p. 15.

⁶⁵ F. R. Leavis, Mass Civilization and Minority Culture (Cambridge: The Minority Press, 1930), p. 7.

⁶⁶ Basil de Sélincourt, "Industry and Humanity," The English Secret and Other Essays (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1923), pp. 136-7.

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⁶⁸ Geoffrey Barraclough, An Introduction to Contemporary History (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 124.

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Chapter II

Satiric Responses to the Machine Age

"The Secret of the Machines"

(Modern Machinery)

We were taken from the ore-bed and the mine,
 We were melted in the furnace and the pit--
 We were cast and wrought and hammered to design,
 We were cut and filed and tooled and gauged to fit.
 Some water, coal, and oil is all we ask,
 And a thousandth of an inch to give us play;
 And now, if you will set us to our task,
 We will serve you four and twenty hours a day!

We can pull and haul and push and lift and drive,
 We can print and plough and weave and heat and light,
 We can run and jump and swim and fly and dive,
 We can see and hear and count and read and write!

Would you call a friend from half across the world?
 If you'll let us have his name and town and state,
 You shall see and hear your crackling question hurled
 Across the arch of heaven while you wait.
 Has he answered? Does he need you at his side?
 You can start this very evening if you choose,
 And take the Western Ocean in the stride
 Of seventy thousand horses and some screws!

The boat-express is waiting your command!
 You will find the Mauretania at the quay,
 Till her captain turns the lever 'neath his hand,
 And the monstrous nine-decked city goes to sea.

Do you wish to make the mountains bare their head
 And lay their new-cut forests at your feet?
 Do you want to turn a river in its bed,
 Or plant a barren wilderness with wheat?
 Shall we pipe aloft and bring you water down
 From the never-failing cisterns of the snows,
 To work the mills and tramways in your town,
 And irrigate your orchards as it flows?

It is easy! Give us dynamite and drills!
Watch the iron-shouldered rocks lie down and quake,
As the thirsty desert-level floods and fills,
And the valley we have dammed becomes a lake.

But remember, please, the Law by which we live,
We are not built to comprehend a lie,
We can neither love nor pity nor forgive.
If you make a slip in handling us you die!
We are greater than the Peoples or the Kings--
Be humble, as you crawl beneath our rods!--
Our touch can alter all created things,
We are everything on earth--except the Gods!

Though our smoke may hide the heavens from your eyes,
It will vanish and the stars will shine again,
Because, for all our power and weight and size,
We are nothing more than children of your brain!¹

This poem of Kipling's appeared in his A History of England (1911). As a poet of empire, Kipling is necessarily an apologist of machines. It is the spread of machinery over the earth that makes empire possible. In the engineer, the imperialist sees a modern conquering hero. However, in his role of imperial conscience, Kipling dutifully points to the inherent dangers of machinery. The offering of power in the third stanza recalls obvious Biblical parallels of temptation. For the machine is the symbol of human pride; it represents man's attempt to control the physical universe and make himself independent of divine fiat. It embodies a belief that man can define progress in his own terms.

Stephen Spender points out, in The Struggle of the Modern (1963), that the "modern world is the expression of human inventive genius stimulated by the irresistible urge of the human dream of Progress."² The popular myth of Progress is closely scrutinized between the wars. In the literary satire of the period it is possible to detect a general outcry against mankind's non-discriminating adherence to the sophistries of mechanical Progress. Behind diverse satiric modes and declared objectives

lies the realization that forms of machinery, far from enhancing the "human," are, in fact, sacrificing it to meaningless processes. Spender summarizes the problem which, I will argue in this chapter, occupied many satirists between the wars:

Yet the automatism of the world of scientific invention, governmental power, and consumer needs, results in a sense of everyone living amid doomed impersonal, and perhaps self-destructive, forces. In the course of arrogating to himself such immense powers for realizing his vision in steel, concrete, plastics, energy, man has not been able to build into the system of mechanistic wish-fulfillments corrective checks to his own impulses. Thus the machinery of progress, while undoubtedly adapted to diffusing the material benefits which fulfil needs of charity and justice, also multiplies to an almost infinite extent the powers of the forces of self-interest. Both principles, justice and injustice, charity and power, are equally realizable by progress. The individual finds himself an ineffective spectator of the competition between forces of constructiveness and destructiveness within the material achievement of machine-realized wishes.³

The holocaust of the First World War (in which the horrors of no-man's land revealed that the machine could indiscriminately devour the "human"⁴), made it quite clear that something was happening to western man that he could not control. Before the war the cataclysmic dangers besetting mankind were not fully appreciated. The full extent of the machine's influence was obscured by an adherence to the values of an older civilization. In "The Secret of the Machines" Kipling warns that the machine's touch "can alter all created things," but he is confident that the machine's "smoke" will "vanish and the stars will shine again." In retrospect we see the irony of such an assertion. The "smoke" does not clear; it is "the stars" which vanish in the deluge of the Great War. After the war when, as in Yeats' "The Second Coming," "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,"⁵ many

writers admit to a feeling of helplessness in the face of the mechanical Leviathan that has emerged as the new controller of man's destiny. Yeats shudders at the "rough beast" with "a gaze as blank and pitiless as the sun" whose hour has "come round at last." Post-war satirists, as I shall demonstrate in my following chapters, see parallels between the plight of modern man and situations which, until the twentieth century, had only appeared in the nightmare worlds of satiric fiction. They often claim that they are merely presenting "the truth" about the modern world, not amusing distortions of it. They seem to feel as though the mechanical perversions which Swift could ridicule in, for example, Gulliver's voyage to Laputa are now a real part of man's normal life.

We must be wary, of course, of accepting such claims at their face value. Satirists have ever been fond of justifying their unpopular art with assertions that they are revealing a truth which their victims would do well to face. Pope claims that "honest" men have nothing to fear from him; only "babbling blockheads" fail to recognize that his satire is truthful exposition: "Who reads, but with a lust to misapply, / Makes Satire a Lamoon, and Fiction, Lie."⁶ More recently, Philip Roth has claimed that satire only uses distortion to bring out an underlying truth: "Distortion is a dye dropped onto the specimen to make vivid traits and qualities otherwise only faintly visible to the naked eye."⁷

But neither Pope nor Roth would claim that their satire is "literal" truth. As I shall show, Machine-Age satirists often seem convinced that what passes for "normality" in the modern world is itself so distorted that all they can do is to present the reader with the actual truth. Such a belief seems extraordinary, especially when we call to mind some of the satiric distortions which appeared between the wars. Works such as

Rex Warner's The Wild Goose Chase (1938), or Wyndham Lewis' The Childermass (1928), or Aldous Huxley's Brave New World (1932), could hardly be called examples of literary verisimilitude. But the claim to truthfulness is one, I think, which indicates the degree of revulsion which the satirist feels for modern normality. It is meant to tell us as much about the satirist's own uncompromising values as about the world he chooses to portray. The notion that satire can be realistic, rather than distortive, persists. Bernard Levin, for instance, reviewing a translation of Alexander Zinoviev's satire upon Soviet society, The Radiant Fire, assures us that "this is not fantastic satire, but realistic":

Realistic satire sounds like a joke itself, but there is only one test for it: could the extravagant imbecilities that he depicts happen in the Soviet Union exactly like that? They can, and they plainly do; indeed, some of the grotesques that fill its pages are not only drawn from the life, but are recognisable portraits of particular individuals (such as the Lenin Prizewinner Khvostov, with his "phenomenally stupid and pretentious book," who is plainly the odious Sholokhov), their conduct not even caricatured but simply set down.⁸

Levin's purpose--in telling us that life in the Soviet Union consists of such "extraordinary imbecilities" that all the satirist can do is to record them faithfully--is to present us with confirmation of his own inveterate and implacable hatred of the Soviet Union. We can see something similar going on behind the more extreme claims of Machine-Age satirists. The satirist finds the normal world distorted because it is at odds with his own behavior and code of values. This may, at times, be mere elitism. The reader is left to compare the real world, which the satirist claims to record accurately, with the values of the satirist who cannot reconcile himself with human normality.

But, over and above such cultural elitism, there is at least one sense

in which the claims to fictional truth might be more acceptable. As I will argue in later chapters, satirists such as Aldous Huxley, Wyndham Lewis and D. H. Lawrence often seem less concerned with attacking and ridiculing modern "normality" than with using satiric modes to present a tragic truth about the human condition. They see man as being estranged from himself in a world dominated by machines that are the outward manifestation of an abstract and mechanical part of human consciousness. Satire's perennial concern with the "Mechanical Operation" of the human spirit becomes, between the wars, an indictment of a whole civilization which offers no status to the individual human being. In the modern world there is no consensus of "right-thinking" people to which the satirist can appeal against the effects of machinery. The result is that satire becomes less of a formal genre which ridicules vice and folly, and functions more as a critical tool in a heterogeneous defence of the "human idea" itself. The modern satirist's concern to draw attention to the social and spiritual desiccation that now characterizes western civilization is an attempt to convey a tragic truth that goes beyond mere distortive ridicule.

Modern satirists provide the age with a critical analysis of its "accelerated grimace." However, in the introduction to his anthology of twentieth-century verse satire, A Vein of Mockery (1973), James Reeves claims that the "major purpose of the satire of this century has been to entertain, to give pleasure through humour and skilled writing."⁹ Nothing could be further from the truth as regards the satirists I intend to discuss. Both in their remarks about satire and in their works, they firmly eschew writing satire which entertains. They use satire as an instrument for serious analysis. Satire between the wars has very little to do with "amusement," or with the "freemasonry which exists between

people of like mind."¹⁰

Nor do we find spurious polemicism or parasitic inadequacy of the kind described in the following poem by Louis MacNeice. As a satirist himself, MacNeice is guilty of none of the faults he attributes to that literary type. This "popular" portrait of the satirist as a failed and inadequate artist does little justice to those practitioners of the art of satire between the wars who believed that they were using their talents in the defence of human civilization:

"The Satirist"

Who is that man with the handshake? Don't you know;
He is the pinprick master, he can dissect
All your moods and manners, he can discover
A selfish motive for anything--and collect
His royalties as recording angel. No
Reverence here for hero, saint or lover.

Who is that man so deftly filling his pipe
As if creating something? That's the reason:
He is not creative at all, his mind is dry
And hears no blossoms even in the season,
He is an onlooker, a heartless type,
Whose hobby is giving everyone else the lie.

Who is that man with eyes like a lonely dog?
Lonely is right. He knows that he has missed
What others miss unconsciously. Assigned
To a condemned ship he still must keep the log
And so fulfil the premises of his mind ¹¹
Where large ideals have bred a satirist.

Fatuous destructiveness, literary profiteering, frustrated creativity, lack of human concern and professional jealousy are not typical of the satirists in my discussion. They maintain a credibility by showing themselves to be fully aware that a too-confident condemnation of folly, based upon a social consensus of values and beliefs, would be inadequate and out-of-place. Writers as disparate in their beliefs as Waugh, Huxley,

Auden and Wyndham Lewis see themselves engaged in a rearguard action to defend the values and conditions which they believe make human life and creativity possible. After the failure of imperial aspirations and the loss of confidence in the Progress myth, such satirists see hubris springing from that part of human consciousness which has an affinity for the machine. They present Machine-Age man as an overreacher, and warn of the Nemesis that awaits the unbridling of man's "Faustian passion."

We find satirists such as Rex Warner, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley and Wyndham Lewis making the machine an explicit symbol of all that is wrong with man's consciousness and with social organization. They satirize what they see as a now-real Laputa. They insist that satire can no longer use the machine as a metaphor for human folly, but must face directly the actual machinery that dominates the world in which they live. They recommend and attempt to practise a type of satire which avoids making an appeal to "normal" common sense; the professed target of their satire is what, in the modern world, has become the accepted "normality." However, besides the detailed and far-reaching examinations of the Machine Age provided by these writers, there is an awareness on the part of many satirists between the wars that the plight of the individual in the modern mechanical world necessitates a re-orientation of satiric art. From a wide range of apparently contradictory beliefs and outlooks, there emerges a common revulsion for the world that the machine has produced. There is little agreement concerning the causes and possible solutions to Machine-Age problems. Indeed, there are occasions when one satirist will deliberately attack the beliefs of another as being symptomatic of the mechanical malaise. But the satire of the period does share a concern that human identity itself is being threatened by rampant manifestations

of the "Mechanical Operation" of man's spirit.

This satiric concern for man's mechanical overreaching manifests itself in various ways. Sometimes the machine is used as an overt symbol of the desiccation of modern consciousness and as the cause of the social vacuum left by the supersession of the "human idea." In the work of some satirists the machine plays a more peripheral role, or the symptoms it represents are embodied in other images and symbols. However, there are several ways in particular in which we can see a need to escape the modern Laputa informing the many varieties of inter-war satire. In Chapter I, I drew attention to prominent Machine-Age anxieties. For the remainder of the present chapter, I intend to demonstrate how those anxieties manifest themselves generally in the satire of the period. Time and again the same point is made by differently-motivated satirists. Man is repeatedly portrayed as the plaything of forms of mechanical power over which he has no control. The grim irony of the situation is that man himself has created mechanical power and is thus inflicting a punishment upon himself. The irremediable despair which is often found in the satire of the Machine Age is born of a fear that, though man sees the Leviathan he has loosed upon the world, he does not have the moral strength or the physical means to rid himself of it. The machine is the symbol of man's masochism. In this 1932 poem by John Lehmann, for instance, man is presented as being mesmerized by the monster which he has created and which threatens to destroy him completely:

"This Excellent Machine"

This excellent machine is neatly planned,
 A child, a half-wit, would not feel perplexed;
 No chance to err, you simply press the button--
 At once each cog in motion moves the next,

The whole revolves, and anything that lives
 Is quickly sucked towards the running band,
 Where, shot between the automatic knives,
 It's guaranteed to finish dead as mutton.

This excellent machine will illustrate
 The modern world divided into nations:
 So neatly planned, that if you merely tap it
 The armaments will start their devastations,
 And though we're for it, though we're all convinced
 Some fool will press the button soon or late,
 We stand and stare, expecting to be minced--
 And very few are asking Why not scrap it?¹²

The actual machine of the first stanza becomes, in the second, the world political-situation which everyone watches with a fascination born of horror, but about which no one seems to be able to do anything. The poem is singularly undistinguished and its formal structure (heavily underscored for us by the first line of the second stanza) is aimed, unashamedly, at simple instructions. But what feeling the poem does contain illustrates that the satirist is principally motivated by an equal combination of anger and despair. This poem makes a link, one that is constantly made in the satire between the wars, between machinery and inevitable holocaust. Its tone shows the satirist moving away from ridiculing his target (the mechanical paralysis of the modern world) towards pleading shrilly with its victims.

Man's plight before such an inhuman monster was revealed in all its horror during the First World War.¹³ In the post-war period, revulsion for the battlefields of Europe is accompanied by the realization that the mechanical forces which created the "wasteland" have not been appeased. The machine's limitless appetite for destruction continues and intensifies, making another holocaust inevitable. The link between the destruction of the past war and anticipation of a future conflagration appears, for

instance, in Siegfried Sassoon's post-war satire. The anger and despair which we can see in Lehmann's poem over mankind's apparent unwillingness to "scrap it" are also frequent elements in Sassoon's condemnation. The mechanical trap of the present renders the future witheringly problematic. The mechanical products of man's overreaching will become the agents of his destruction. Sassoon, in his 1933 poem, "The Ultimate Atrocity," hears an "aeroplane--what years ahead / Who knows?":

. . . --but if from that machine should fall
The first bacterial bomb, this world might find
That all the aspirations of the dead
Had been betrayed and blotted out, and all
Their deeds denied who hoped for mankind.¹⁴

Prompted by such anxieties, Sassoon pleads for the absolution and deliverance of man "from this hell / Unto unmechanized mastery over life."¹⁵ He is haunted by the fear that man fumbles and dithers like a sorcerer's apprentice under the weight of the forces he has foolishly unleashed. The world left after the machine has devoured the "human" completely will, of course, be organized mechanically. The totalitarian hell, which Sassoon envisages as man's fate, is a Spenglerian marriage of scientific achievements and traditional Christian evils. As with Lehmann's "This Excellent Machine," the following 1933 satire by Sassoon, which first appeared in The Road to Ruin, employs little artifice to conceal the mixture of anger and hopelessness in the face of blind philistinism:

"News From the War After Next"

The self-appointed Representative
Of Anti-Christ in Europe having been chosen
As War Dictator, we are pledged to live
With Violence, Greed, and Ignorance as those in
Controllorship of life . . . The microphone
Transmits the creed of Anti-Christ alone.

The last idealist was lynched this morning
 By Beelzebub's Cathedral congregation--
 A most impressive and appropriate warning
 To all who would debrutalize the Nation.

Our dago enemies having tried to kill us
 By every method hitherto perfected,
 We launch to-morrow our great new Bacillus,
 And an overwhelming victory is expected.

Thus, Moloch willing, we inaugurate
 A super-savage Mammonistic State.

(Collected Poems, p. 203)

Individual vices and follies become insignificant in the face of worries about total human destruction. If it is to retain its authority to castigate human behavior, satire must take account of prevailing fears. It must reflect the predicament that man finds himself in.

We can see Machine-Age satire attempting to do this in various ways. Most obviously, we see satirists making use of images of actual machines-- particularly forms of transport--as revealing symptoms of cultural malaise. Or, sometimes, the machine takes on mythological trappings and becomes a kind of wicked, devouring Minotaur demanding human sacrifice. We find, also, frequently-recurring Machine-Age landscapes, invested with a symbolic significance for the works in which they appear and warning the reader of the inhuman forces that are shaping the real world. Common too are presentations of Machine-Age thinking; the tendency to use the machine and the laws of Newtonian physics to explain human conduct which, as I pointed out in Chapter I, reached its apotheosis in the writings of W. F. Watson and the Behaviorists. Most important of all, we see an ubiquitous fear that human identity is being destroyed by those forces which the machine represents. Characters in inter-war satire rarely embody vices or follies. They are used to show how human personality itself is disintegrating. Examples of these various forms of machine-

pervasiveness are found in the work of many satirists.

The delusive operation of man's "Faustian passion," which will eventually lead to total destruction, or a totalitarian living death, is nowhere more apparent than in the modes of mechanical transport that are spreading their mesh across the earth. The satiric use of transport images to indicate the treacherous path along which mankind is heedlessly heading is the obverse of the Imperialist's admiration of the machine as an expression of man's conquering spirit. However, in using transport analogues, satire merely partakes of a symbolism commonly used to suggest the movement of the modern world. When Eliot, for instance, wishes to allegorize modern life, the railway train presents itself as an obvious correlative:

When the train starts, and the passengers are settled
To fruit, periodicals and business letters
(And those who saw them off have left the platform)
Their faces relax from grief into relief,
To the sleepy rhythm of a hundred hours.
Fare forward, travellers! not escaping from the past
Into different lives, or into any future;
You are not the same people who left the station
Or who will arrive at the terminus,
While the narrowing rails slide together behind you.¹⁶

For Eliot, the railway is opposed to the "strong brown god" of the river, who is "Unhonoured, unpropitiated / By worshippers of the machine."¹⁷

When the symbol of the train is found in satire, the anxious restlessness of Eliot's presentation frequently remains a principal ingredient. For one of the common qualities of satire between the wars is that it is often as apprehensive as it is accusatory. We can see this particularly clearly in Edward Upward's nightmarish "The Railway Accident" (1928), in which a train journey provides a series of ridiculous but ominous episodes which

correspond with the central character's mounting anxiety neurosis. Hearn's individual impotence becomes more and more manifest as the accident approaches and he realizes that he is quite helpless to do anything about it. The steel rails which move people according to a pre-established plan are evidence of individual ineffectiveness and paralysing psychological fears. Men have no control over the forces that are hurling them along at speeds of which only the machine is capable.

Seen from different perspectives the train is used to represent various qualities in modern life which the satirist finds dehumanizing. Edgell Rickword, for instance, associates a passing train with the delusive cocoon in which the successful and comfortable inhabitants of the Machine Age have wrapt themselves, thus making human contact with the "coatless" poor impossible. These are the first two stanzas of his 1928 satire, "Ode to a Train-de-luxe":

On your sprung seats the Faithful glide
oblivious of the world that is,
O Pullmans where we never ride
to Brightons of remoter bliss.

We watch, our bowels gripped hard with spleen,
your soft, luxurious passing-by.
Do glass and varnish so serene
repudiate no human cry?¹⁸

For Rickword, the train provides a simple lesson in bourgeois insouciance. The "bowels gripped hard with spleen" have a melodramatic, insincere sound to them and the poem never rises above a forced and unconvincing anger. Caught in their comfortable machine, the "successful business-men" and their families are blind to the "world's dark edge." They fail to see that one day their devitalized comfort will be no defence against those who seek to found the "virile State." Unfortunately, Rickword seems not to

see the irony of his associating that "virile" state with a new form of transport that will make the train obsolete; "What rocket-plane shall pierce this fate / and hurl us past doom-destined space / where we might found the virile State, / pious Aeneas of the skyward Race?" (Collected Poems, p. 72).

Satire has always used mechanical images to castigate the myopia which continues to plague humankind. However, in Machine-Age satire, such images represent human entrapment within a society that has become almost totally dehumanized. For instance, a great deal of the vigour of the invective in the first part of Roy Campbell's "Junction of Rails: Voice of Steel," from Mithraic Emblems (1936), comes from the correspondence between his ingenious mechanical motifs and a world which already exists. The railway imagery conveys to us Campbell's feelings about the moribund machine-world of urban civilization:

Progress, the blue macadam of their dream,
Its railed and shining hippodrome of steam,
Glazed by cool horsepower, varnished clean with wheels,
Filming their destiny in endless reels,
Defers the formal ending of their scheme.

They greet each other in these gliding cars,
Read the same nightly journal of the stars,
And when the rail rings I can hear the bells,
Ringing for dinner in the world's hotels
And after that the closing of the bars.

Though they have taught the lightning how to lie
And made their wisdom to misread the sky
I hold their pulses; through my ringing loom
Their trains with flying shuttles weave a doom
I am too sure a prophet to defy.¹⁹

If the Eliot parallels are not deliberate ("the closing of the bars" recalls "the lighting of the lamps"; "flying shuttles weave a doom" echoes "vacant shuttles weave the wind") they are certainly reminiscent of the same

feeling of vacuous isolation and futile activity that we find in "Preludes," "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," "Morning at the Window" and "Gerontion," and serve to broaden the implications of the machine imagery. Criticism is tinged with sadness at the "endless reels" and the meaningless round of modern man's activities. The railway is a resonant symptom; the "plexus" of the modern world's "myriad schemes" and "purposes." The telling way in which Campbell uses the machine to explore, rather than to distort, an actual world is not sustained in the flabby unreality of the second part of his poem. Unfortunately, he elaborates too much on the "world unborn" that will replace the malaise of the "city horde." While Rickword leaves us to speculate about his "virile State," Campbell anticipates a future which is a nebulous compound of religion, beauty and violence. It has no credibility as an alternative to the real, machine-world of the present:

A sword is singing and a scythe is reaping:
 In those great pylons prostrate in the dust,
 Death has a sword of valour in his keeping
 To arm our souls towards the future leaping;
 And holy holy holy is the rust
 Wherein the blue Excaliburs are sleeping!²⁰

The perceptive truth, which is often the professed aim of modern satirists, is a reaction against the feelings about machinery which we find in a poem such as Stephen Spender's "The Express," which first appeared in Poems (1933). Against such puerile and unexplained worship of the "mystery" and "luminous self-possession" of mechanical power, satire provides a vigorous antidote:

Steaming through metal landscapes on her lines,
 She plunges new eras of white happiness,
 Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves
 And parallels clean like the steel of guns.

At last, further than Edinburgh or Rome,
 Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night
 Where only a low streamline brightness
 Of phosphorous on the tossing hill is white.
 Ah, like a comet through flame she moves entranced
 Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough
 Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.²¹

The railway is merely one of the tentacles of the monstrous machine which is tightening its grip upon the entire globe. The motor car is another, and more frequent, symptom of the machine's progressive encroachment because it embodies the "quick perspective of the future" better than the railway, which is really a remnant from a former age of romantic, mechanical "Progress." I will discuss in detail later how Huxley uses the motor car in his satires to show the machine manipulating human consciousness and taking over man's sexual drives. The Jekyll and Hyde transformations of Lord Hovenden, in Those Barren Leaves (1925), show him to be dependent upon his car for his sexual assertiveness. But we can see in the more literal satiric attacks of a poet such as Louis MacNeice how the motor car is used to illustrate the preoccupations of a blinkered world inherently hostile to the spiritual and intuitive dimensions of human consciousness. For instance, in a poem from Out of the Picture (1937), called "Pindar is Dead," MacNeice ironically juxtaposes images of the movement of modern life with a bald refrain that brings home their real significance. The overall irony is that the bustle that now takes up so much of man's time is the real deadness; man is now preoccupied with mechanical movement that has no ultimate purpose. However, such obsessive restlessness prevents mankind from seeing the spiritual stasis of his caged existence:

There are hikers on all the roads--
 Pindar is dead--

The petrol pumps are doing a roaring business,
 Motors are tuning up for the Easter races,
 Building companies are loaning to the newly married--
 Pindar is dead and that's no matter.
 (Collected Poems, p. 79)

After the deadening grind of each week's work, man's heart can expand no farther, MacNeice tells us in "Sunday Morning" (1935), than to "tinker with his car" (Collected Poems, p. 23). The machine has effectively deprived man of identity and autonomy by providing him with occupations and pastimes that remove the need for any human response. MacNeice warns us that "Riding in cars / On tilting roads / We have left behind / Our household gods" ("Riding in Cars," Collected Poems, p. 78), and echoes Eliot's indictment against the "worshippers of the machine" who are incapable of any form of consciousness other than the merely functional and mechanical.

The more reactionary satirists of the period make the most of the motor car as a symptom of social malaise. Chesterton, for instance, sees irrefutable evidence of spiritual and cultural demise in the way that the car is shaping man's behavior. In his essay "The Free Man and the Ford Car," in The Outline of Sanity (1926), he draws the usual parallels between the gospel of endless standardization according to Mr. Ford and the spiritual degeneracy of the modern individual.²² Chesterton is a frequent satirist of machines and, with his strong religious commitments, draws the rather far-fetched parallel between the motor car and the Old Testament serpent. In "The Old Gentleman in the Park" (1932), Machine-Age transport is seen as a significant falling away from the spiritual benefits of the horse:

Beyond the trees like iron trees,
 The painted lamp-posts stand.
 The old red road runs like the rust
 Upon this iron land.

Cars flat as fish and fleet as birds,
 Low-bodied and high speeded,
 Go on their belly like the Snake,
 And eat the dust as he did.

But down the red dust never more
 Her happy horse-hoofs go.
 O, what a road of rust indeed!
 O, what a Rotten Row!²³

The wooden contrivances and the heavy didactic thump of Chesterton's verse are very different from the sparkle that we associate with the satire of Evelyn Waugh. But Waugh, also, uses the motor car to show the degenerate movement of modern life. In Vile Bodies (1930), for instance, he provides an incisive and entertaining parody of current philosophical cant in terms of different conceptions of the automobile:

The truth is that motor cars offer a very happy illustration of the metaphysical distinction between "being" and "becoming." Some cars, mere vehicles with no purpose above bare locomotion, mechanical drudges such as Lady Metroland's Hispano Suiza, or Mrs. Mouse's Rolls Royce, or Lady Circumference's 1912 Daimler, or the "general reader's" Austin Seven, these have definite "being" just as much as their occupants. They are bought all screwed up and numbered and painted, and there they stay through various declensions of ownership, brightened now and then with a lick of paint or temporarily rejuvenated by the addition of some minor organ, but still maintaining their essential identity to the scrap heap.

Not so the real cars, that become masters of men; those vital creations of metal who exist solely for their own propulsion through space; for whom their drivers, clinging precariously at the steering wheel, are as important as his stenographer to a stockbroker. These are in perpetual flux; like the confluence of traffic at some spot where many roads meet, streams of mechanism come together, mingle and separate again.²⁴

Behind the wit of this passage lies a serious critique of the Machine Age. Waugh is satirizing Bergsonism for much the same reason that Wyndham Lewis attacks it.²⁵ He sees the notion of "perpetual flux" as a machine-spawned concept related to the desire for constant change and revolution.

The link between the philosophical point of view and the motor car is not arbitrary, although Waugh is, perhaps, far more instinctive in his choice of analogues than is Lewis.

Waugh also uses the motor car in Vile Bodies to express the vacuous round of modern life in a way that recalls the vacuum at the centre of Aldous Huxley's early satires. The central metaphor of Vile Bodies is the farcical motor race attended by the Bright Young Things and in which Agatha participates. Because of the race she loses her sanity and, eventually, her life. Before she dies, she glimpses a parallel between the meaningless circular movement of the cars and the lives led by members of her set:

"D'you know, all that time when I was dotty I had the most awful dreams. I thought we were all driving round in a motor race and none of us could stop, and there was an enormous audience composed entirely of gossip writers and gate crashers and Archie Schwert and people like that, all shouting at us at once to go faster, and car after car kept crashing until I was left all alone driving and driving--and then I used to crash and wake up." (Vile Bodies, p. 181)

The key word in this society is "bogus"; the artificiality of life is evidence of a spiritual void. According to Father Rothschild, there is nothing of substance in society to prevent the machine from carrying the world towards another war: "'There is a radical instability in our whole world order, and soon we shall be walking into the jaws of destruction again, protesting our pacific intention'" (Vile Bodies, p. 128). Once again, the implication is that man is watching the approach of his own destruction but is unwilling, or unable, to do anything about it. The circular movement of machinery holds man fast in an ultimately destructive prison. Under the farcical surface of modern life lies an emptiness which has

tragic implications for mankind in general.

We find a very differently motivated satirist such as Louis MacNeice making the same point. He sees a frightening parallel between the machinery which holds man in its grip and the grinding movement of a glacier. In "The Glacier" (1933), we are presented with a satiric picture of humankind mesmerized by its own relentless movement towards destruction:

Where bus encumbers bus and fills its slot
Speed up the traffic in a quick motion film of thought
Till bus succeeds bus so identically sliding through
That you cannot catch the fraction of a chink between the two,
But they all go so fast, bus after bus, day after day,
Year after year, that you cannot mark any headway,
But the whole stream of traffic seems to crawl
Carrying its dead boulders down a glacier wall.

(Collected Poems, p. 24)

Man is caught like a boulder in a glacier, his fate heralded to him by the movement and noise of traffic: "And horns of cars, touché, touché, rapier's retort, a moving cage" ("Morning Sun," Collected Poems, p. 26).

As Edgell Rickword puts it in "The Pseudo-Faustus," a satire from Invocation to Angels (1928), the "swift insidious wheels, the quiet machines / where the cramped mind weaves endless slave designs" (Collected Poems, p. 55) have left man "naked, and balanced on the brooding void" (Collected Poems, p. 56).

Besides the frequent references to forms of transport, Machine-Age satirists often use images of the machine which mythologize its effects and give it a more universal application. One such image is a terrifying parody of the old Wheel of Fortune which, in the modern world, becomes a mechanical trap. No longer under the aegis of a metaphysical authority, the wheel now spins on an axis governed by physical laws alone. D. H. Lawrence mocks the "wonderful" machine which now spins "in its own

Nirvana," turning the "blue wheels" of its "own heaven."²⁶ Chesterton uses the wheel as a symbol of deadly sin which has been called into the world to "bend and bind" men into an inhuman, mechanical subservience:

Call upon the wheels, master, call upon the wheels,
Weary grow the holidays when you miss the meals,
Through the Gate of Treason, through the gate within,
Cometh fear and greed of fame, cometh deadly sin;
If a man grow faint, master, take him ere he kneels,
Take him, break him, rend him, end him, roll him,
crush him with the wheels.

("The Song of the Wheels," Collected Poems, pp. 172-3)

The image of the wheel lends itself naturally to satiric use because of the way it can represent a world in which there is movement but no resolution. The Machine Age is frequently envisaged as a circular trap. Hence the claim made by many of the satirists in my discussion that they are presenting a truth about the modern situation, not amusing distortions of it. A particularly clear formal use of circularity can be found, for instance, in Waugh's Decline and Fall (1928). The disintegration of Paul Pennyfeather's identity is embodied in the circular trap of the novel's own movement through a series of prisons: Oxford, Public School, the social prison of Margot's world, actual prison, and, finally, back to Oxford. The overall effect is of complete personal and social regression. Paul inevitably sheds the conditioned and insubstantial mores that make up his identity until a final emptiness is reached, whereupon he subsides into mechanical habit back at his old college.

This circular disintegration is symbolically summed up towards the end of Decline and Fall by Professor Silenus, the book's "modern sorcerer" and representative of "homo mechanicus." The Goddess of Fortune, who is repeatedly toasted throughout the book as a "much-maligned lady," is finally presented in her modern form. Silenus asks Paul:

'Shall I tell you about life?'

'Yes do,' said Paul politely.

'Well, it's like the big wheel at Luna Park. Have you seen the big wheel?'

'No, I'm afraid not.'

'You pay five-francs and go into a room with tiers of seats all round, and the centre of the floor is made of a great disc of polished wood that revolves quickly. At first you sit down and watch the others. They are all trying to sit on the wheel, and they keep getting flung off, and that makes them laugh, and you laugh too. It's great fun.'

'I don't think that sounds very much like life,' said Paul rather sadly.

'Oh, but it is, though. You see, the nearer you get to the hub of the wheel the slower it is moving and the easier it is to stay on. There's generally someone in the centre who stands up and sometimes does a sort of dance. Often, he's paid by the management, though, or, at any rate, he's allowed in free. Of course at the very centre there's a point completely at rest, if one could only find it: I'm not sure I am not very near that point myself. Of course the professional men get in the way. Lots of people just enjoy scrambling on and being whisked off and scrambling on again. How they all shriek and giggle! Then there are others, like Margot, who sit as far out as they can and hold on for dear life and enjoy that. But the whole point about the wheel is you needn't get on at all, if you don't want to. People get hold of ideas about life, and that makes them think they've got to join in the game, even if they don't enjoy it. It doesn't suit everyone.'

.....
 'Now you're a person who was clearly meant to stay in the seats and sit still and if you get bored watch the others. Somehow you got on to the wheel, and you got thrown off again at once with a hard bump. It's all right for Margot, who can cling on, and for me, at the centre, but you're static. Instead of this absurd division into sexes they ought to class people as static and dynamic. There's a real distinction there, though I can't tell you how it comes. I think we're probably two quite different species spiritually.'

'I used that idea of the wheel in a cinema film once. I think it rather sounds like it, don't you? What was it I came back for?'

'A nail file.'

'Oh yes, of course. I know of no other utterly boring and futile occupation than generalising about life. Did you take in what I was saying?'

'Yes, I think so.'

'I think I shall have my meals alone in future. Will you tell the servants? It makes me feel quite ill to talk so much. Good night.'

'Good Night,' said Paul. 27

Silenus is bent upon the "elimination of the human element from the consideration of form" and, for him, the "only perfect building must be the factory, because that is built to house machines, not men." Man is never beautiful or happy "except when he becomes the channel for the distribution of mechanical forces" (Decline and Fall, p. 120).

Another mythologized machine image is Spengler's "modern sorcerer": a "switchboard with levers and labels at which the workman calls mighty effects into play without possessing the slightest notion of their essence."²⁸ Various modified, this image is a repository of many of the collective fears of the period between the wars. However, it has a particular significance for satire. For instance, if the city sequence of Rex Warner's The Wild Goose Chase (1937) is compared with Gulliver's voyage to Laputa, we can see Warner drawing heavily upon satiric tradition. He shows an inhuman city oppressing a naturally virile countryside in the same way that the city of Laputa preys upon and lays waste its domains. The proclivity of the inhabitants of Laputa for regular geometric shapes is paralleled in the smooth, geometric architecture of Warner's city. But, most obviously, Warner uses Swift's idea of the Grand Academy of Lagado as the basis for his Convent in which useless mathematical calculations are carried out in an attempt to reduce the whole of life to dead, abstract knowledge:

"Pure Science," said Humberto, shooting out a leg and slapping it, "Pure Science. Of course I'm only speaking of the birds outside the town. I've never been outside myself, and I don't want to, but I sift the evidence I get from visitors and after all I feel I'm doing quite a useful bit of research. Here's to scholarship, as Dr. Zany said. May it never be any use to anyone, Ha, Ha! Rather an old chestnut, I'm afraid."²⁹

But there is a feeling about Warner's satire that is very different from Swift's. This can largely be accounted for by the unidentifiable

apprehension which makes up so much of the atmosphere of The Wild Goose Chase. Swift ridicules the activities of the Royal Society, but Warner is concerned with a fascist, totalitarian threat to the whole of mankind. Swift can reduce to absurdity the experiments of the Royal Society by introducing a "wonderful Machine" which, when its "Iron Handle" is cranked, turns out useless knowledge ad infinitum. At the centre of Warner's satire is the "Machine Room" from which everything can be controlled. The machine image in this case functions as a vehicle for the expression of totalitarian anxieties that cannot be assuaged by mere reductive ridicule:

"Yes," said George. "I'd like to know whether something cannot be done for the countrymen," but before he could continue the King interrupted him with a sudden laugh. "Come this way," he said. "Come this way and I'll show you. We've got the situation well in hand."

He led George into the Machine Room, which was, to George's surprise, quite silent and contained no machines, but only a long table, studded with buttons and lights of various colours, shining through small circles of glass, apparently a mirror.

"I see you're surprised," said the King, "not to see any machines, but here are all the controls and here (pointing to the mirror) is our observation screen. By manipulating the appropriate controls I can throw on that screen a picture, something like a cinematograph picture, of events taking place in any part of our territory. It is a question, as you will imagine, of being able to control the light waves. We have a similar installation which enables us to hear any conversation which we wish to hear, but the two apparatuses have not so far been connected together. That is a problem with which we are busy at the moment. But what shall I show you? Did you ever visit the vaults of the Anserium?"

(Wild Goose Chase, pp. 227-8)

The Anserium is a chamber of horrors in which life is sacrificed to death; villagers are connected by tubes to dead Kings. Blood is passed from one to the other so that the living are used "to preserve the uneasy repose of death". (Wild Goose Chase, p. 229).

Besides the symbolic use of actual and mythical machines, modern satire contains recurrent Machine-Age landscapes and glimpses of the world that the machine has produced. But, significantly, this real Laputa is not presented as a place of ridiculous grotesques. There can now be no rescue and return to a saner world where the distortions of the satiric voyage are dispelled. For, even if mankind manages to escape the total destruction that he is so ardently preparing for himself, he is still destined for a future of uniformity and monotony..

Various modern landscapes are the background of a satiric obituary for the "human idea." John Betjeman, for instance, often laments the loss of a smaller, more comfortable England of country lanes and vicarage gardens. The landscape of the future which he sees resulting from present trends is one in which the plastic and tin mass world has reduced everything to inhuman, anonymous uniformity. Betjeman summarizes his distaste in "The Planster's Vision," which appeared in New Bats in Old Belfries (1945):

I have a Vision of The Future, chum,
 The workers' flats in fields of soya beans.
 Tower up like silver pencils, score on score:
 And Surging Millions hear the Challenge come
 From microphones in communal canteens
 "No Right! No Wrong! All's perfect, evermore."³⁰

Machine-Age landscapes are expressions of a fundamental dehumanization which permeates all spheres of life, transforming both the physical world and the inward terrain of the human mind. Betjeman's conservative parochialism with its overt espousal of rural and suburban, middle-class values is a far cry from the Marxist vitalism of Rex Warner. Yet both satirists are in revolt from the mechanical hells that will surely come

about if present conditions are allowed to continue. Warner's futurist city landscape in The Wild Goose Chase is an expression of the same artificial purposelessness that Betjeman fears:

There seemed in the whole town no shadow, so numerous, so powerful, and so diversely disposed were the electric lights, and it was perhaps this fact which made George inclined to look upon the people who hurried shadowless to and fro as unreal figures, embodied but only just, and the buildings, rectangular and gleaming, appeared purposeless, as if made of sugar or of something else inappropriate for human architecture. (p. 167)

The same details and textures are chosen by differently-motivated satirists as evidence of dehumanization. The materials and designs that man has used to build the modern world are signs that he is spiritually moribund. Warner's city is a construct of "cylindrical towers made of some shining material, glass, or polished steel, which projected to a great height from what seemed to be an interminable level roof of concrete" (p. 218). The whole architectural design represents the elimination of anthropomorphic considerations:

Entering at a glass door they were soon in the quadrangle, walking on an aluminium path which bordered a central lawn of artificial grass. The building of the quadrangle was similar in style to the exterior of the Convent, being light and rectangular, the walls of glass and aluminium relieved from monotony by the countless triangular shades of aluminium or celluloid which covered windows and doors and directed the flow of light from the electric bulbs which seemed to shine from every angle. (p. 219)

Evelyn Waugh's aristocratic notions of personal and social worth are very different from Warner's. Yet he, also, contemplates with horror the approach of the same inhuman artificiality. The house designed by Professor Silenus in Decline and Fall is made of "aluminium" and "platinum"

and has a "cylindrical study," a "glass floor," "pneumatic rubber furniture," and a "porcelain ceiling." The floor of the drawing room is a large "kaleidoscope set in motion by an electric button" and the roofs are "domes of glass and aluminium which glittered like Chanel diamonds in the afternoon sun" (p. 142). The people who come to visit are just "insignificant incidents in the life of the house; this new-born monster to whose birth ageless and forgotten cultures had been in travail" (p. 137).

This "unnatural" and "dehumanized" architecture is part of the modern "unreal city"; a twentieth-century hell, created in the image of the mechanical devil which rules it, and complete with its underground labyrinths and restless crowds of faceless automatons. The side of Warner's city which is removed from the disinfected deadness of the Convent has its seething crowds who have never "walked beneath a sky that was not a roof of concrete" (Wild Goose Chase, p. 218), and everywhere, from all directions, comes the "harsh hubbub of machines, clanking and metallic sharp percussion, outlet of steam with shouts" (p. 216). Warner's city is a synoptic chart of conditions he sees everywhere apparent in the real world of the thirties. The vacuum of Machine-Age life which characterizes the immediate aftermath of the Great War continues during the thirties in the endless dole queues and restless crowds of the Depression. For those who can afford it, life is a meaningless motor-car race, but, for the emerging masses, it is a continuous lesson in monotony and human redundancy.

Machine-Age forces make the old, aristocratic world ridiculously obsolete at the same time as they bring into existence swarms of anonymous slaves whose only significance lies in serving seemingly all-powerful economic laws. Those satirists with leftist sympathies who write out of the reality of the Depression see it as an object lesson in what happens

when human considerations are sacrificed to abstract, mechanical laws of the capitalist marketplace. The city is the place where the misery is concentrated and where the effects of the inhuman machine of modern life are most apparent.³¹ For instance, Louis MacNeice, throughout the thirties, satirizes the city as a place where queues of "fidgety machines" wait in endless vistas of streets below factories which tower like "Vulcan's forges who doesn't care a tinker's damn" ("Birmingham," Collected Poems, pp. 17-18). His satire (often no more than a section or two in a larger work) is an angry and resentful attempt to point out the inhuman distortions which are now an ever-present part of everyday life. The present is a realized nightmare through which the individual stumbles in impotent fear. The satiric passages of MacNeice's "long occasional poem," Autumn Journal (1939), are both anxious and critical:

And when we go out into Piccadilly Circus
 They are selling and buying the late
 Special editions snatched and read abruptly
 Beneath the electric signs as crude as Fate.
 And the individual, powerless, has to exert the
 Powers of will and choice
 And choose between enormous evils, either
 Of which depends upon somebody else's voice.
 The cylinders are racing in the presses,
 The mines are laid,
 The ribbon plumbs the fallen fathoms of Wall Street,
 And you and I are afraid.

(Collected Poems, p. 109)

The "fidgety machines" have little to look forward to; the future waits "like a giant" whose mind "is a vacuum": "Out there lies the future gathering quickly / Its blank momentum; through the tubes of London / The dead winds blow the crowds like beasts in flight from / Fire in the forest" ("Christmas Shopping," Collected Poems, p. 96).

For Auden, also, the Depression of the thirties is a sign that the

machine has proved itself inadequate for human needs. A society that has disregarded "healers" and opponents of the machine such as Lawrence, Blake and Homer Lane is now trampled in its own wreckage. Consequently, when Auden satirizes the present social system, he frequently envisages it as a landscape of broken machines. As John Blair has commented in The Poetic Art of W. H. Auden (1965), the landscape of abandoned and rusting machinery was "nearly his trademark in the early poems."³² Stephen Spender, in The Struggle of the Modern, tells us that "machinery" in Auden's poetry has a similar meaning and function as the "wasteland" in Eliot's work: "In Auden's early poetry there is a parallel attempt to make poetry out of the industrial scene visualized as symptomatic of the decay of society."³³ In Poems (1930), Auden writes of how the minions of the broken machine now hear "doom's approaching footsteps regular down miles / of straight":

Get there if you can and see the land you once were proud
to own
Though the roads have almost vanished and the expresses
never run;

Smokeless chimneys, damaged bridges, rotting wharves and
choked canals,
Tramlines buckled, smashed trucks lying on their side across
the rails;

Power stations locked, deserted, since they drew the boiler
fires;
Pylons fallen or subsiding, trailing dead high-tension
wires;

Hedd-gears gaunt on grass-grown pitbanks, seams abandoned
years ago;
Drop a stone and listen for its splash in flooded dark
below.³⁴

Recurrent Machine-Age landscapes reveal how an older industrialism is giving way to an even more impersonal and dehumanized future. The "dark

Satanic Mills" of the nineteenth century are still present in the grimy hell of "Vulcan's forges" where helpless automatons labour for a monster that doesn't give a "tinker's damn." However, replacing this older, Victorian setting are the polished steel and glass surfaces of the future, filled completely with artificial light, and devoid even of the evil vitality of actual machines. And somewhere between these two lies the endless, monotonous uniformity of suburban sprawl that has tamed the life out of everyone.

Osbert Sitwell is a frequent satirist of the "unending dusty line" of modern suburbia where houses "stand up square / in lines." In "Green Fly," from his Collected Satires and Poems, (1931), he complains how "Each house repeats itself again, / But smaller still and yet more dry; / For-- just as those who live within-- / So have these houses progeny."³⁵

Sitwell's satire expresses more of a patrician distaste for the repetitious vulgarity of the new "progeny" than a genuine concern for the preservation of human values. The "black steam-roller" which he sees as the symbol of modern consciousness is the traditional clumsy oaf conceived by privileged impatience as that which does not resemble itself. Sitwell's machine is the harbinger of vulgarity and moronic imbecility:

The jaundiced faces of the clanking trams,
Peeping round sharp corners in angular progression,
Tilting and screaming down the hills,
Or creaking up them, as mighty overladen ships
Groan in ascent of mountainous waves;
The asphalt-isolated trees
Sprouting amid apparently volcanic wastes,
Where seethe whole craters of hot, bubbling tar
And where runs wild
The sweating, snorting, palpitating, black steam-roller,
That favourite steed, that rather vorticist Pegasus
Of the rose-clad, rose-flushed municipal-council
Whose orderly imagination
Ever takes flight on such fantastic, unexpected steeds;

The little bits of rock,
 Scattered artistically against the hard road corners,
 From which there sprang out, or under which there crouched,
 The dreariest, most dusty, desolate plants,
 The pergolas, the terraces, the railings,
 The laurel bushes and pet dogs
 Round all of which the guardian sea
 Threw its dark cloak of pale-eyed imbecility.

("Miss Mew's Epoch," Collected Satires and Poems, pp.
 175-6)

John Betjeman's "Slough," from Continual Dew (1937), attacks the "synthetic" and "bogus" values which lie behind the new architecture. But Betjeman's distaste for "Those air-conditioned, bright canteens, / Tinned fruit, tinned meat, tinned milk, tinned beans / Tinned minds, tinned breath" is informed by a recognition, however indulgent, that the inhabitants of the "mess they call a town" are victims rather than culprits. He asks that the "bald young clerks" be spared because it is "not their fault that they are mad":

It's not their fault they do not know
 The birdsong from the radio,
 It's not their fault they often go
 To Maidenhead

And talk of sports and makes of cars
 In various bogus Tudor bars
 And daren't look up and see the stars
 But belch instead.

In labour-saving homes, with care
 Their wives frizz out peroxide hair
 And dry it in synthetic air
 And paint their nails.³⁶

The artificiality of Machine-Age landscapes reflects the workings of the human mind that has now succumbed completely to mechanical concepts. In my first chapter I discussed the concern expressed between the wars over the extent to which the machine was accepted as the model for the organization of all life. In his book, The Broken Image (1964), Floyd Matson discusses

the social and psychological consequences of the machine's "triumphant invasion of the main currents of social thought"; a process that was almost complete by the end of the nineteenth century:

During the nineteenth century, the world view of classical physics--the image of the Great Machine--was extended to its logical, psychological and sociological limits. Nearly everywhere, by the end of the century, the dominant impulse seemed to be to force the objects of human inquiry and concern beneath the microscope of mechanistic analysis, to reduce their contents to the smallest measurable denominator or the single irreducible cause--without, at the same time, contaminating the observation with "subjective" considerations. The ideal of the social scientist in the Age of Progress was still very much as Fontenelle had characterized it: merely to be a spectator at the grand performance of Nature--but a spectator with the mentality of a mechanic.³⁷

The years between the wars see a concerted reaction against this process. The outcry against the encroachment of the machine over the physical environment is accompanied by the realization that man has dangerously subordinated himself to his own concepts. We find frequent satiric disapproval of the new thought, both in the form of direct criticism and in the creation of fictional characters who caricature mechanical thinking.

Louis MacNeice, for instance, in an early thirties poem, "Turf-Stacks," regrets that man's mind has learned to "run in grooves" to such an extent that the greatest need is for some kind of defence against the "mass-production of neat thoughts." Man must build "a fortress against ideas and against the / Shuddering insidious shock of the theory-vendors, / The little sardine men crammed in a monster toy / Who tilt their aggregate heart against our crumbling Troy" (Collected Poems, p. 18).

Satire has always ridiculed the myopic distortions forced upon the world by abstract thinkers; blinkered by concepts, man will always go awry. However, the new "theory-vendors" are not pedantic old fools;

they are dangerous and powerful figures who control the way the world is going. Various examples of the autocratic homo mechanicus are found in the satire of the period. Aldous Huxley's Mr. Scogan and Shearwater, Wyndham Lewis' Lord Snooty, Evelyn Waugh's Professor Silenus and Rex Warner's Professor Pothimere are all governed by modes of thought in which man is merely one of the many cogs in the total machine of life. Each of these characters is impatient with humankind for not conforming quickly enough to the efficient and repetitive movements of the machine, and each looks forward to a world in which such human inadequacies have been eliminated. Waugh's Silenus, for instance, who appears in Decline and Fall, is a sinister figure who is very reluctant to allow human considerations to enter into his architectural plans:

'I suppose there ought to be a staircase,' he said gloomily. 'Why can't the creatures stay in one place? Up and down, in and out, round and round! Why can't they sit still and work? Do dynamos require staircases? Do monkeys require houses? What an immature, self-destructive, antiquated mischief is man! How obscure and gross his prancing and chattering on his little stage of evolution! How loathsome and beyond words boring all the thoughts and self-approval of this biological by-product! this half-formed, ill-conditioned body! this erratic, maladjusted mechanism of his soul; on one side the harmonious instincts and balanced responses of the animal, on the other the inflexible purpose of the engine, and between them man, equally alien from the being of Nature and the doing of the machine, the vile 'becoming!'

Two hours later the foreman in charge of the concrete-mixer came to consult with the Professor. He had not moved from where the journalist had left him; his fawn-like eyes were fixed and inexpressive, and the hand which had held the biscuit still rose and fell to and from his mouth with a regular motion, while his empty jaws champed rhythmically; otherwise he was wholly immobile.

(Decline and Fall, pp. 120-21)

This loathing for, and determination to expose the shortcomings of, homo mechanicus transcends each satirist's individual purpose. Warner's

Professor Pothiere has drawn up a "calculus of sensation" to control love-making by quantitative means and to "guide the young to happiness";

I have experimented on animals and, if you will excuse me, on the bodies of unfortunate people, malefactors or votaries of science. On such occasions I have registered by various apparatus the rise or fall in the pressure of my own blood and in the blood of others who were spectators of these operations. (Wild Goose Chase, pp. 181-2)

Herbert Read, in a poem called "Equation," which first appeared in Mutations of the Phoenix (1923), satirizes the reductive, mechanistic analysis that sees both the physical and the spiritual universe as a logical sum: "Earth is machine and works to plan, / Winnowing space and time; / The ethic mind is engine too, / Accelerating in the void."³⁸ Read's point is presented in an expanded form by G. Day-Lewis in "The Magnetic Mountain" (1933); even God no longer makes the world in His own image but is now Himself conceived in terms of the mechanical laws of mathematics and science:

Third Enemy Speaks

God is a proposition,
And we that prove him are his priests, his chosen,
From bare hypothesis
Of strata and wind, of stars and tides, watch me
Construct his universe,
A working model of my majestic notions,
A sum done in the head.
Last week I measured the light, his little finger;
The rest is a matter of time.

God is an electrician,
And they that worship him must worship him
In ampere and in volt.
Scrap sun and moon, your twilight of false gods:
X. is not here or there;
Whose lightning scrawls brief cryptograms on sky,
Easy for us to solve;
Whose notions fit our formulae, whose temple
Is a pure apparatus.

God is a statistician;
 Offer him all the data; tell him your dreams.
 What is your lucky number?
 How do you react to bombs? Have you a rival?
 Do you really love your wife?
 Get yourself taped. Put soul upon the table;
 Switch on the arc-lights; watch
 Hearts beat, the secret agent of the blood.
 Let every cell be observed.

God is a Good Physician,
 Gives fruit for hygiene, crops for calories.
 Don't touch that dirty man,
 Don't drink from the same cup, sleep in one bed;
 You know he would not like it.
 Young men, cut out those visions, they're bad for the eyes:
 I'll show you face to face
 Eugenics, Eupetics and Euthanasia,
 the clinic Trinity.³⁹

Day-Lewis presents the God of homo mechanicus as an over-zealous science master. God cannot be "seen on a slide" or "caught on a filter." Unfortunately, the poet's advice about where he is to be found is a Sunday-school lesson of doubtful relevance. Exhorting his charges to step "through ruins to sound Reveille," he falls back on a nebulous and romantic conception of the deity that is no answer to the evil potency of the machine:

Where then, Oh where? In earth or in air?
 The master of mirth, the corrector of care?
 Nightingale knows, if any,
 And poplar flowing with wind; and high on the sunny
 Hill you can find him, and low on the lawn
 When every dew-drop is a separate dawn.⁴⁰

This escape to "nightingale," "wind," "sunny" hills and dew-drops makes Day-Lewis' attack upon Machine-Age thought sound impotent. A more effective satire upon the scientific deity is Robert Graves' "Apollo of the Physiologists." This is one of a handful of satires which Graves wrote during the thirties in which the tone is quietly sardonic:

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Despite this learned cult's official
 And seemingly sincere denial
 That they either reject or postulate
 God, or God's scientific surrogate,
 Prints of a deity occur passim
 Throughout their extant literature. They make him
 A dumb, dead-pan Apollo with a profile
 Drawn in Victorian-Hellenistic style--
 The pallid, bald, partitioned head suggesting
 Wholly abstract cerebral functioning;
 Or nude and at full length, this deity
 Displays digestive, venous respiratory
 And nervous systems painted in bold colours
 On his immaculate exterior.
 Sometimes, in verso, a bald, naked Muse,
 His consort, flaunts her arteries and sinews,
 While, upside-down, crouched in her chaste abdomen,
 Adored by men and wondered at by women,
 Hangs a Victorian-Hellenistic foetus--
 Fruit of her academic god's afflatus.⁴¹

This quiet mockery is more convincing than the staccato of Day-Lewis' inventory in the "Magnetic Mountain" sequence quoted above. The Day-Lewis excerpt lacks solidity, principally because nothing is being observed by either the half-dramatized caricature or the poet himself. The criticism of the "temple" of "pure apparatus" is another form of "abstract cerebral functioning" and comes across as posed and half-hearted. We take Graves' criticism more seriously because he is cleverly interpreting something real, and his wit makes us receptive to his semiology. But quality of verse apart, both satirists are exposing the new mechanical canons which devalue the deity and, in consequence, rob man of his own significance. A mind completely ruled by mathematical logic cannot help but think of God as a "proposition" or a "sum." With similar hubris, the physiologist creates a god out of his own preoccupation with the purely physical functions of the body. Machine-Age man has reversed the old myth and has created God from his own mechanical images. In doing so he has destroyed man's spiritual significance and unseated him from his unique position in

the natural world. Man and his gods have been sacrificed to theories of the universe based upon the machine.

The impersonal and pervasive nature of this perceived decline often makes the ultimate target of Machine-Age satire difficult to identify. For it is not evil or foolish individuals or groups that are attacked; nor is the satire usually a misanthropic condemnation of human nature itself. The subjects chosen for criticism are symptoms of a broad social malaise; it is difficult to lay responsibility in any one place. In fact, the symptoms are evidence of a complete lack of personal or social responsibility for thought or actions. Chesterton, for example, attacks trends such as "The International Idea" (Collected Poems, p. 16), "Americanization" (Collected Poems, p. 25) and the "Genius of Business" (Collected Poems, p. 33). His Songs of Education (1927) are general indictments of the quantitative criteria that have become the only ways of presenting knowledge and organizing life.

It is a significant feature of this kind of general satire that individual conduct and coterie behavior are of little importance. People are the helpless dupes of a general evil that is not easily singled out for ridicule. This situation is emphasized in a satire by Sassoon called "Lines Written in Anticipation of a London Paper Attaining a Guaranteed Circulation of Ten Million Daily," which appeared first in his Satirical Poems (1926). Sassoon, like Chesterton, is concerned with the quantitative criteria that have become the only norms of value in the "normal" world; "The Past is an edition torn to tatters; / And only one thing now supremely matters; / Your enviable Journal's circulation / Exceeds our census'd London population" (Collected Poems, p. 133). But then the thought occurs to him that he is not really attacking anything that it

would make sense to call "responsible." The fault lies within various social power groups, but the ultimate culprit remains elusive, for it is the malaise of a whole civilization:

But, while I write, doubt surges in my breast,
 'To whom exactly are these words addressed?'
 Do I so copiously congratulate
 A lonely Earldom or a Syndicate?
 Or am I speaking to familiar friends
 Who hold your shares and hold fat Dividends?
 Were it not wiser, were it not more candid,
 More courteous, more consistent with good sense,
 If I were to include all, all who are banded
 Together in achievement so immense?
 For such inclusion is to have augmented
 My audience to an almost national size.
 I must congratulate those well-contented
 And public-spirited Firms who advertize
 Their functions, their ideals, their whole existence,
 Across the current acreage of your sheets
 With privileged and opulent persistence.
 I must congratulate the London streets
 Which you adorn with posters that reveal
 From day to day, from hour to hour, those many
 Events which most concern the public-weal,
 And catch most easily the public penny.
 I must congratulate the winning Horse;
 The Coin that lost the Test Match; the huge Fist
 Of the sub-human Champion-Pugilist;
 The simpering Siren in the Bart.'s Divorce;
 The well-connected Poisoner, tensely tried;
 And the world-famed Bassoonist who has died.

Finally, O best and worst of rumour-breeders,
 I damn your circulation as a whole,
 And leave you to your twice-ten-million readers
 With deep condolence from my lenient soul.

(Collected Poems, pp. 133-4)

The self-conscious speculation and doubt that we find in this poem is a far remove from the self-confident vitriolic condemnation of traditional satire. As the satirist contemplates the size of his target and realizes that he is condemning, almost, the whole nation, he is also brought to an awareness of his own isolation. This process of personal discovery has

never been a part of traditional satire. The final stanza of Sassoon's poem is a confession, as much as it is a condemnation of quantitative values, of the satirist's own isolation and impotence in the face of the forces he attacks. Not only has the machine deprived the satirist of an audience of discriminating and right-thinking people; it has also made impossible the specificity that was so much a part of the effectiveness of traditional satire. Sassoon, in the end, can only "leave" the paper to its "twice-ten-million readers" and console himself with an impotent curse. The satirist can merely warn man that his mind has entered a cul-de-sac from which it cannot extricate itself because of its unquestioning adherence to forms of knowledge based upon mechanical, physical laws. As Osbert Sitwell tells us, "all round the globe / Complete is the circle, / Of germ in its tube / And shell in its cradle" ("And Science," Collected Satires and Poems, p. 115).

Waugh's Decline and Fall contains a sardonic exposé of this intellectual cul-de-sac. The book's "prison" motif is used to identify modes of thought that shackle man's mind. Sir Wilfred Lucas-Dockery, the governor of the actual prison in the novel, is yet another modern "theory-vendor" in the form of a social psychologist. Sir Wilfred has theoretically reduced all crime to the "repressed desire for aesthetic expression":

'The Government regulations are rather uncompromising. For the first four weeks you will have to observe the solitary confinement order by law. After that we will find you something more creative. We don't want you to feel that your personality is being stamped out. Have you any experience of art leather work?'

'No, sir.'

'Well, I might put you into the Arts and Crafts Work-shop. I came to the conclusion many years ago that almost all crime is due to the repressed desire for aesthetic expression. At last we have the opportunity for testing it. Are you an extrovert or an introvert?'

'I'm afraid I'm not sure, sir.'

'So few people are. I'm trying to induce the Home Office to install an official psycho-analyst. Do you read the New Nation, I wonder? There is rather a flattering article this week called The Lucas-Dockery Experiments. I like the prisoners to know these things. It gives them corporate pride. I may give you one small example of the work we are doing that affects your own case. Up till now all offences connected with prostitution have been put into the sexual category. Now I hold that an offense of your kind is essentially acquisitive and shall grade it accordingly. It does not, of course, make any difference as far as your conditions of imprisonment are concerned--the routine of penal servitude is prescribed by Standing Orders--but you see what a difference it makes to the annual statistics.'

'The human touch,' said Sir Wilfred after Paul had been led from the room. 'I'm sure it makes all the difference. You could see with that unfortunate man just now what a difference it made to him to think that, far from being a mere nameless slave, he has now become part of a great revolution in statistics.' (Decline and Fall, pp. 167-8)

Sir Wilfred is an illustration of what happens when "behavioral" theories replace human perspectives. Like Huxley's Shearwater, he has reduced all value to quantitative measurements and is convinced that all human progress must proceed along similar lines. Within the microcosm of his prison he enacts the theories which outside are hailed as enlightened and progressive attempts to integrate the individual "unit" into the prevailing social "system." The ultimate purpose of this human engineering is an efficient performance by each unit within the socio-economic superstructure. The knowledge and presumptions of the engineer are brought to bear upon the problems of the human psyche. In fact, for Sir Wilfred, even human creativity is a "function" that can be measured, manipulated and profitably assimilated within the processes of the social machine.

The world ruled by the machine and its concepts is one from which human purpose and significance have been banished. Man is now seen as part of a chain of effects which has no first cause and no ultimate end. His actions and desires assume the forms of lines, smooth planes and

lifeless solids, like the architectural patterns described by Waugh and Warner. The concept of "free will" is an illusion; man must now submit to a yoke of physical laws. Moral, political and physical activities are all completely accounted for in mechanical terms. Archaic notions such as intent, understanding, freedom, initiative, responsibility, are seen as inadequate fictional substitutes for the kinds of causes that are now easily explainable in terms of mechanical law. In such a world as this, human identity itself is tentative. There is little point in criticizing the vice or folly of individuals or of identifiable groups. Satire must attack the forces which have removed man from the centre of the world and which make human personality insignificant.

For the satirists in my discussion Laputan values are established norms, not a reductio ad absurdum of the intellectual theories or the behavior of a particular individual or social group. As a result, the form and mood of their works are without the abrasive confidence that characterizes the genre in, for instance, the eighteenth century. In subsequent chapters I will discuss in detail how Lewis, Huxley and Lawrence recognize that satire must be re-defined and re-directed to correspond with what is seen as a new human predicament. Eighteenth-century satirists can select individuals and types who exert power and influence in political and social life to the detriment of mankind generally. In the more complex modern world, individuals and groups are more frequently thought of as the agents or ciphers of powers which are beyond their control.

In my first chapter I described various reactions to new forms of knowledge such as psychology, sociology and economics. The general objection was that the basic premises underlying such disciplines denied individual

human worth by assuming that man is an object who behaves according to the laws of mechanical physics. The new disciplines advance accounts of human behavior which make the personal vituperation and in-fighting of a great deal of traditional satire seem limited in range and significance. There is a level at which men can no longer be held completely responsible for their behavior. Furthermore, traditional borderlines between deviant and normal behavior no longer make sense if man is considered as the pawn of forces that are beyond his personal control.

Satire concerns itself with social and political man. Traditionally, it has held up examples of human conduct for our inspection and has asked us to judge them by certain explicit or implicit standards. The satire written between the wars seems less concerned with this kind of judgment and more concerned to warn us of a fearful state of human "obsolescence" and "anonymity." Modern satirists present human figures in their work as defunct ciphers; man is seen as a victim of mechanical forces that are erasing his identity. When people do appear foolish, their folly is a deluded belief in their own significance and effectiveness. Rulers and ruled alike are "hollow men," the dupes of impersonal forces that they cannot even perceive, let alone alter or control. The mechanical Nemesis that is indefatigably pursuing man threatens to absorb his identity and render him obsolete. He is being supplanted by his own creation, as Butler warned he could be in Erewhon. For the Machine-Age satirist, the "human concept" itself is problematic. For the remainder of this chapter I would like to emphasize the satiric preoccupation between the wars with the disintegration of human personality. Character rather than characters is the principal concern of modern satire.

In his "Theme for 'The Pseudo-Faustus,'" from Invocations to Angels

(1938), Edgell Rickword satirizes the "polar desolation" of the modern human condition which, "ringed-in with streets that tawdry wishes built, / contracts existence to a minimum":

The human concept like a shrivelled huck
rasps its complaint even on the breeze of hope;

.....
"Cook of the midden or flaring garbage-cans,
our brief dawn-crow is muffled in the wet
blanket of history; like a leching frog
caught in mid-rapture under the world's vast turf
we jerk exhausted limbs in endless folds;
and stifling, spitting, furiously frustrated,
perish, not budging, with intense exertion."

(Collected Poems, p. 54)

Rickword's satire, too bathetic in its choice of analogues, is, he tells us, a "humble epitaph to our mutual rot" ("The Epitaph," Collected Poems, p. 45). Even those who can perceive the dangerous position of modern man gain no consolation from their enlightenment. The influence of the machine is such that those who do not conform to its processes are merely discarded and made defunct. William Flomer sees the twenties and thirties generally as a time when "blind men into ditches led the blind," because man "the self-destroyer, was not lucid in his mind."⁴² Louis MacNeice complains that "we are obsolete who like the lesser things" ("Turf Stacks," Collected Poems, p. 18). In "An Eclogue for Christmas" (1933), he describes the twenties as a time when "things draw to an end" because the human concept itself has become moribund:

- A. It is time for some new coinage, people have got so old,
Hacked and handled and shiny from pocketing they have made
bold
To think that each is himself through these accidents, being
blind
To the fact that they are merely the counters of an unknown
mind.

B. A Mind that does not think, if such a thing can be,
Mechanical Reason, capricious Identity.

(Collected Poems, p. 34)

Apes, automatons and puppets are everywhere in the satire between the wars. People are ridiculous, not because they are foolishly behaving in a mechanical fashion, but because they are unwittingly committed to a world that could never allow them to behave in any other way. No matter what the ideological persuasion of the satirist, he presents the human figure as an anonymous and/or defunct victim of circumstance. Looked at from a distance, man has become a "mass" or an "object," indiscernible from the rest of the Machine-Age landscape. In Vile Bodies (1930), for instance, Ginger takes Nina for a plane ride, from which perspective the ridiculous individual characters of the book fade into faceless blobs:

Nina looked down and saw inclined at an odd angle an horizon of straggling red suburb; arterial roads dotted with little cars; factories, some of them working, others empty and decaying; a disused canal; some distant hill sown with bungalows; wireless masts and overhead power cables; men and women were indiscernible except as tiny spots; they were marrying and shopping and making money and having children. The scene lurched and tilted again as the aeroplane struck a current of air.

"I think I'm going to be sick," said Nina.

"Poor little girl," said Ginger. "That's what the paper bags are for." (pp. 192-3)

In this short passage Waugh demonstrates his skill in capturing the whole modern predicament in a brief description and two lines of dialogue. Trapped in a machine, Nina is afforded a momentary glimpse of the human situation before she is once again caught up in the mad, rolling movements of the aeroplane. At the controls is Ginger, a "modern sorcerer," blissfully married to the machine that defines him and gives him his effectiveness. Captured too, is the horrible doubt: are the people below

really insignificant "spots" on the Machine-Age landscape--their personal lives (marriage and children) as inhumanly functional as shopping and making money--or is it the machine which is carrying Nina which merely makes them seem insignificant? It is this dilemma which makes Nina feel sick and drives her, later in the book, to madness, as much as it is the nausea brought on by her being carried, helplessly, by the rolling aeroplane. And then there is the terrifying irony of Ginger's words: his condescension; his sublime ignorance to all that Nina's sickness means; and his ridiculous faith that it can all be coped with by offering "paper bags" to be sick into.

With much less density, and with far less success than Waugh has in conveying the nauseous doubt and fear brought on by a glimpse of the human situation, other satirists show that they are of the same mind. Sassoon, in "In the National Gallery" (1926), broods over the "anonymous crowds" who haunt "The National Gallery," their "faces irresolute and unperplexed,-- Unspeculative faces, bored and weak," who never find "what they seem to seek" (Collected Poems, p. 149). Osbert Sitwell, with his usual disdain, surveys the city masses:

The ants are hurrying along down the footway,
Dressed, here, in bright colours.
Under their various intolerable burdens
They stagger along.
Stop to converse, move, wave their antennae.

("Out of the Flame," Collected Satires and Poems, p. 127)

Edgell Rickword, who, in one breath, derides the delusive cocoon in which the wealthy hide themselves, in another displays fear and distaste for the "hordes flying the approach of thought, / the loutish mass with lingering moonish smiles / or vast cod-faces swimming the crowded lanes."⁴³

The various occupations which engage "collective" man are seen as

further evidence of the demise of human identity. William Flomer in his "Hotel Magnificent: Yokohama, 1927" interprets modern tastes in music and dancing as symptoms of human decline:

The band bursts out anew, and a wistful nasal whining
 With hypnotic syncopation fills the ballroom's glossy floor
 With two-backed beasts side-stepping, robots intertwining,⁴⁴
 Trying to work a throwback, to be irresponsible once more.

Man's attempts to escape the destructive monotony of his working life are catered for by the machine. Mechanical pastimes seduce him further into not desiring an individual identity. In leisure as in work there is no alternative to machinery. For instance, in "Newsreel," from his Overtures to Death (1938), Day-Lewis sees the cinema as a place where man goes to escape real experience and to submerge himself in a collective dream-world that becomes a surrogate for real thought and feeling:

Enter the dream-house, brothers and sisters, leaving
 Your debts asleep, your history at the door;
 This is the home for heroes, and this loving
 Darkness a fur you can afford.

Fish in their tank electrically heated
 Nose without envy the glass wall: for them
 Clerk, spy, nurse, killer, prince, the great and the defeated,
 Move in mute day-dream.

Bathed in this common source, you gape incurious
 At what your active hours have willed--
 Sleep-walking on that silver wall, the furious⁴⁵
 Sick shapes and pregnant fancies of your world.

For Rickword, the gramophone, likewise, deludes "our mutual insouciance / with sentiments that mask our own."⁴⁶ Even human sexual desire, he feels, is now no more than a repetitive habit bequeathed to us by "vanished apes"; the ritual of human courtship is a mindless enactment of cause and effect between one machine and another:

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"Sir Orang Haut-Ton at Vespers"

'Oh World be nobler for her sake'

The slow procession of dead suns
bemuses his rebellious brain,
ogling the apt Machine that runs
with gathered skirt through age-grey rain.

The legs are marble-smooth in hose
and neatly pointed crocodile
cases not-now-prehensile toes,
but still the simian limbs beguile;

as tram-lines on Bank Holidays
lure to that worn familiar sod
where the Ancestral Tripper plays-
in pungent groves the pagan god.

(Collected Poems, p. 29)

Read in isolation these rather undistinguished verse satires might suggest a mere scornful contempt for the philistine pursuits of the "popular" mass culture. Such easy dismissiveness is unlikely to convince the reader. Part of their failure lies in the fact that they do not fully communicate the symptomatic value of their subjects in the way that good modern satire does. The reader might feel that he is being invited to join the satirist in taking a contemptuously superior attitude towards the "brothers and sisters" and "Sir Orang Haut-Ton," and contemptuous superiority is a much too facile response to the problems of the Machine Age. More successful modern satire alerts the reader to the full implications of what he is asked to observe, and usually communicates a feeling of anxiety and unease that does not allow him to remain aloof and complacent. It brings to the reader's attention the fact that machinery and Machine-Age symptoms are evidence of a whole cultural dissociation of human sensibility that he himself cannot escape. Eliot's verse satires, for instance, combine disapproval with the ominous anxiety that must be part of any modern

appraisal of man's plight. His "silent vertebrate in brown" with its "gesture of orang-outang" is the archetypal forerunner of the apes and puppets that are given more immediately recognizable trappings by other satirists. The hollow and dusty gourd of human identity is presented in a number of contexts between the wars, but the essential anxiety over human obsolescence, which Eliot communicates symbolically, remains a constant ingredient. Each individual is now part of the "herd endeified," trapped within the vacuum that is now human identity: "With eyes that blink but never weep, / The sentimental wonderless" (Sitwell, "Green Fly," Collected Satires and Poems, p. 59). Worldly effectiveness is the monopoly of those who, deceiving themselves, like Pound's Mr. Nixon, have completely assimilated the mechanical rules and values which now control human activity.

When the satiric focus changes from "collective" man to individuals, the charge of ineffectiveness remains. Those satirists, for instance, who attack the dead hand of tradition in the period see its representatives as part of an "old bitch gone in the teeth," who are deluded into thinking that they have a significance and a personal identity. Sassoon, for example, in his Satirical Poems (1926), satirizes members of an "obsolete Aristocracy" who are ridiculous because they are defunct:

"On Reading the War Diary of a Defunct Ambassador"

The world will find no pity in your pages;
 No exercise of spirit worthy of mention;
 Only a public-funeral grief-convention;
 And all the circumspection of the ages.
 But I, for one, am grateful, overjoyed,
 And unindignant that your punctual pen
 Should have been constructively employed
 In manifesting to unprivileged men
 The visionless officialized fatuity
 That once kept Europe safe for Perpetuity.
 (Collected Poems, p. 130)

09

Sitwell also satirizes an aristocracy who are puppets caught in a "living death," "twitching in doll-like, hideous grimaces" (Collected Satires and Poems, p. 53). He sarcastically exhorts them to "Allow no personality to stamp / Its wayward lines upon your talk or dress; / Smooth out your social furrows, on them clamp / The necessary look of nothingness" (Collected Satires and Poems, p. 51). Waugh's Tony Last, in A Handful of Dust (1934), is the epitome of aristocratic helplessness. Tony's folly lies in his adherence to a set of human decencies which, in the profit-motivated world of Mrs. Beaver, are obsolete. Waugh's satire presents Tony in an enigmatic light and the author is careful not to allow the reader to dismiss him as a fool. He is a scapegoat, but he is also the embodiment of the only positives that the book can be said to have. Tony's search for the "human" city ends with the realization that it no longer exists: "There is no city. Mrs. Beaver has covered it with chromium plating and converted it into flats."⁴⁷ His confinement by Mr. Todd is an allegorical presentation of his isolated and defunct position in what is now the "normal world." He is "human"; "civilization" is now a jungle ruled by a madman. The aristocratic Hetton, like Tony, is absorbed by the Machine Age and made into a profitable concern. England's cultural heritage becomes just another commodity. Even Tony's memory is turned into cash at the suggestion of Mrs. Beaver; an elaborate monument is erected in his honour in order to attract visitors. The new inhabitants of Hetton ride up the drive on a "two-stroke motor-cycle."⁴⁸

The modern Everyman, of whatever class, is an anonymous husk whose identity is completely controlled from without. The stated theme of Waugh's Decline and Fall (1928) is the impossibility of someone such as Paul Pennyfeather having an identity:

For an evening at least the shadow that has flitted about this narrative under the name of Paul Pennyfeather materialized into a solid figure of an intelligent, well-educated, well-conducted young man, a man who could be trusted to use his vote at a general election with discretion and proper detachment, whose opinion on a ballet or critical essay was rather better than most people's, who could order a dinner without embarrassment and in a creditable French accent, who could be trusted to see to luggage at foreign railway-stations and might be expected to acquit himself with decision and decorum in all the emergencies of civilized life. This was the Paul Pennyfeather who had been developing in the placid years which precede this story. In fact, the whole of this book is really an account of the mysterious disappearance of Paul Pennyfeather, so that the reader must not complain if the shadow who took his name does not amply fill the important part of hero for which he was originally cast.

(Decline and Fall, p. 122)

Waugh's attitude towards the character he is satirizing here is enigmatic, as it was with Tony Last. He recognizes the ridiculous inadequacy of a code which defines the typical Englishman in such a superficial and class-bound way. But in the larger context of Decline and Fall, especially in the light of the forces which Silenus and Margot represent, Paul is presented as more of an innocent victim with whom we would do well to sympathize.

We would expect a more optimistic position to be presented by left-wing satirists. But, for instance, in Auden and Isherwood's The Dog Beneath the Skin (1935), the problem of human identity is again the central issue and again it is presented as problematic. Francis, like Paul Pennyfeather, is progressively shorn of his illusions concerning human significance. His parting words to the inhabitants of Pressan Ambo are not so much condemnation as a confession of his and their mutual insignificance as individual people:

Since I've been away from you, I've come to understand you better. I don't hate you any more. I see how you fit into the whole scheme. You are significant, but not in the way I used to imagine. You are units in an immense army; most of you will die without ever knowing what your leaders are really

fighting for or even that you are fighting at all. Well, I am going to be a unit in the army of the other side, but the battlefield is so huge that it's practically certain you will never see me again. We are all of us completely unimportant, so it would be very silly to start quarrelling, wouldn't it? Goodbye.⁴⁹

The individual has no meaning alone and cannot hope for a significance other than as a "unit" in a larger structure. In contrast to this, the figures who are given the illusion of personal effectiveness in modern satire are, like Lewis' Bailiff in The Childermass, merely puppet-controlling puppets. The Bailiff can pragmatically adopt all points of view but is ultimately committed to nothing because he is the cipher of forces more powerful than himself.

Auden's early satire frequently deals with human insignificance. The final fate of his Miss Gee, for instance, is that in death she is seen as the specimen she has always really been. Her life is presented as a bundle of psychological complexes and her death carries her onto the dissecting table. Her final ignominy at the hands of callously inhuman students and surgeons, who are merely scientifically curious, captures the whole tone of the poem in its blending of farce and pathos:

They took Miss Gee to the hospital,
She lay there a total wreck,
Lay in the ward for women
With the bedclothes right up to her neck.

They laid her on the table,
The students began to laugh;
And Mr. Rose the surgeon
He cut Miss Gee in half.

Mr. Rose he turned to his students,
Said; 'Gentlemen, if you please,
We seldom see a sarcoma
As far advanced as this.'

They took her off the table,
They wheeled away Miss Gee
Down to another department
Where they study anatomy.

They hung her from the ceiling,
Yes, they hung up Miss Gee;
And a couple of Oxford Groupers
Carefully dissected her knee. 50

Miss Gee is ridiculous because she is a totally helpless victim who is finally reduced to the level of an object. The formal banter of the verse is at odds with the isolated anonymity and human powerlessness which is its subject. The poem conveys a feeling of tragic farce. Auden summarizes the effects of the great "revolution in statistics" in his well-known satire, "The Unknown Citizen" (1939). Man's identity is now in the hands of the "Bureau of Statistics." Regarded as nothing more than an aggregate, modern man is a social "unit" that is, for all official intents and purposes, dead. "The Unknown Citizen" is a synoptic account of what a great deal of inter-war satire attempts to convey. The machine-based world of official bureaucracy has no place for inconvenient human idiosyncrasies.

"The Unknown Citizen" elicits as much pity as scorn and the anonymous fate depicted in it is tragic as well as ridiculous. A similar blend of tragic ridicule is found in John Betjeman's "Death in Leamington," from Mount Zion (1932). Like Auden's "Miss Gee," Betjeman's poem might be called a "satire of circumstance" in which situation and tone are played off against each other to create a ridiculous tragedy. The dehumanized institutionalism, which lies behind the words and actions of the nurse, deprives even death of its significance. There is no real distinction between the corpse and the "half-dead" perfunctoriness of the living:

And nurse came in with the tea-things
 Breast high 'mid the stands and chairs--
 But nurse was alone with her own little soul,
 And the things were alone with theirs.

She bolted the big round window,
 She let the blinds unroll,
 She set a match to the mantle,
 She covered the fire with coal.

And "Tea!" she said in a tiny voice
 "Wake up! It's nearly five."
 Oh! Chintzy, chintzy cheeriness,
 Half dead and half alive!

Do you know that the stucco is peeling?
 Do you know that the heart will stop?
 From those yellow Italianate arches
 Do you hear the plaster drop?

Nurse looked at the silent bedstead,
 At the grey, decaying face,
 As the calm of a Leamington ev'ning
 Drifted into the place.

She moved the table of bottles
 Away from the bed to the wall;
 And tiptoeing gently over the stairs
 Turned down the gas in the hall.⁵¹

The tone here is much quieter than in Auden's "Miss Gee." The distaste which Betjeman obviously feels for the cheap shoddiness of such institutionalized life, and the dehumanizing effect it has upon the people who find themselves a part of it is carefully controlled. But the sting of the final stanza is all the more effective because of the lightness with which it is conveyed. The perfunctory and indifferent inevitability of the nurse's response to death, and the bathetic symbolism of her final gesture, are obscene. Her reverent turning down of the gas in the hall seems like a mock-religious rite until we realize that her first thought in the face of death is to save money.

The same fear of human insignificance in the face of institutionalized

anonymity lies behind Chesterton's Songs of Education (1927). The bureau of statistics which serves the industrial machine has reduced human intellect and emotions to a set of procedures reminiscent of those in Brave New World. Even the most basic and instinctive human relationships, such as that between mother and child, has been taken over by a totalitarian machine. Chesterton makes his point by presenting us with a mock-lullaby:

For mother is happy in greasing a wheel
For somebody else, who is cornering Steel;
And though our one meeting was not very long,
She took the occasion to sing me this song:
"O, hush thee, my baby, the time will soon come
When thy sleep will be broken with hooting and hum;
There are handles want turning and turning all day,
And knobs to be pressed in the usual way;

O, hush thee, my baby, take rest while I croon,
For Progress comes early, and Freedom too soon."
(Songs of Education, "For the Grêche," Collected Poems, pp. 101-2)

There are times when, in warning man of his blind drift towards obsolescence and destruction, modern satire presents the human condition as absurd. In changing its generic qualities in order to present the new vision, such satire often moves towards what Frye calls the last phase of satire, which is the "point of demonic epiphany, the dark tower and prison of endless pain, the city of dreadful night in the desert, or, with a more erudite irony, the tour abolie, the goal of the quest that isn't there."⁵² Rather than being a vehicle for personal animosity or for the assertion of a consensus of values, such satire aims at an incisive interpretation of man's general predicament. Deeply concerned with the individual's isolation and profound uncertainty in the face of inexorable impersonal forces, it attempts to present the reader with comprehensive insights into man's situation.

Huxley, in his early satires, sees man on a meaningless, mechanical switchback. Waugh sees him caught in an absurd motor-car race or lost in the jungle with a madman for a keeper. Satirists as ideologically opposed as Wyndham Lewis and Rex Warner incorporate within their work similar panoramic glimpses of the modern human condition. Warner's George in The Wild Goose Chase, finds himself in a desert landscape much like that of the Time-Flats in Lewis' Childermass. George is forced to face the fact that "he was by himself, unable to move in conjunction with others, travelling, he hoped, in the right direction, but at a velocity it was impossible for him to relate to anything else" (Wild Goose Chase, p. 148):

When time and space were regulated as oddly as they were in this country, it was difficult, he reflected, to be sure of anything but of single events (and even these might not yet have occurred), while as for the interstices between events and the emotional states appropriate to them, there was absolutely no knowing. (Wild Goose Chase, pp. 145-6)

Between the wars, satirists have to acknowledge new attitudes and modes of feeling which lie outside the "freemasonry which exists between people of like mind." In order to accommodate Machine-Age anxieties the genre acquires new tones and forms. In my following chapters I will discuss in some detail how Wyndham Lewis and Aldous Huxley make a conscious attempt to modify the satiric genre in order to present a comprehensive literary assessment of "the times." In a final short chapter I shall examine briefly the verse satire of D. H. Lawrence in order to show how Lawrence's uncompromising opposition to Machine-Age life finds formal expression in a kind of satire which Auden has called "prophetic denunciation."

Notes

- 1 Rudyard Kipling, Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Inclusive Edition, 1885-1926 (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1927), pp. 780-81.
- 2 Stephen Spender, "The World of Mechanical Metamorphosis," The Struggle of the Modern (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1963), p. 148.
- 3 Spender, "Mechanical Metamorphosis," pp. 148-9.
- 4 T. S. Eliot, "War," Selected Prose, ed. John Hayward (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1953), p. 197:

What we have to concern ourselves with primarily is the causes in modern society, in our industrial and financial machinery it may be, which bring about the kind of war which we have experienced; and to give our adherence to all alterations in that machinery which tend to remove the motives. We do not, I suppose, deny that society is very deeply affected morally and spiritually by material conditions, even by a machinery which it has constructed piecemeal and with short-sighted aims. This is not to accept any doctrine of determinism, for it means no more than that society, and the majority of individuals composing it, are only imperfectly conscious of what they are doing, directed by impure motives and aiming at false gods.

- 5 W. B. Yeats, "The Second Coming," The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 210.
- 6 Alexander Pope, "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," The Poetical Works of Alexander Pope, ed. Sir Adolphus William Ward (London: Macmillan, 1927), p. 280.
- 7 Philip Roth, "On Our Gang," Reading Myself and Others (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975), p. 49.
- 8 Bernard Levin, review of The Radiant Future, by Alexander Zinoviev,

trans. Gordon Clough, The Sunday Times, 29 March 1981, p. 43.

⁹ James Reeves, A Vein of Mockery: Twentieth-Century Verse Satire (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 5.

¹⁰ Reeves, p. 7.

¹¹ Louis MacNeice, "The Satirist," The Collected Poems of Louis MacNeice, ed. E. R. Dodds (London: Faber, 1966), p. 210. All further references to poems contained in this book appear in the text.

¹² John Lehmann, "This Excellent Machine," Collected Poems, 1930-1963 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1963), p. 34.

¹³ See C. J. Fox, "The Wind in the Rampant Trees--War Thoughts 60 Years After Ypres," PN Review, 4, No. 4 (1976), 16-19:

For Junger; the war represented a brutally extreme form of the 'total mobilization' which he considered the ultimate end of the machine-dominated forces shaping the European world.

Here chivalry took its final farewell. 'It had to yield to the heightened intensity of the war, just as all fine and personal feeling has to yield when machinery gets the upper hand. The Europe of today appeared here for the first time on the field of battle' (p. 17).

¹⁴ Siegfried Sassoon, "The Ultimate Atrocity," Collected Poems, 1908-1956 (London: Faber, 1964), pp. 202-3. This poem first appeared in 1933 in The Road to Ruin.

¹⁵ Sassoon, "A Prayer for 1936," Collected Poems, p. 250. This poem first appeared in 1939 in Rhymed Ruminations. All further references to poems contained in Collected Poems appear in the text.

¹⁶ T. S. Eliot, "The Dry Salvages," Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (London: Faber, 1970), p. 210.

¹⁷ Eliot, "Dry Salvages," p. 205.

¹⁸ Edgell Rickword, "Ode to a Train-de-luxe," Collected Poems (London:

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The Bodley Head, 1947), p. 71. This poem first appeared in 1928 in Invocations to Angels. All further references to poems contained in Collected Poems appear in the text.

19 Roy Campbell, "Junction of Rails; Voice of Steel," The Collected Poems of Roy Campbell (London: The Bodley Head, 1949), I, 149-50.

20 Campbell, "Junction of Rails," p. 152.

21 Stephen Spender, "The Express," Collected Poems, 1928-1953 (London: Faber and Faber, 1955), p. 54.

22 G. K. Chesterton, "The Free Man and the Ford Car," The Outline of Sanity (London: Methuen, 1926), pp. 171-81.

23 G. K. Chesterton, "The Old Gentleman in the Park," The Collected Poems of G. K. Chesterton (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1927), p. 17.

All further references to poems contained in this book appear in the text.

24 Evelyn Waugh, Vile Bodies (1930; rpt. London: Tonbridge Printers, 1949), pp. 155-56. All further references to this book appear in the text.

25 See Chapter III.

26 D. H. Lawrence, "Oh Wonderful Machine," The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, eds. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 643.

27 Evelyn Waugh, Decline and Fall (1928; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1974), pp. 208-9. All further references to this book appear in the text.

28 See Chapter I, p. 32.

29 Rex Warner, The Wild Goose Chase (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1938), p. 175. All further references to this book appear in the text.

30 John Betjeman, "The Plaster's Vision," Collected Poems (London:

John Murray, 1958), p. 128.

31 Henry Pelling, Modern Britain, 1885-1955 (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1960), pp. 129-30:

The worst feature of the life of the unemployed was its monotony and the feeling of futility that accompanied it. In the country a man could do some gardening or poaching, and keep himself fit in various ways; but in the towns, in spite of the efforts of various voluntary and governmental services to provide re-training or recreation, there was all too often little alternative to sheer street-corner idleness, month in and month out--often year in and year out.

32 John G. Blair, The Poetic Art of W. H. Auden (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 57.

33 Spender, "Mechanical Metamorphosis," p. 151.

34 W. H. Auden, Poems (London: Faber, 1930), p. 73.

35 Osbert Sitwell, "Green Fly," The Collected Satires and Poems of Osbert Sitwell (London: Duckworth, 1931), p. 57. All further references to works contained in this book appear in the text.

36 Betjeman, "Slough," Collected Poems, p. 22.

37 Floyd W. Matson, The Broken Image; Man, Science and Society (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 28-9.

38 Herbert Read, "Equation," Poems, 1914-1934 (London: Faber, 1935), p. 79.

39 G. Day-Lewis, "The Magnetic Mountain," Collected Poems (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954), pp. 102-3.

40 Day-Lewis, "Magnetic Mountain," pp. 103-4.

41 Robert Graves, "Apollo of the Physiologists," Poems, 1938-1945 (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1946), p. 48.

42 William Plomer, "Father and Son," Borderline Ballads (New York:

Noonday Press, 1955), p. 41.

⁴³ Rickword, "Prelude, Dream and Divargation," Collected Poems, p. 47.

This poem first appeared in Invocations to Angels in 1928.

⁴⁴ Plomer, "Hotel Magnificent: Yokohama, 1927," Borderline Ballads, p. 13.

⁴⁵ Day-Lewis, "Newsreel," Collected Poems, pp. 171-2.

⁴⁶ Rickword, "Farewell to Fancy: The Suburb of Adolescence Re-visited," Collected Poems, p. 36. This poem first appeared in Invocation to Angels in 1928.

⁴⁷ Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust (1934; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1974), p. 207.

⁴⁸ Handful of Dust, p. 218.

⁴⁹ W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, The Dog Beneath the Skin; or, Where is Francis? (London: Faber, 1935), p. 174.

⁵⁰ W. H. Auden, "Miss Gee," Another Time (London: Faber, 1940), p. 76.

⁵¹ Betjeman, "Death in Leamington," Collected Poems, pp. 1-2.

⁵² Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 238-9.

Chapter III

Wyndham Lewis and the Machine Age.

The succession of polemical books which Wyndham Lewis wrote between 1925 and 1933 contains no sustained explication of critical principles.

The various targets contained in the polemics are selected for their symptomatic importance as manifestations of a vast mechanical conspiracy which embraces the whole of the modern world. For the most part, we are left to chart Lewis' position from what he tells us he is opposed to. He describes himself in these works as a critic of "no official position."¹ He criticizes ad hoc; taken together or individually, the books abound in inconsistencies. So any attempt to distil a theoretical coherence from works as diverse as The Doom of Youth (1932) and Time and Western Man (1927) would distort Lewis' declared objectives. Also, the polemics vary considerably in quality and importance. Paleface (1929), The Doom of Youth (1932), The Diabolical Principle (1931) and The Old Gang and the New Gang (1933) are manifestly more flawed and, "popular" works than Time and Western Man (1927) and The Art of Being Ruled (1926), which are "not written for an audience already there"² and are intended to create their own audience.

Hugh Kenner has warned of the ways in which Lewis presents different

"personal interests" to different publics, and this "must never be forgotten in any attempt to reconcile his various statements of principle."³ Equally

inimical to Lewis' purpose would be an attempt to list the numerous butts of his criticism with a view to charting his likes and dislikes. He

openly confesses to a modification of his opinions from one book to the next,⁴

But, however irreconcilable Lewis' various statements of principle may be,

the polemical books are indispensable to a discussion of Lewis' satirical writings and to an understanding of what he tried to achieve as a satirist. With this purpose in mind, an examination of some of the more pervasive and frequently recurrent terminology which appears in the polemics will, I feel, throw a great deal of light upon Lewis' satiric theory and practice. Behind Lewis' tirades we find him relying upon certain key terms which recur throughout his polemics as points of reference for his various arguments. The ultimate meaning of these terms remains elusive, but Lewis' persistent use of them provides a continuity of sorts. His reasoning constantly returns to antithetical dualisms such as "mechanical" and "intellectual," "mechanical" and "organic," "mechanical" and "vital." His terms of approval and disapproval are common currency between the wars, but he repeatedly tells us that his meanings are quite different from those of anyone else. So his points of reference, he would have us believe, are familiar words with unfamiliar or idiosyncratic meanings. For instance, he tells us in Time and Western Man that when thinkers such as Bergson, Whitehead, or Alexander use the word "organic" as the opposite of "mechanical" they are themselves being "perfectly mechanical--or at all events what 'the thought of educated men' would term 'mechanical'" (p. 183). On the other hand Lewis himself uses the term "organic" as the opposite of "mechanical" and tells us, for instance in Faleface, that society "as an organism," or "as an organic whole," is about to perish because of "mechanical" perversions (pp. 77-7). Lewis' claims to originality in this respect are not entirely convincing. I intend to examine what he means by his basic terms and why he thinks his usage so markedly different from that of other writers in the period. In particular, I intend to discuss what distinguishes Lewis' basic notion of "mechanism" from the mechanical

concepts of writers such as Lawrence and Huxley, and from the general fears about mechanism ubiquitous between the wars.⁵

In Lewis' social criticism the "mechanical" provides a constant point of reference. Inconsistencies occur in particular applications, but the machine remains his analogue for all that is wrong with the "wild time we live in" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 415), whether it be industrial standardization or Bergson's theories of flux. Like Matthew Arnold before him, Lewis repeatedly rests his case upon implicit distinctions between a life of "mere machinery" and a life truly lived. However, unlike Arnold's critical terms, Lewis' distinctions cannot be reduced to anything like an integrated system of positive and negative modes of behavior. Lewis is obviously aware of Arnold's position in Culture and Anarchy (1869), as he quotes extensively from that book throughout his first major polemic, The Art of Being Ruled. Also, on several occasions throughout his polemical writings, Lewis deliberately dissociates his views from those of Arnold.⁶ In The Diabolical Principle, for instance, he tells us that "Matthew Arnold's moron is not ours."⁷ Lewis is particularly concerned to detach his notion of "intellect" from any link with "righteousness," the basic premise of Culture and Anarchy for Lewis being that the intellect finds "right reason" to be commensurate with the "will of God."⁸ In Paleface Lewis quotes and approves of Samuel Butler's criticism of Arnold's concept of righteousness. Butler objects to Arnold's setting up righteousness as man's highest aim in life and feels that a man "should have any number of little aims about which he should be conscious," but he should have "neither name for, nor consciousness concerning, the main aim in his life" (Paleface, p. 16). Man's attention should be confined to "things immediately round about him" rather than seeking for "unseen but supreme power" (Paleface,

p. 16). Lewis recommends, in this context, Butler's "passion for tolerance" as opposed to the confining effect that Arnold's "righteousness and intolerance" have upon the intellect (Paleface, p. 17).

In The Art of Being Ruled Lewis makes it quite clear that he considers "intelligence" (the opposite, for Lewis, of "machinery") to be a separate human entity which, in order to function effectively and free itself from machinery, must retain a strict autonomy:

Just as you probably cannot be a good artist and a good moralist at the same time, so righteousness or mysticism and the speculative reason do not mix well. . . . It is strange, but in practice the 'detached' intelligence is more 'moral,' in the sense that it is more humane, than is morality or righteousness.

(Art of Being Ruled, pp. 320-1)

"Detached" from any belief in an ultimate "end" and from a function commensurate with the "will of God," Lewis' notion of intelligence seems at first to be what Arnold would call the "mere machinery" of thought for its own sake. However, while for Arnold the intellect is a "free play" of the mind about our stock notions and habits (Culture and Anarchy, p. 211), for Lewis, intelligence is to be found in artistic expression: "thinking is of course first and foremost an art" (Diabolical Principle, p. 122).

Lewis' faith in intellect continues unabated throughout his polemical books. "It is only by intellect, not by indignation and emotionality, any more than by geniality and jokes, that the terrestrial paradise can be attained," he tells us in The Art of Being Ruled (p. 82). He exhorts us all to "sacrifice anything to the end that this most priceless power of any (the intellectual power by which, as a kind, we express and illustrate ourselves, precisely because of which we are conscious of our poor organization and the fatuity of our record up to date) be put in a position

finally to be effective." He asks us whether, "instead of the vast organization to exploit the weaknesses of the Many, should we not possess one for the exploitation of the intelligence of the Few?" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 89).

The intellect should be protected at all costs, he tells us, because it is the "goose that lays the golden eggs". (Art of Being Ruled, p. 381).

The constant favours afforded to "mechanical" man are, for Lewis, the prime cause of modern social problems because "the inventive individual is constantly exposed to destruction in a way that the uninventive, mechanical, associational man is not." He assures us that "had the best intelligences at any time in the world been able to combine, the result would have been for man at large of the happiest" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 420). Lewis constantly attributes "inventive" and "vital" qualities to the intellect in accord with his notion of the intellectual as an artist rather than a teacher or a philosopher.

He becomes less convincing when he equates "pure inventive intelligence" (Diabolical Principle, p. 99) with powers of natural leadership. The Lewisian intellectual can claim "the authority of the function that he regards as superior to any mechanical dominion of physical force or wealth":

More than the prophet or religious teacher he represents at his best the great unworldly element in the world, and that is the guarantee of his usefulness. It is he and not the political ruler who supplies the contrast of this something remote and different that is the very stuff of which all living (not mechanical) power is composed, and without whose incessant functioning men would rapidly sink back to their mechanical origins.

(Art of Being Ruled, p. 432)

Lewis' remote and vital intellectual who supplies the "very stuff" of living power upon which others depend has something of the "unacknowledged

legislator" about him. However, he is a very different being from his Romantic counterpart, for his "pure inventive intelligence" is informed not by an emotional or mystical sense but by strong powers of scrutiny and differentiation. Moreover, he combines critical and creative faculties in such a way that he transcends completely anything that would normally be called intellectual activity.

When an average person casts a dispassionate eye over his fellow creatures . . . it is usually as a consequence of some acute rage or disappointment. He does not at all seasons gaze in that clairvoyant fashion upon another man. And even when he does so his picture is distorted by passion. It is in consequence of this shortcoming in 'detachment' on the part of the human average that their picture is not convincing.

It is only the intellect, in its highest incarnations, that gives the really convincing 'detached' scientific picture of squalor, ugliness or fraud. There lies the use of the intellect (or the man possessed of a great intellect) to the agent of political disintegration. And one of the things, it is noteworthy, that that agent invariably affects is 'detachment'--though that quality, which is semi-divine, 'detachment,' is the last thing he in reality possesses.

(Diabolical Principle, pp. 95-6)

Characteristically, then, thinking is "semi-divine" and "first and foremost an art" for Lewis. But the converse is not true; not all art is intellect.

In case we are in any doubt as to the kind of art which the Lewisian

intellectual is likely to produce, we are informed on several occasions

that it has all of the hard perceptiveness of a "science." In The Art of

Being Ruled Lewis tells us that "Science is the science of the inside of

things; art is the science of their outside. Art is the differentiator;

science is the identifier" (p. 260). In The Doom of Youth he assures us

that he himself is a "man of science."⁹ Such remarks are important for

Lewis' theory of satire because, as he tells us in Men Without Art, satire

is a presentation of the truth:

Satire in reality often is nothing else but the truth-- the truth, in fact, of Natural Science. That objective, non-emotional truth of the scientific intelligence sometimes takes on the exuberant sensuous quality of creative art; then it is apt to be called 'Satire,' for it has been bent not so much upon pleasing as upon being true.¹⁰

At the risk of labouring the point, the Lewisian intellect is likely to express itself through satire.

For Lewis, "machinery" prevails wherever "intellect," as he defines it, is not functioning. It is also important that the intellectual should work alone; "solitariness of thought" is the "prime condition for intellectual success" (Time and Western Man, p. 37). Real thought sheds the machinery of "time" and "sensation" and freely traverses values and ideologies. "Sensation" is "essentially hostile to the arts of the intellect" (Time and Western Man, p. 131), so the "perceptual self" must be a "timeless self":

Perception, indeed, has no 'date,' only sensation has that. . . . Perception, with its element of timelessness, has, in conjunction with that, a detestable repose. Perception, in short, smacks of contemplation, it suggests leisure; only sensation guarantees action. (Time and Western Man, p. 412)

Lewis' notion that the "perception" of the intellect does not guarantee "action" naturally prompts an inquiry into the relationship between the two. But, in the polemics, the question of how the products of the intellect are to have the social and political effectiveness that Lewis obviously believes they ought to have is left vague and unexamined. Over this issue Lewis is most unsatisfactory and his terminology is put to its crudest use. He sees society as being made up of thinkers and non-thinkers, or "intellectuals" and "machines." He believes that if "Natural Law" were

to have its way, the machines would be happily subservient to the intellectuals. The result would be, he assures us, "for man at large of the happiest." This over-simplified and convenient division of mankind into two states of consciousness appears in various guises and contexts throughout his polemics, but the laws which govern the necessary interaction between the two states are never satisfactorily stated or explained to us. For instance, we can see the division being used in a political context when Lewis tells us that there are "two distinct types" of men. We have the life of the "ruled" or "mechanical" man which "must be lived on one plane, that of the ruler on the other." This means that "the life of the subject will be lived concretely, stereotyped on a narrow, fashionable plan, of use for the day or time; full of kind, protective illusions, like a screen round a child's bed" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 96). On the other hand, the life of the "ruler" will be very unpleasant: "It will be severe, full of the shock of the forces of outer vastness from which the masses are sheltered, full of incessant labour" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 96). The underlying assumption of this rhetorical and schematic division of mankind is that the "ruled" will automatically submit to the "rulers" as an inevitable consequence of some "Natural Law." Revealingly, when Lewis does come to recommend an actual ruler, his choice shows the inadequacy of his inflexible and schematic categorization. Or rather, the preposterousness of his choice reveals him as the victim of his own schemata.

One of the most prominent features of the Lewisian "detached" intellect is its mobility. It can traverse the scale of values "from the nadir to the zenith," choosing those critical criteria and procedures most appropriate to the particular issue under discussion. It is not hampered,

Lewis tells us, by having to sustain or defend principles about a fixed position. But such convenient elusiveness has its obvious dangers. We might begin to doubt the substance of a faculty that is only ever seen as a reaction to something else. The qualities which Lewis gives to the "intellect" often seem little more than a defence of what he is doing in the polemical books, and one of the final impressions we have from the books as a whole is that Lewis is recommending himself and his own activities as an alternative to "machinery." The dissatisfaction that we feel with the "intellect" as he describes it in his polemics is the same dissatisfaction that we feel with the books themselves, which are creations of the type of intelligence which they were created to recommend. Lewis is "the Enemy" in the polemics, but he remains a critic somewhat defined by his enemies. He sees it as his role to respond to and qualify the views of others; he does not see it as part of his task to propose a consistent position of his own. He, so he tells us, writes to correct an imbalance. He counters one abstraction with another: the "subjective" with the "objective"; "machinery" with "intellect"; the "drifting" with the "static"; "chaos" with "order"; the "feminine" with the "masculine." Consequently, "machinery" comes to designate any abstraction that he is attacking at any particular time.

The Lewisian intellect is free-ranging, but it is not completely devoid of ballast because, Lewis tells us, it is governed by "common sense," which is linked to a view of the outside of things and an insistence on spatial rather than temporal relations. Lewis explains that common sense is the "term used in philosophy for the ordered picture of the classical world, and equally the instinctive picture we inherit from untold generations of men" (Time and Western Man, p. 426). But we must not

take these classical associations too literally. Lewis believed the terms "Classical" and "Romantic" to be "strictly unusable" (Men Without Art, p. 203), even though the "classical" has a "physiognomy of sorts":

It has a solid aspect rather than a gaseous; it is liable to incline rather to the side of Aristotle than to the side of Plato; to be of a public rather than of a private character; to be objective rather than subjective; to incline to action rather than to dream; to belong to the sensuous side rather than to the ascetic; to be redolent of common sense rather than of metaphysic; to be universal rather than idiomatic; to lean upon the intellect rather than upon the bowels and nerves. (Men Without Art, p. 190)

Lewis is also careful to dissociate himself from Spengler in this respect:

My 'Classical' is not the Hellenic Age, as it is Spengler's; and my Western is not his 'Western.' For me the contrast is no longer Modern Europe and Classical Greece. We can very well be the healthy opposite of 'romantic' (and all that entails) without being greek [sic]. On the other hand, if Time-travel were able to offer us the alternative of residence in New York or residence in Periclean Athens, I should choose the latter. (Time and Western Man, p. 306)

Lewis himself, he tells us in Time and Western Man, is a "classical intellect" because he lives "in the present" (p. 307) in the world of "common sense." He prefers the "chaste wisdom of the Chinese or the Greek" (p. 130) because it is the "instinctive 'spacialized' world of the 'pure Present' of Antiquity that is 'creative' if anything deserves that name" (p. 233). The Greek world affirms the common sense of the inventive intellect because the "Greek regarded himself as surrounded by static and soulless 'things'; whereas we, and our 'Faustian' brothers, regard ourselves as surrounded by 'forces,' and as dynamically involved in a World-Soul" (p. 294).

Lewis recommends the "intellect" and its mode of perception in terminology that is commonplace. But in so doing he sometimes distorts

the more usual meaning of words. His way of seeing the world is, according to him, not only different from, or more beneficial than, other ways, but he makes it the "natural" mode of perception which, if adhered to, will result in an "organic" rather than a "mechanical" society. His "natural" world is "static":

The world of classical 'common-sense'--the world of the Greek, the world of the Schoolmen--is the world of nature, too, and it is a very ancient one. All the health and sanity that we have left belongs to that world, and its forms and impulses. It is such a tremendous power that nothing can ever break it down permanently. But to-day the issue, more dramatically than at any other possible point in history (owing to the situation created by the inventions of our science), is between that nature or some development of it on the one side, and upon the other, those forces represented by the philosophy of Time. . . . all the weight of our intelligence should be thrown into the scales representing our deepest instincts.

(Time and Western Man, pp. 186-7)

In this passage we see Lewis justifying what is really only a "mode of perception" which sees nature as "static" by saying that nature is static. He makes what is perceived synonymous with his way of perceiving. His annexing and inverting of terminology sometimes seems perverse. For instance, he rejects "Romantic" perception by recommending his own perspective as being more "natural" and more "organic," terms whose meanings are usually associated with a sense of the world that does not apprehend reality as "static and soulless 'things.'"

This personalised use of terms continues throughout Lewis' account of "Natural Law." His "Natural Law" is simply the hierarchy of intellect over mechanism which modern democracy disregards at its peril. The intellect is the "aristocratical attribute" (Time and Western Man, p. 302); the modern world "puts taboos more and more upon the 'aristocracy of intellect' and its natural privileges" (Doom of Youth, p. 130). In Paleface

Lewis tells us that the division of society into "persons" and "machines" is not his idea: "in the first place the plan is, of course, not mine at all, but nature's" (p. 74). Nature does not desire a "structureless, horizontal jelly of a society, as does the modern democrat, but a more organic affair" (p. 74), and it is the common-sense world of the classical intellect that is most conducive to organic social structures. This is why society is sadly defective:

Instead of an organic whole, a mass of minute individuals, under the guise of an Ethic there appears the Mystic of the Many, the cult of the cell, or the worship of the particle; and the dogma of 'what is due from everybody to everybody' takes the place of the natural law of what is due to character, to creative genius, or to personal power, or even to their symbols. (Faleface, pp. 77-8)

If intellect is obscured, society will cease to function "as an organism" and will inevitably fall victim to mechanical perversions, "for it cannot survive in a condition in which what is most vital in it is obscured or not permitted to function" (Faleface, pp. 79-81). "Organic," "vital," and "natural" are imprecise terms of approval used by anyone who wishes to recommend a particular social or political structure or a particular way of looking at the world. They seem anomalous terms for Lewis to use, both because of their vagueness (the Lewisian "intellect" prides itself upon hard clarity, scrutiny and powers of differentiation) and because of their associations with the primitive, Romantic naturalism that Lewis intends to vanquish.

As Lewis applies his concept of "intellect" to political and social problems it annexes more and more attributes. But the necessary links between these attributes and intelligence remain undeveloped. Inventiveness and powers of differentiation are automatically allied with "personal

power" and "social effectiveness." Because Lewis' divisions are so absolute-- anything that is not "intellect" is "machinery"--his abstractions have to be stretched to accommodate more qualities:

The two chief orders of authority are the principles of natural superiority . . . on the one hand (of a natural gift of strength, intelligence, daring, or what not), and the organized power of numbers, or any authority established in defiance of and not in complicity with natural laws, on the other.

(Art of Being Ruled, p. 271)

Lewis considers the relationships between "strength," "daring," "what not," and "intelligence" to be natural and inevitable. His inflexible divisions lead to implausible associations and (even, at times, to bald contradictions. As Frederic Jameson writes in Fables of Aggression, "if intelligence is the same as strength, then there would be no need to defend it in the first place."¹¹

On a number of occasions Lewis helpfully explains the differences between his own use of terms and normal usage. In The Doom of Youth, for example, he treats directly the problem of "natural" and "mechanical" Youth. He is careful to tell us that he is here using terms according to the meanings they have in "the emotional popular mind" (p. 14). But this "popular" dualism and his own "natural" and "mechanical" polarization are very different:

The politicization of 'Youth' is of course destructive of the natural, of necessity. All direct propaganda that tends to make very young persons begin to think of themselves (1) first and foremost as 'young,' and that (2) at the same time imbues them with the idea of an especial and superlative, almost mystical value residing in the mere fact of youth (irrespective of gifts, training, or personal beauty)--such propaganda substitutes for the natural the trained. (p. 14)

Having divided the "popular" conception of Youth into two categories, "namely, a something wild and unspoiled (and therefore natural) upon the one hand; and a something disciplined and given a stark definition--seen in terms of abstract force--upon the other," he tells us that the "natural versus the mechanical . . . is a crude statement of these values" (p. 19). For the real choice, as he sees it, is "between several well-defined types of the mechanical; not between the natural and the mechanical at all" (p. 19). He tells us that he is particularly anxious to dissociate himself from the romantic concept of "natural" which, for him, is the very root of "machinery";

Rousseau had the notion of the perfection of 'the natural man.' And it is quite conceivable that some day there will be a movement in favour of 'the natural Youth.' If there were such a movement, it would undoubtedly run counter to the romantic values of 'the natural man'; for it is those values that have resulted in the mechanical youth--which is a paradox. (p. 27).

This is a paradox of which Lewis makes a great deal; he expounds upon it at length in The Art of Being Ruled where he comes to the conclusion that "it has been in the name of nature always that men have combined to overthrow the natural in themselves" (p. 34).

For similar reasons, Lewis also dissociates his use of "natural" from the links which the word has with animal unconsciousness. For Lewis, the animal and the mechanical are always synonymous. The forces which make the world mechanical "endow with the supreme value, all that is purely animal, or mechanical, and . . . rob the average run of men of any pretension to anything else" (Doom of Youth, p. 28).

Lewis makes "Natural Law" responsible for the attitude which he adopts towards "Human Nature." As always, he thinks in terms of two distinct

types; he tells us that Nature has divided the species into "persons" and "machines":

Nature does in every generation endow a handful of people with invaluable and mysterious gifts, in the special fields of science, and of art, or in character and general ability, making them fertile and inventive where other people are for the most part receptive only (and who indeed unless stirred up to argument ask nothing better than to receive and receive and receive, naturally docile if properly fed).

(Diabolical Principle, p. 128)

Where Arnold divides each person into "best" self and "every-day" self,¹² Lewis' division suggests "best" men and "every-day" men. His mechanical "Everyman," who composes "99 per cent of mankind," has repeatedly demonstrated his inability "to improve in any of the arts and sciences of life, and so it would be simply foolish any longer to waste and blunt the brilliant natural gifts of the elect minority over this huge silly baby-mule and brutal dunce--that is to say--the greater part of men."¹³ Like his "intellectual," Lewis' "Everyman," who is naturally content with a "dependent, animal existence," is always a very rhetorical being. He is grotesque because his features have been distorted to fit Lewis' basic "natural" and "mechanical" antithesis. In The Art of Being Ruled Goethe is cited as providing confirmation for this division:

Goethe had a jargon of his own for referring to these two species whose existence he perfectly recognized. He divided people into Puppets and Natures. He said the majority of people were machines, playing a part. When he wished to express admiration for a man, he would say about him, 'He is a nature.' This division into natural men and mechanical men (which Goethe's idiom amounts to) answers to the solution advocated in this essay. And today there is an absurd war between the 'puppets' and the 'natures,' the machines and the men. And owing to the development of machinery, the pressure on the 'natures' increases. (p. 135)

In Culture and Anarchy Arnold calls for a recognition by each man of his own "nature," and a recognition by all men that escape from machinery is impossible "so long as the rest of mankind are not perfected along with us" (p. 192). But Lewis warns us that "we are all slipping back into machinery, because we all have tried to be free" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 135). Escape is only possible if the "natures" isolate themselves from the "machines" and face the fact that "99 per cent" of the species must remain "puppets." The inevitability and natural rightness of this division underlies all Lewis' social and political criticism.

It is hardly surprising that Lewis' "natural man" is an extremely rare being, a creative critic with a "semi-divine," detached intellect. Natural men are "born," but the normal, mechanical man "is made, not born; and he is made, of course, with very great difficulty" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 280). Only the abnormally gifted man can free himself from machinery and be natural: "under any circumstances . . . very few people can be 'persons'" (Paleface, p. 73). Lewis further believes that most people do not want to be "persons"; they merely require the fiction of being a "person":

No one wants to be free. . . . People ask nothing better than to be types--occupational types, social types, functional types of any sort. If you force them not to be, they are miserable, just as the savage grew miserable when the white men came and prevented him from living a life devoted to the forms and rituals he had made. (Art of Being Ruled, pp. 167-8)

The fictive "savage" of Romantic theory, the conventional "natural man," is the most mishandled machine of all. Mass civilization is, according to Lewis, composed of little else but such natural, mechanical men, artificially forced into positions that, if left alone, they would naturally avoid:

For in the mass people wish to be automata; they wish to be

conventional; they hate you teaching them or forcing them into 'freedom'; they wish to be obedient, hard-working machines, as near dead as possible--as near dead (feelingless and thoughtless) as they can get, without actually dying.

(Art of Being Ruled, p. 168)

Lewis' constantly reiterated notion of a mechanical "Everyman," who ought to be made into a useful unit of an organic social hierarchy, seems to have something in common with the principles of Watsonian Behaviorism, which I discussed earlier as a popular school of psychological thought on human nature which had both adherents and opponents between the wars. But Lewis is loud in his condemnation of Behaviorist doctrine, which he cites as being one of the worst symptoms of the modern mechanical malaise:

Comparative Psychology or 'Behaviorism' . . . substitutes the body for the 'mind.' There is not, for it, so much as a pin's point of the 'psychic' left anywhere in the field of observation. Everything about a human being is directly and peripherally observable; and all the facts about the human machine can be stated 'in terms of stimulus and response,' or of 'habit-formation.' . . . we reach, with Professor Watson, the last ditch. (Time and Western Man, p. 345)

Lewis himself believes that "there are certain laws . . . that could be shown to control the major orders and classes of men at any given time" (Doom of Youth, p. xiv). But when he is criticising Behaviorism, his anxieties over the inherent dangers of its doctrinal base seem to correspond fairly closely with the fears of thinkers such as Jaspers.¹⁴ For instance, he tells us that man must assume "responsibility" for his acts:

In a man's way of regarding himself, it is socially of capital importance that he should regard himself as one person. Is it not? That is surely beyond any possible question. It is only in that way that you can hope to ground in him a responsibility towards all 'his' acts. (Time and Western Man, p. 364)

And yet he believes that "99 per cent" of people are born "molluscs"

(there is no offence in saying it, for it is quite true), and they are made into sham students, artists, cosmopolitan aristocrats, globe-trotters, philosophers, poets, mountaineers, buccaneers, and gypsies" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 104). Behaviorism, of course, has no way of accounting for the Lewisian intellectual, the born "nature" with valuable and mysterious gifts to whom "men owe everything they can ever hope to have" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 431). Behaviorism discounts all of the features of life that Lewis holds most valuable. In Faleface he explains why he rejects the teachings of Watson so vehemently:

[Behaviorism]. . . is just the extreme gospel of the Machine Age. Every little average 'goose-stepping, superstitious, sentimental' unit of a present-day industrial mass-democracy is a behaviorist. He would be just as thorough a one without Professor Watson. Why Behaviorism is so intolerable intellectually is not because it leads, but because it follows the little average 'goose-stepping, superstitious, sentimental' unit of the mass democracy, and makes a mechanical imitation of this robot in the philosophic field. (pp. 161-2)

Behaviorism is wrong because of its origins. This seems to be the only way of reconciling Lewis' criticism of it with some of his own views on human nature. It grows out of the Machine Age rather than out of a view of man based upon Greek common sense. It caters to the evils of mass democracy rather than allowing the "natures" to lead and organize the "machines." However, in many respects, Lewis' own concepts share some of the narrowness of Behaviorist principles. His notions of how "99 per cent" of mankind are machines that the intellectual should be allowed to adjust are not far removed from the Watsonian manipulation of human life according to the laws of cause and effect.

Generally speaking, there is a wide-spread feeling between the wars that what Arnold saw as the "besetting danger"¹⁵ of modern life has become

a victorious tyranny from which there is no escape. The "mere machinery" of Philistine behavior has developed into the all-encompassing Machine Age. Lewis, like others, consistently subsumes his individual targets in a general condemnation of the "Machine Age." He refers often to the "trying and unnatural conditions of the Machine Age" (Faleface, p. 157); and blames the "Machine" and "Industrial Technique" for the evils of modern society. In fact, in his broad assessment of "the times," Lewis manifests an orthodoxy that is somewhat uncharacteristic of his criticism of specific problems and particular people. This orthodoxy (the belief that "immense and critical revaluations are taking place--an Umwertung aller Werte. It is the passing of a world, as it were, not of an empire or of single nations." Men Without Art, p. 124) is much more prominent in a book such as The Doom of Youth than it is in Time and Western Man. But Lewis uses the machine in all of his polemics as a general analogue for the modern malaise:

The notion of Progress leads naturally to the development of an attitude of disdain and hostility for anything that is not the latest model. So all human values end by imitating the conditions and values of the constantly improving machines of the Machine Age. Industrial Technique imposes its 'progressive' values upon us. Our individual life is quite overshadowed by the machine, which separates us from all human life that has gone before us.

There is no new human entity in the World. It is the machines by means of which, or because of which, the Great Revolutions are imposed upon us--and, of course, the economic masters of the machines. (Doom of Youth, p. 48)

In The Doom of Youth, as a critic of industrial conditions, Lewis shifts his emphasis and takes the part of "all men" against the machine. He deplores the fact that "the Machine takes the place increasingly of the Man" (p. 54). In fact, he believes that "an attack upon the standard of

human life itself--of the life of almost the whole of mankind--is in progress. There is a considerable chance that the world is not big enough for both Man and his Machines" (p. 58). It is quite clear that Lewis applies his concept of machinery in two ways. In Paleface, for instance, we are told that "most men wish to be machines" (p. 237), but, on the other hand, the great social problem that men have to face is whether mechanical values will replace human values:

This was the first lesson of the Whites in the great issue that was to occupy such a central position in his life--namely, of Man versus the Machine. The Redskin provided the first illustration. In that first picture the White was on the side of the Machine. With his machinery he drove back and then destroyed the Redskin. Later, all human enemies apparently disposed of, the struggle began between the all-conquering Machine and himself. It looked as though his fate might be the same as that of the Redskin. To-day that is the problem more than ever. But it is never stated very clearly, because all the organization of publicity is in the hands of the owners of the Machines. (Paleface, p. 236)

Lewis is here once again using words in their "popular" rather than Lewisian sense. The conflict here is not really "Man versus the Machine." For Lewis uses two concepts of machinery which are sometimes difficult to reconcile. Depending upon context, he employs Arnold's sense of "machinery" as a "state of consciousness" which is unavoidable for "99 per cent" of mankind; or he employs Butler's notion of the "Machine" as an evolutionary force in its own right, taking over and perverting "human nature" and social organization. On the one hand machines are making all people mechanical; on the other, most people are inevitably and naturally mechanical. In Paleface Lewis writes of the "Whites and the Machine" (p. 236) and then turns to criticizing the "White Machine" (p. 238). He does not object to people being machines, as does Arnold for instance,

for this is natural and unavoidable. He dislikes, rather, the mechanical people of the Machine Age who are preventing the natures from carrying out their natural function.

When he is taking an overall view of things, Lewis' fears seem very similar to those generally expressed between the wars. In his broad concern for the perversions of the "Machine Age" he reveals sympathies and common concerns with many of the people he condemns as being mechanical.¹⁶ For instance, it is not Spengler's vision of "mechanical chaos" that is wrong but his account of it. Lewis claims to "observe it with far more anguish than does Spengler" (Time and Western Man, p. 307). He wishes to substitute his "true account of the historic progression by which we have arrived at the present impasse, for also I do not deny--who can?--that there is a fearful state of chaos throughout the world" (Time and Western Man, p. 307). In Paleface he makes it quite clear that he takes for granted the "general" view of machinery:

It is not disputed by anyone that we have evolved a very mechanical type of life . . . There is much less differentiation now, that is, between the consciousness of the respective members of a geographical group, and between the various groups of peoples, than before machines made it possible for everyone to mould their mind on the same cultural model. (pp. 74-5)

In this general context "consciousness" and "mind" are allowed to "everyone." In other contexts the words designate special gifts of "nature" granted only to the "very few." The "great industrial machine has removed from the individual life all responsibility" (Paleface, p. 100), but he maintains categorically at other times that only "natures" can be "individuals" and that "responsibility" is the last thing desired or required by the majority of people: "independence of character, or the being a person, is a gift of

nature, to put it shortly" (Paleface, p. 79).

Whether we explain these inconsistencies as matters of degree, shifts in emphasis, or as the presentation of different "personal interests" to different publics, we can see that Lewis applies his "machine" terminology indiscriminately and in a variety of contexts. As a critic of the "Machine Age" in general, he means the same thing as everyone else between the wars who uses mechanical notions to account for an ubiquitous social malaise. He means the replacement of individual will, purpose and responsibility by a vast mass of "titanic apparatus" that the individual is apparently helpless to resist. More specifically, he labels everything "mechanical" which he sees contributing to the general malaise: "Romanticism"; Bergson's "organic"; "Mr. Everyman"; "Industrial Technique"; and, of course, D. H. Lawrence, whose "admiration for savages and cats is really an expression of the worst side of the Machine Age . . . Machine-Age man is effusive about them because they are machines like himself; and Mr. Lawrence, at least makes no pretence of admiring his savages because they are free" (Paleface, p. 195). Even more specifically, when Lewis is discussing human nature itself, "machinery" is the inevitable and not-to-be-regretted state of consciousness of "99 per cent" of mankind. Unlike other opponents of "machinery" during the period, Lewis does not want to awaken his mechanical "Everyman" to an awareness of his puppet existence. His concern is to prevent the "machines" from holding the ascendancy over the "natures."¹⁷ However we explain away Lewis' inconsistencies, they often make his accusations against the "Machine Age" on behalf of a general "human idea" appear to be rhetorical ripostes.¹⁸

Lewis' distinguishing feature as a critic of "machinery" lies in his uncharitable and unfashionable view of human nature. Throughout his

polemics he provides many useful qualifications to the notion of "machinery" presented by Arnold in Culture and Anarchy. At times he almost seems to be answering Arnold point for point:

No successful human society could be founded upon a notion of the 'common good' which attempted to weigh out to everybody an equal amount and kind of 'good.' The 'pleasures of the mind,' for instance . . . cannot be equally distributed unless you have a community composed of standard minds, turned out according to some super-mechanical method. It is exactly that sort of regularity or quantitative fixity that it is necessary to avoid, for the sake of the mutual satisfaction of any social group.
(Paleface, p. 88)

As far as Lewis is concerned, Arnold's whole notion of constant human progress towards perfection is merely the sentiment of a typical nineteenth-century moralist who will not be satisfied until "every man, woman, and child (but especially every woman and child), in the entire world, had been accommodated with all the 'pleasures of the mind' of Plato" (Paleface, pp. 89-90). Lewis' qualifications of Arnold's position are consistent and confirm his less optimistic view of the average person's capabilities:

As for the indefinite expansion of the idea of the 'good,' or of the 'human' without limit of time or place--so that any number of units may be embraced by a law that is unique--there again the emotional or sentimental expansiveness of the protestant moralist seems to me to be at fault, and to provide for us, in place of a well-built society, an emotional chaos.
(Paleface, p. 90)

But his own critique of machinery and the alternatives he offers are less satisfactory. He represents himself as providing checks and balances to modern trends and symptoms rather than as developing a consistent and water-tight system of alternatives. . . But, whether intentionally or not, the alternatives are there, either in the form of vague concepts such as "natures" or "intellects" or implicit in the arguments he directs against

specific targets. His case is weakened because one half of it remains comparatively undeveloped.

The one concrete example we have of the Lewisian "intellectual" or "nature" in action is Lewis himself.¹⁹ He is, he tells us, an "intellectual" and a "natural leader." Yet he is confused about his own motives in writing his polemics. As we read Culture and Anarchy, we are in no doubt why Arnold is writing and criticizing. Lewis, however, is evasive and self-conscious about his intentions. He frequently feels the need to justify his position although, of course, he protests too loudly that he does not. In The Diabolical Principle, for instance, he recognizes that his rhetorical methods belie somewhat the very principles that he offers as alternatives to machinery:

It has been objected that my own critical writing is full of storm and stress: that I am a counter-storm, merely, and that I do not set an example of olympian calm to my romanticist adversaries.

That I have deliberately used, often, in my criticism, an incandescent rhetoric is true. But then, of necessity, rapidly executed polemical essays directed against a tireless and innumerable people of termites, can hardly be conducted in any other way. The atheneian drafts, at war with Sparta or Persia, did not provide a spectacle of hellenic grace and imperturbability, I think. Such an essay as Time and Western Man is not supposed to imitate in its form an attic temple. It is a sudden barrage of destructive criticism laid down about a spot where temples, it is hoped, may under its cover be erected. (pp. 31-2)

The cumbrous imagery of war with which Lewis' self-concept is so often linked weighs him down and limits his tactics. The belligerent "detached intellect" which traverses the scale of values from nadir to zenith needs its enemies to sustain it. The polemics constitute, at times, a one-way-song of their own. The "detachment" of other writers is, for Lewis, the "arch-fraud,"²⁰ but he claims the right to change his mind whenever he likes in the name of "objectivity" and "detachment":

I advance the strange claim (as my private Bill of Rights)

to act and to think non-politically in everything, in complete detachment from all the intolerable watchwords and formulas by which we are beset. I am an artist and my mind, at least, is entirely free . . . I shall act as a conventional 'radical' at six this evening if that seems to be appropriate to the situation, and at ten a.m. tomorrow I shall display royalist tendencies if I am provoked by too much stupidity or righteous pomp from some other quarter. (Diabolical Principle, pp. 37-8)

Lewis' natural intellect is free-ranging because its ultimate point of reference is always itself.²¹

In Paleface Lewis tells us that he intends to prosecute his "function of 'impartial observer,'" but his criticism is never impartial. The Lewisian intellect, confined to spatial, external forms of perception, avoids scrutinising the internal impulses that give rise to its own activities. For instance, in Paleface, Lewis describes himself as "a 'bitter' critic of all those symptoms of the interregnum that suggest a compromise or a backsliding or a substitution of opportunist romantic policies . . . for a policy of creative compulsion" (p. 83). But he is also, when it suits him, "purely and simply amusing myself," as Paul would say. I have no official position . . . nor do I covet one" (p. 86). At other times his "position, inasmuch as it causes me to oppose on all issues 'the romantic,' comes under the heading 'classical'" (p. 254). Lewis' concern to be elusive, which he cites as proof of his "objectivity"--his political views are "partly communist and partly fascist, with a distinct streak of monarchism, but at bottom anarchist with a healthy passion for order" (Diabolical Principle, p. 126)--does not matter in his art, but it limits somewhat the credibility of his polemics.

In Time and Western Man Lewis tells us that his notions are "not idly-held opinions; but are a critical engine constructed from directly observed fact of the most refractory description, sedulously submitted to

repeated tests" (p. 39). If we take him at his word, we have to keep in mind his definition of what constitutes "directly observed fact." Later in the same book he relates all of his ideas to his central "philosophy of the eye," on which he bases the common sense of his intellect:

Our philosophy attaches itself to the concrete and radiant reality of the optic sense. That sensation of overwhelming reality which vision alone gives is the reality of 'common sense,' as it is the reality we inherit from pagan antiquity. And it is indeed on that 'reality' that I am basing all I say.
(Time and Western Man, p. 418)

But to remain "dogmatically . . . for the Great Without, for the method of external approach--for the wisdom of the eye" (Men Without Art, p. 128), is, as far as human behavior and social organization are concerned, to risk another kind of "abstraction and darkness."²² Such a "philosophy," in fact, tends to reduce human needs and human goals to "problems of behavior" (Paleface, p. 58). It concerns itself with discovering those "certain laws . . . that could be shown to control the major orders and classes of men at any given time" (Doom of Youth, p. ix). The dogmatic adherence to such a philosophy often results in conclusions about mankind similar to those reached by the Behaviorists. It is the approach of a particular type of artist applied to spheres of critical investigation where its bias is, at times, debilitating. As Frederic Jameson puts it in Fables of Aggression, "an absolute critique of culture finds itself grounded in the thoroughly relativized position of the painter, whose own vested interest lies in the desperate establishment of a more propitious ideological and cultural space in which to do his own work."²³ Lewis confesses as much in The Art of Being Ruled:

I am an artist, and, through my eye, must confess to a

tremendous bias. In my purely literary voyages my eye is always my compass. 'The architectural simplicity'--whether of a platonic idea or a greek temple--I prefer to no idea at all, or, for instance, to most of the complicated and too tropical structures of India. Nothing could ever convince my EYE--even if my intelligence were otherwise overcome--that anything that did not possess this simplicity, conceptual quality, hard exact outline, grand architectural proportion, was the greatest. (p. 391)

When Lewis carries these predilections into his accounts of human nature and social organization the results are the crude dualisms found in his basic terminology. Because he is determined to base his observations upon externally perceived, soulless things, the polemics lack a sense of the complex and ambivalent side of human life. His divisions and conclusions remain incorrigibly schematic, even though he assures us that "extreme concreteness and extreme definition is for me a necessity. . . . I am on the side of common sense, as against abstraction" (Paleface, p. 253). Yet Lewis' "Mr. Everyman," for instance, is nothing but a rhetorical abstraction. Even when actual people are chosen for discussion, they are chosen because they are "symptoms" of the times, or "paradigms" of some abstraction. George Sorel, for instance, is a "symptomatic figure that it would be difficult to match" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 128). In The Art of Being Ruled it is the "life of the human average whose destiny we are attempting to trace" (p. 156). In fact, the concrete hardly seems to interest Lewis at all in the polemics; he deals not with people but with the "principles that determine their actions." This is why, Timothy Materer tells us in Vortex: Pound, Eliot, and Lewis, Lewis keeps getting things wrong:

His obsessive concern with the outsides of a thing, with his 'external approach' to fictional characters and portrait subjects, schematized his experiences to give him the precarious illusion

that he controlled them. Naturally, people did not care to be so rigidly categorized; nor did events stand still long enough to validate Lewis' brilliant but frequently wrong analyses.²⁴

The "rhetorical kind of knowing" and the "willed superimposition"²⁵ that Hugh Kenner claims are exalted in the polemics often seem to be substitutes for the thought and discrimination that Lewis claims are the only alternatives to "machinery." His revolt from the unnatural present becomes, at times, a withdrawal from a real investigation of "the great discontinuity of our destiny" (Men Without Art, p. 126). The "detached intellect" labels the world "unnatural" because that world does not correspond to its own abstractions. It sees others in terms of "masses" and "the herd" because it is bound by its own inflexible categories. At times the difference between "natural" and "mechanical" becomes merely the difference between Lewis and the world outside himself. He becomes, in his own eyes, a "man of the transition" with "no organic function in this society, naturally, since this society has been pretty thoroughly dismantled and put out of commission" (Paleface, p. 83).

Lewis repeatedly asserts that his views of the "Machine Age" and of "mechanical" human nature commit him to a new type of satire. In Paleface, for instance, he proposes "a change of orientation for our satire." He tells us that we have to "develop another form of laughter" because "there is nothing today for us to laugh about" (p. 269). The "triumph of the machine means that the Machine-Age satirist can no longer attack aberrant social behavior in the name of a "human" or "moral" norm. Mechanical behavior is the norm and there is no generally accepted notion of common sense beside which mechanical conduct can be made to look ridiculous. The laughter that once united men of sense against fools is clearly inadequate, Lewis tells us, for Machine-Age conditions:

Bernard Shaw and Company laughed all the time. A merry twinkle was never out of their eye. Happy sunny White children of long ago! But their laughter was the opposite of what ours should be. They laughed ever so genially over things that, unfortunately, we can no longer afford to laugh at. (Paleface, p. 269)

The Machine-Age satirist, Lewis tells us, is in a position of having to devise a new kind of satire to cope with the "absurd war between the 'puppets' and the 'natures,' the machines and the men."

In Men Without Art he goes so far as to say that the times are "propitious" for a "great period of imaginative satire" and that he has established the "theoretic foundations for such work" (p. 160). In my next chapter I intend to examine this claim.

Notes

¹ Wyndham Lewis, Paleface: The Philosophy of the 'Melting-Pot' (1929; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1969), p. 86. All further references to this book appear in the text.

² Wyndham Lewis, The Art of Being Ruled (London: Chatto and Windus, 1926), p. xii. All further references to this book will appear in the text.

³ Hugh Kenner, Wyndham Lewis (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions, 1954), p. 81.

⁴ See, for example, Wyndham Lewis, Time and Western Man (London: Chatto and Windus, 1927), pp. 41-2: "Since writing The Art of Being Ruled (1925) I have somewhat modified my views with regard to what I then called 'democracy.' I should express myself differently today." All further references to this book appear in the text.

⁵ Frederic Jameson, I think, helpfully makes the connection between Lewis' "culture criticism" and the Machine Age and places it in perspective for us:

It is clear that Lewis' polemic pamphlets must be replaced [sic] within a whole corpus of such productions in the interwar period, which constitutes a veritable discursive genre--what we will call the "culture critique"--and numbers such influential texts as Ortega's Rebellion de las Masas, Benda's Trahison des clerics, Scheler's call to cultural regeneration, Heidegger's stigmatization of the inauthenticity of the anonymous and depersonalized subject of the modern industrial city, not excluding the more "positive" appeals to authority of a Babbit or a Charles Maurros, whose ideas, along with many of those previously mentioned, found a congenial forum in T. S. Eliot's revue The Criterion throughout this period. Not that any of these positions can lay claim to intellectual originality; in the main, they tend to exploit, with varying degrees of ingenuity, counterrevolutionary theories and

arguments developed generations earlier by Taine and Nietzsche (when not by Edmund Burke himself). Yet in the mechanized city of the interwar period, such concepts find a rich new field of manoeuvre and a far wider social and ideological resonance.

What they can now express is that apocalyptic vision of the end of western civilization to which Spengler gave representation, and which is eloquently dramatized by Valéry's cry: "Nous autres civilisations, nous savons maintenant que nous sommes mortels!"

Frederic Jameson, Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist (London: University of California Press, 1979), p. 126.

⁶ Arnold's concept of "machinery" in Culture and Anarchy can be reduced to a fairly simple notion. "Machinery" occurs wherever action, which can be no more than a means, is confused with what should be its end: the perfection of the human spirit. True culture means an independence from "mere machinery"; it involves "seeing things as they really are; and it is to this, therefore, and to no machinery in the world, that culture sticks fondly." Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 46.

⁷ Wyndham Lewis, The Diabolical Principle and the Dithyrambic Spectator (London: Chatto and Windus, 1931), pp. 120-21. All further references to this book appear in the text.

⁸ Arnold, p. 46. All further references to this book appear in the text.

⁹ Wyndham Lewis, The Doom of Youth (1932; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1973), p. 96. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹⁰ Wyndham Lewis, Men Without Art (1934; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), p. 121. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹¹ Jameson, p. 118.

¹² In Culture and Anarchy Arnold conceives of all human beings as having "every-day selves" which remain "machinery and nothing more" (p. 107), and

"best selves" which we should all seek out and affirm because "this is the very self which culture, or the study of perfection, seeks to develop in us; at the expense of our old untransformed self" (p. 95).

¹³ Wyndham Lewis, The Old Gang and the New Gang (London: Desmond Harmsworth, 1933), p. 14.

¹⁴ See Chapter I, p. 18.

¹⁵ Culture and Anarchy, pp. 49-50:

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organizations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the character of perfection indisputably joined to them.

¹⁶ As Lewis' statements about the period become more general, his point of view appears more and more orthodox. It becomes difficult to distinguish his position from the perspectives he singles out for condemnation on other occasions. In Time and Western Man he is quite categorical about his attitude towards Spengler: "The fundamental attitude of Spengler I entirely reject, as I have already indicated--this quite apart from any question of the hideous and inflated form in which he presents his mechanical vision of things, or his light-hearted inconsistency" (p. 280). Yet in the following passage from Paleface, viewpoint and terminology are remarkably reminiscent of Spengler:

The hideous condition of our world is often attributed to 'dark' agencies, willing its overthrow. But there have always been such devils incarnate--it goes quite without saying that there are such evil agencies--'dark' influences of every sort are certain

at all moments to be at work. That alone would not account for the unique position of universal danger and disorganization in which we find ourselves all round the globe. It is obviously to its mechanical instrument, not to the human will itself, that we must look. (p. 250)

It would be difficult in The Doom of Youth, also, to find anything that fundamentally contradicts Spengler's "vision of things." This has led Northrop Frye to assert that Lewis is a Spenglerian even though he criticizes The Decline of the West in Time and Western Man. Northrop Frye, "Wyndham Lewis: Anti-Spenglerian," Canadian Forum, 16, No. 185 (June, 1936), 21-2.

¹⁷ Frederic Jameson comes to a similar conclusion in Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist, when he writes that "politically, of course, Lewis was an elitist, committed to the great man theory of history and to the defense of 'intelligence' in the face of the rising tide of mass mediocrity" (p. 30). This meant that he was obsessed with a "vast cosmological plot by the Zeitgeist to reduce strong personalities . . . to the level of the mediocre and the mindlessly standardized" (p. 116). This "anxiety," says Jameson, is "the very heart of Lewis' ideological system" (p. 116).

¹⁸ In attacking the Machine Age, Lewis is concerned, he tells us, with the "human idea itself. It is the whole of humanity this time that is at stake" (Art of Being Ruled, p. 76). But what he means by the "human idea" varies from context to context. He is "not, of course, a humanitarian," as he tells us in Paleface (pp. 247-8). When he tells us in The Doom of Youth that, "of course we know that . . . the human values possess a permanence for us that the hypothetical machinery of the technique of the physicist does not," his "human values" turn out to be "Homer and Shakespeare" who are "few and far between" (p. 135). In another context, in

The Art of Being Ruled, the "war on 'the human'" is simply a "war on all life"; "'the human'" being not merely anything particular to us, but something common to all forms of life, a mountain even being 'human' in so far as it is alive" (p. 212).

¹⁹ Various critics have come to this conclusion. For example, Frederic Jameson writing on Lewis' attack on the "Time Cult" in Time and Western Man, concludes that "however illuminating this diagnosis may have been, it had the unfortunate effect of forcing his readership to choose between himself and virtually everything else (Joyce, Pound, Proust, Stein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Bergson, Whitehead, etc.) in the modern canon" (Fables of Aggression, pp. 3-4).

²⁰ In The Diabolical Principle Lewis warns us against the "specific cant of 'detachment'" which it is one of his "routine tasks to explain." He presents us with no criteria to distinguish between "semi-divine" detachment and detachment of the "arch-fraud": "The specific cant of 'detachment' (the attitude stolen by art, journalism, advertisement, etc., from Science) the twin of 'anonymity,' is the arch-fraud; it is one of the routine tasks of the Enemy to explain it" (p. 13).

²¹ William Chase has recently made the same point:

As early as 1929 Lewis had in fact established a formula potent enough to devitalize any politics, even his own. In Enemy 3, he announced that his position was 'partly communist and partly fascist, with a distinct streak of monarchism in my marxism, but at bottom anarchist with a healthy passion for order.' This is essential Lewis, for while it introduces political possibilities, it cleverly does so only to have them summarily dismissed. It would be a fool's errand to try to resolve Lewis' communism with his fascism, melding it with his monarcho-marxism, and aligning it with his anarchic orderliness. Lewis mentions these isms only so that they may be seen through; behind them is revealed the intelligent authority of 'The Enemy' himself, Lewis alone.

William Chase, "On Lewis's Politics: The Polemics Polemically Answered," in

Wyndham Lewis: A Revaluation, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: The Athlone Press, 1980), p. 155.

²² William Chase makes this point in his essay "On Lewis's Politics: The Polemics Polemically Answered," where he links Lewis' "external approach" with his "taste for system":

Novelists and ideologists have for long been burdened with all the messy complexities of human beings (humans who ruinously resolve themselves into entities Lewis found deplorable, such as 'women,' 'negroes,' 'jews,' 'pacifists,' 'feminists,' and lovers of 'jazz'); As a writer, Lewis easily lifts this burden from his own shoulders. He will have people who are a little less than human and a little more than imaginable; they will thus be appropriate to his 'taste for system.' They will have, moreover, only that 'external' aspect to which his mind so easily turned; they will not be bothered by the 'internal' realities he found so distressing.

(Wyndham Lewis: A Revaluation, p. 150)

²³ Jameson, p. 126.

²⁴ Timothy Materer, Vortex: Pound, Eliot and Lewis (London: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 218.

²⁵ Kenner, p. 87:

The polemics exalt a rhetorical kind of knowing over a grasp, in depth, of what there is to know. Enough of the world can be dealt with by this willed superimposition of coordinates to make the polemics useful and plausible over most of their area; but their insuperable logic, like that of Mercator's Projection, is increasingly strained on each side of the narrow line where coincidence between map and object is absolute, and achieves infinite distortion at the poles. The same is true of Lewis's fiction of the years 1927-32, which was written at the same time as the major polemics and according to the same principles.

Chapter IV

The Satire of Wyndham Lewis

From The Wild Body (1927), through the polemical books and the abstract satires themselves, in various articles written during the same period, and, in particular, in the essays contained in Men Without Art (1934), Lewis advocates and expounds a theory of satire to deal with what he sees as the extraordinary exigencies of the Machine Age. He believes that a satiric treatment of this "peculiar situation" is the sanest approach in the circumstances; satire is the only way to present the truth concerning the "period of transition" in which he feels he is caught. For Lewis, satire is more than an expression of disapproval or an attack upon folly and vice; it is the one safe path through the "bad-lands" of the "post-war decade-and-a-half,"¹ and the only "alternative" to the "terrestrial monsters of the evolutionist circus by which we are surrounded, and whose destinies we share" (Men Without Art, p. 289). The satires and the polemics of Lewis' middle period are part of a "gladiatorial phase" of his work. They are an expression of that "intellect" which Lewis feels is the only alternative to "machinery."²

Lewis recognizes that he is not the only artist to have perceived the need for a satiric response to modern conditions. In 1934 he writes that "satire is very much in the news. It is (whether we like it or not) an art that is coming into fashion again, after a long eclipse."³ But Lewis stresses that it is a new kind of satire that is appearing: "Satire undoubtedly requires to be redefined somewhat. None of the traditional definitions will quite fit what the new schools of satire that are arising--

or have arisen--to-day would understand by that term" ("Studies in the Art of Laughter," p. 509). He sees that traditional forms of satire, like other traditional genres in the modern period, have lost their relevance because the needs and occasions that gave rise to them have disappeared or are dramatically altered. Lewis shares with other modern satirists the feeling that what requires attention is no longer aberrant vice or folly. As Roy Campbell observes in his "History of a Rejected Review," "it is the so-called 'normal' man who is the abnormal man of today."⁴ Lewis, in his satire, attempts to face this paradox directly. He sees that what needs to be satirized is a generally accepted part of the normality of the modern world. The threats to modern life do not come from the preoccupations of a particular class or from a particular type of vice:

It is with man, and not with manners, that what we have agreed to describe as 'satire' is called upon to deal. It is a chronic ailment (manifesting itself, it is true, in a variety of ways) not an epidemic state, depending upon 'period,' or upon the 'wicked ways' of a particular smart-set of the time.

(Men Without Art, p. 124)

This sense of a new type of newness is, of course, typically modern.

"Immense and critical revaluations are taking place," Lewis tells us in Men Without Art, for "it is the passing of a world, as it were, not of an empire or of single nations" (p. 124). The perception of "present revaluations (operating in every corner of the earth)" which are "of a very different order, both in scale and in kind, to those which changed the 'period' of Elizabeth into the 'period' of Charles II" (p. 125) accounts for the ubiquitous anxiety of the inter-war years. Earlier, I discussed the ways in which these "chronic" fears and uncertainties are frequently identified with the image and processes of machinery. This is particularly

evident in the satire of the Machine Age which, in the face of "a dwarfed and almost meaningless humanity" (Men Without Art, p. 212), often blends vituperation with feelings of anxiety. Lewis is keenly aware of the new situation:

There is no being 'Elizabethan,' or being 'Georgian,' any more, for the man who is in fact an artist. All that is over except as a pretty period-game. An artist who is not a mere entertainer and money-maker, or self-advertising gossip-star, must today be penetrated by a sense of the great discontinuity of our destiny. At every moment he is compelled to be aware of that different scene, coming up as if by magic, behind all that has been familiar for so long to all the nations of the Aryan World. Nothing but a sort of Façade is left standing, that is the fact. (Men Without Art, p. 126).

So much is this the case that in Men Without Art Lewis goes so far as to say that "all art is in fact satire today" (p. 12). By this he means that "there is nothing written or painted today of any power which could not be brought under the head of Satire (if you allow a fairly wide interpretation to that term)" (p. 12). He believes that all modern artists who are concerned with the "great discontinuity of our destiny" must, inevitably, express themselves satirically:

'Satire' . . . (applying to all the art of the present time of any force at all) refers to an 'expressionist' universe which is reeling a little, a little drunken with an overdose of the 'ridiculous'--where everything is not only tipped but steeped in a philosophic solution of the material, not of mirth, but of the intense and even painful sense of the absurd. It is a time, evidently, in which homo animal ridens is accentuating--for his deep purposes no doubt, and in response to adverse conditions--his dangerous, philosophic, 'god-like' prerogative--that wild nihilism that is a function of reason and of which his laughter is the characteristic expression. And a bird-woman plaster-mask of Picasso--or, following Picasso, in a weightier substance, a pinheaded giantess of Mr. Henry Moore, with a little crease in the stone to show the position of the face, but with great fruity bulges for her dugs--are, as much as Mr. Joyce's Leopold Bloom, or Gissy Caffrey, or Mr. Eliot's Klipstein and Krumpacker, expressions of this tendency. And that is why, by stretching a

point, no more, we can without exaggeration write satire for art--not the moralist satire directed at a given society, but a metaphysical satire occupied with mankind.

(Men Without Art, p. 289)

The modern satirist must show, not the vices and follies of individuals or social groups, but the crippling debilities of modern life itself.

Furthermore, in order to do this, Lewis believes that the satirist must dissociate himself in several ways from the satiric practices of the past.

To begin with, Machine-Age satire must have no truck with traditional moral codes. The moralist in the modern world is "installed indeed upon veritable quicksand, as well as is the 'irresponsible' laughing figure he would denounce; and he is often himself a complex of orthodox moral and 'amoral' values" (Men Without Art, p. 134). Traditional morals are inadequate for Machine-Age problems; hence, Lewis' attempt to provide us, in Men Without Art, with a theory of the "character, and the function of, non-ethical satire" (p. 107). He constantly warns us that "there is no prejudice so inveterate, in even the educated mind, as that which sees in satire a work of edification" (p. 106), but he anticipates the difficulty that the reader might have in coming to terms with the new satiric point of view: "I am a satirist, I am afraid there is no use denying that. But I am not a moralist; and about that I make no bones either. And it is these two facts, taken together, which constitute my particular difficulty" (p. 107). It is Lewis' intention to separate satire from any moral base and to make it a "recognized philosophic and artistic human activity, not contingent upon judgments which are not those specifically of the artistic or philosophic mind" (Men Without Art, p. 107). In other words, satire is to be the activity of the detached Lewisian "intellectual," not of the teacher or the moralist.

It may be objected here that Lewis deliberately places a rather narrow

interpretation upon the links between satire and morality. He makes the traditional satirist "a champion of some outraged Mrs. Grundy" (p. 107), but, of course, this has very rarely been the case. Morality does not have to be so strictly defined, and Lewis himself confesses on several occasions that his own invective is not without values:

A "deliberate theory of life, of nature, of the universe," I do not deny it, is to be found within the crypts and tissues of this criticism; and whether or not it be true that "the philosopher must ever be, more or less, a partisan," I certainly--deliberately--am that. (Men Without Art, p. 118)

Lewis really wishes to deny any overt connection between the new satire and a system of morality. He wishes his satire to be "detached" and free-ranging as a true expression of the Lewisian intellect. The Lewisian satirist is, in fact, a new type of moralist rather than a being with no values at all. He is more suited to the conditions of the Machine Age than a conventional moralist could be, and might be termed, as Lewis tells us in Men Without Art, a "moralist-in-the-making":

I shall . . . uncover a moralist-in-the-making, as if were: a moralist, that is, as understood today. . . . concerned not with the ethical judgment any more, but with all the other descriptions of judgment that go to the making of that very complex flower, the intellectualist-moralist, who is the only type of moral critic who today can exert any influence, and so influence, to any serious extent, the productions of Satire, and, in a more general way, of Art. (p. 137)

The activities of the new satirist correspond very closely with the activities of the "semi-divine" intellectual presented in The Art of Being Ruled, whose reason is completely divorced from "righteousness." But this is only because, Lewis tells us, it is more moral under modern circumstances to be this way: "It is strange, but in practice the 'detached' intelligence

is more 'moral,' in the sense that it is more humane, than is morality or righteousness."⁵ Trapped in a "period of transition," the new satirist must maintain as objective a vision as possible in order to analyse the cultural malaise and to keep the "human idea" alive. As things stand, no action is possible; the satirist-intellectual must remain an outsider who provokes the reader towards a greater understanding of what satiric laughter now implies about the conditions of the modern world. Fixed moralities must be avoided because, in the circumstances, they can be little else but a distorted response to the evils they propose to remedy:

As to the moralities of the moment, the real trouble about them, as I see it, is their bastard quality, and the uneasy hold their sponsors have upon them. Emerging as they do in response to growing lawlessness, and in opposition to dogmas of the Marxo-Nietzschean 'beyond the law' order, they are too often found to be contaminated with the very things against which they are invoked. (Men Without Art, p. 131)

Lewis is recommending a satiric stoicism in the face of extraordinary forces. It is no use the satirist investigating the difference between the "good" and the "bad," which has been the "traditional pattern of ethical codification" (Men Without Art, p. 135); he can show his humanity only by investigating the differences between the "real" and the "unreal." The new satirist cannot be a man speaking to men because "Mr. Everyman," from within the "midst of his comfortable fog,"⁶ sees nothing of the forces which threaten his existence. Lewisian satire does not lack an ideological base. It is intended to be a rearguard action against the encroaching machine:

If art, along with the mind of man, goes to live in the heart of the Machine--goes, as it were, to live over the shop--then the arts will ultimately cease to exist as we know them up to now, or perhaps at last in any form whatever. By the

substitution of a quantitative for a qualitative norm, the very meaning of art must become lost.⁷

And the "valuing of our arts is bound up with the valuing of our life and vice versa" (Men Without Art, p. 291). Lewis sees satire as a means of keeping alive a "qualitative norm." So he is guilty of a false emphasis when he says he believes that "'satire' for its own sake-- as much as anything else for its own sake--is impossible" (Men Without Art, p. 109). He makes it quite clear in other contexts that art of any kind cannot be divorced from values: "If you banish the idea of value altogether, then indeed you must never trouble so much as to waste a thought upon art, whose values are nothing if not contingent. They stand or fall with other values than their own. There can be no art-for-art's-sake--at all events as I see the matter."⁸

The aim of the new satire, Lewis tells us, is to present "the truth." Traditionally, satire has been considered a deliberate distortion of the truth in order to vanquish vice and folly. Satirist and audience have shared an understanding of satiric fictions and distortions and of the ways in which the conventions of satire relate to the real world. But Lewis feels that "normal" modern life is itself a distortion of the "human idea," and so satire must re-orientate itself to deal with the new situation:

Satire in reality often is nothing else but the truth--the truth, in fact, of Natural Science. That objective, non-emotional truth of the scientific intelligence sometimes takes on the exuberant, sensuous quality of creative art; then it is very apt to be called 'Satire,' for it has been bent not so much upon pleasing as upon being true. (Men Without Art, p. 121)

This means, according to Lewis' theory, that the new satire will only appear "grotesque" or "distorted" to those who regard the "things of everyday, and everyday persons, through spectacles couleur-de-rose" (Men

Without Art, p. 121). Also, in Men Without Art, Lewis reveals that the function of the new satire will be, "like science, to bring human life more into contempt each day" and "by illustrating the discoveries of science demonstrate the futility and absurdity of human life" (p. 226).

But Lewis admits that satiric truth is not the only kind of truth that it is possible to perceive. The trouble is that people only accept the "humanly 'agreeable'" truth and disregard completely the "humanly 'disagreeable.'" That is unavoidable, seeing what we are" (Men Without Art, p. 122). The new satire is "merely a formula based rather upon the 'truth' of the intellect than upon the 'truth' of the average romantic sensualist" (p. 122). This truth of the intellect is, according to Lewis, the only salvation from the machinery that threatens to expunge humanity. In order to perceive the truth of the intellect, we must leave the old notion of satire behind:

The term satire suggests off-hand some resolve on the part of the 'satirist' to pick out disobligingly all that is objectionable and ill-favoured in a given system of persons and things, and to make of that a work of art. Certainly such a 'satire' as The Apes of God is not that. Indeed often it is nothing but people's vanity that causes them to use that term at all; often they are, in what they call 'satire,' confronted with a description of their everyday life as close to the truth as that found in any other artistic formula.
(Men Without Art, p. 122)

The satiric intellect perceives a truth about the modern world which only appears to be a distortion to those who do not perceive the nature of the reality that besets them.

So the old satire, according to Lewis, tried to present distortions to those who thought they possessed a sense of the truth of things; the new satire presents a truth about things to the few who are intelligent enough to see the dangers of their own distorted normality. Lewis wishes,

through a "metaphysical satire," to present truths endemic to the human condition. These truths cannot be told by "more than one man in a generation or two,"⁹ for they cannot exist "in the midst of the hot and immediate interests of 'real' everyday social life" (Apes of God, p. 279), and the art that merely apes that life. To "Mr. Everyman" the new truths are "too horrible to contemplate" (Apes of God, p. 281).

Such claims are typical of Lewis in their combination of genuine theorizing and mere self-aggrandizement. For it is questionable whether this new satiric perspective is really so different from satiric practices of the past. Plenty of satire has dealt with what it sees as inherent horrors in the human condition itself, and Lewis frequently identifies his own approach with the misanthropic practices of, for instance, Swift. In The Apes of God Zagreus, acting as an advocate of the new satire, makes a direct parallel between what is needed at present and the methods of Swiftian satire:

What I really am trying to say is that none of us are able in fact, in the matter of quite naked truth, to support that magnifying glass, focused upon us, any more than the best complexion could support such examination. Were we mercilessly transported into Fiction, by the eye of a Swift, for instance, the picture would be intolerable, both for fiction and for us. (p. 270)

Also, in "The Materialism of the Artist," we are told that the new satirist will "carry on the good work of such pioneers as Swift" (Men Without Art, p. 226). Lewis' satire, which at times matches the vitriolic intensity of Swift's, only appears new when it is compared with the satire of some of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries. Roy Campbell makes this point when, discussing The Apes of God in the "Rejected Review," he compares Lewis with the "prophets of Domestic Comfort" whom he has made obsolete:

It is not the jolly, slap-me-on-the-back laughter of the drawing-room satirist. It is more like the 'risus sardonius' that follows an overdose of strychnine, for there are few people of our generation who will not find one of their own ruling follies or hypocrisies unmasked in this book.¹⁰

However, only in The Apes of God can Lewis' practice be compared, as Campbell suggests, with the Jonsonian comedy of humours. For usually Lewis' satire is meant to cope with a "chronic ailment . . . not an epidemic state, depending upon 'period' or upon the 'wicked ways' of the particular smart-set of the time." The satire of Lewis' middle period does, in one sense, have a distinct modernity about it. It faces the possible obliteration of the "human idea" itself as the mesh of the machine widens. Lewis may admire and emulate the satiric intensity of Swift, but the situation upon which his satire is brought to bear differs from that which confronted Swift, for Lewis satirizes the "passing of a world."

The "new laughter" which, in polemics such as Paleface, Lewis says is necessary for the exigencies of the Machine Age, must, he emphasizes in Men Without Art, be "non-personal and non-moral" (p. 113). It must be an "anti-toxin of the first order" (p. 114). It must not be the complacent sense of humour of which the Anglo-Saxon is so proud. The "English grin" is an agreement between social equals and, as such, is the greatest obstacle blocking a perception of the real dangers. Satiric laughter must destroy the benevolence of humour, for "perfect laughter, if there could be such a thing, would be inhuman" (Men Without Art, p. 112). This is consistent with Lewis' notion in The Wild Body (1928) that satire must become the "great Heaven of Ideas, where you meet the titans of red laughter."¹¹

Lewis makes quite explicit the connection between the new laughter and his concept of machinery. His theory of satiric humour depends upon

the basic dualism that he sees everywhere between "natures" and "machines." In his essay "The Meaning of The Wild Body," he describes this dualism as a basic split between mind and body: "First, to assume the dichotomy of mind and body is necessary here, without arguing it; for it is upon that essential separation that the theory of laughter here proposed is based" (p. 244). Satiric humour, for Lewis, centres upon the incongruity between these "two creatures": nature and machine or mind and body. The lives of most people, he tells us, are a mechanical pattern "as circumscribed and complete as a theorem of Euclid" (Wild Body, p. 234), and the "root of the comic is to be sought in the sensations resulting from the observation of a thing behaving like a person. But from that point of view all men are necessarily comic: for they are all things, or physical bodies, behaving as persons" (Wild Body, p. 247). The satiric artist is able, momentarily, to step outside the circumscribed pattern of human life and to present a cold, objective account of the "evolutionary machine" within which people are confined. Using only the "surface of the visible machinery of life," the satirist presents the "great classic lines of the skeleton of things" ("Studies in the Art of Laughter," pp. 511-12) which, in the modern period, are disagreeable truths about the subjugation of the "human idea" to machinery.

The mechanical human condition is, for Lewis, a general condition from which only the "semi-divine" few can remove themselves; even their detachment is only possible for a brief time in the "metallic" objectivity of satiric art:

But 'men' are undoubtedly, to a greater or less extent, machines. And there are those amongst us who are revolted by this reflection, and there are those who are not. Men are sometimes so palpably machines, their machination is so transparent, that

they are comic, as we say. And all we mean by that, is that our consciousness is pitched up to the very moderate altitude of relative independence at which we live--at which level we have the illusion of being autonomous and 'free.' But if one of us exposes too much of his 'works,' and we start seeing him as a thing, then--in subconsciously referring this back to ourselves--we are astonished and shocked, and we bark at him--we laugh--in order to relieve our emotion.

(Men Without Art, p. 116)

Lewis' approach to the comic type can be seen in its context as part of the man-machine debate which takes place between the wars. The clockwork ghost of La Mettrie haunts the satires of his middle period.

Lewis' discussion of satire illustrates how he felt the genre must alter with changing conditions. If the basis of traditional satire, as Lewis believes, has been a belief shared by satirist and audience that they are judging the world from a position of mutual advantage, Lewis finds himself unable to contemplate any such consensus. Indeed, it is the consensus of his time which he condemns as harmful. In so far as critical judgment occupies Lewis at all, it is in the form of a condemnation of the forces that are destroying the "human idea" for the sake of machinery. Individual men can no longer be held accountable for this state of affairs. Lewis wishes us to question what has brought mankind to this "insanitary trough," rather than the inadequacies of individual people or their deviation from an accepted mode of behavior. There are times when recognizable representations of actual people do appear in Lewis' abstract satires, but he wishes us to regard them merely as "symptoms" of a general mechanical malaise. He claims to be interested not in people but in the principles that motivate their behavior. For this reason, he sees his satire as serving a fundamentally different purpose from traditional satire.

Lewis acknowledges that there are clear links between his comic theory and "the absurd." He tells us in "The Meaning of the Wild Body" that the basic anomaly which he sees between natures and machines is essentially an expression of absurdity because "man is ridiculous fundamentally, he is ridiculous because he is a man, instead of a thing" (p. 249). This means that no one is safe from satiric attack: "Every man is profoundly open to the same criticism or ridicule from any opponent who is only different enough. Again, it is comparatively easy to see that another man, as an animal, is absurd; but it is far more difficult to observe oneself in that hard and exquisite light" (p. 246). The dominance of mechanical man, which is responsible for the tyranny of modern conditions, has rendered the idea of humanity "absurd." So the satirist must see beyond the mere social contexts that have been the concern of traditional satire in order to get at the absurdity of modern life:

To begin to understand the totality of the absurd at all, you have to assume much more than belongs to a social differentiation. There is nothing that is animal (and we as bodies are animals) that is not absurd, or, if you like, the madness of our life is at the root of every true philosophy. (p. 245)

This belief in the essential "madness of our life" explains why Lewis often refers to the "painful effect of true satire" (Men Without Art, p. 110). He envisions a joining of satire and tragedy into a "grinning tragedy" of the Machine Age. The spectacle of man behaving like a machine is absurd, but the social implications of such a plight are bleakly tragic. So the laughter of satire is "tragic laughter": "It is not a genial guffaw nor the titillations provoked by a harmless entertainer. It is tragic, if a thing can be 'tragic' without pity and terror, and it seems to me it can" (p. 113). Lewisian satire is meant to be cathartic; it is based upon the

"tragic handicaps that our human conditions involve" (p. 114). In this sense his satire is intended as a "philosophical" expression of the human condition rather than a vehicle carrying moral judgments about the conduct of particular men.

We see Lewis attempting to put these ideas into effect in his own satires. The Childermass (1928), The Apes of God (1930), Snooty Baronet (1932) and One-Way-Song (1933) are the works most clearly orientated towards the concerns of the polemics. They are also the works in which Lewis' concept of a new Machine-Age satire is most heavily felt. To remain consistent with his own theory of satire, Lewis would have to reject the traditional relationship between satirist and audience in which, according to Lewis, the reader is invited to laugh with the satirist at something which they both agree needs to be disparaged. Instead, the satire would have to challenge directly the reader's own prejudices and intellectual predilections and prompt an awareness of the absurdity of the human condition itself. However, without help from the satirist, the reader is liable to be left confused about the ultimate meaning of such "metaphysical satire occupied with mankind." So we find that Lewis has to compromise and provide some guidance through the "bad-lands" without allowing the reader to subside into a complacent acceptance of his own immunity from censure. In his satires of this period we see Lewis attempting to find satiric modes and procedures capable of conveying his complicated and idiosyncratic ideas about the Machine Age, ideas not confined to "period" or a particular set of people, but dealing with the "passing of a world."

In The Childermass these concerns are not satisfactorily worked out. The inventiveness and intellectual pithiness of the first part of the book give way to a rather wooden debate in which, with little fictional embodiment,

the arguments of The Art of Being Ruled, Time and Western Man and Paleface are presented in a debased form. The book opens magnificently with an epic panorama seemingly free of satiric purpose:

The approach of the so-called Yang Gate is over a ridge of nummulitic limestone. From its red crest the city and its walls are seen as though in an isometric plan. Two miles across, a tract of mist and dust separates this ridge from the river. It is here that in a shimmering obscurity the emigrant mass is collected within sight of the magnetic city. To the accompaniment of innumerable lowing horns along the banks of the river, a chorus of mournful messages, the day breaks. At the dully sparkling margin, their feet in the hot waves, stand the watermen, signalling from shore to shore.¹²

We become aware that we are in the presence of satire with the introduction of some rather traditional satiric effects. Satters, newly arrived on the plain before "Heaven," mouthing familiar clichés, differs from most caricatures only in the number of despicable qualities of which he is compounded. He is dressed in "knee-cords, football stogies, tasselled golf stockings, a Fair Isle jumper, a frogged mess jacket, a Mons Star pinned upon the left breast, and a Rugby cap, the tinsel rusted, of out-size, canted forward" (p. 12). Throughout the book he undergoes several mutations but remains a recognizable embodiment of various ideas and qualities that Lewis detests.¹³ There is enough of the physical grotesqueness of traditional satire about him to let us know that we should feel he is totally ridiculous. For instance, he emits a "pungent smell. It is the sticky vegetable odour of small babies in a close room, a distillation of the secretions and excrements of the earliest human life" (p. 16). Lewis' predilection for external observation brings out what he feels is the distorted mechanicalness of the human body in motion:

Satters perceives a butterfly. Snatching his hand out of its

*tight-fitting nest, wrenching his cap from his head, he flings himself in its pursuit, his great knees sticking together as he runs, buttocks labouring, feet flying out in a knock-kneed helter-skelter. He archly contorts himself, establishing a vermiform rhythm between neck and waist. The great corsets and collars of muscle prevent the seductive intention from becoming a complete success. (p. 82)

Of course this is not the Swiftian "magnifying glass" that Lewis believes is necessary for satire. It is pure invention, for nothing is being observed. The mechanical theories of the polemics are evident in Lewis' satiric style; he superimposes a mechanical interpretation on life which weakens the impact of the satire because we know it is theoretical rather than real. There are enough local effects of this kind to make Lewis' satiric intent obvious. But the wider meanings of the book and the ideas for which the satire is meant to be working are only accessible to the initiated reader. Satters and Pulley, with their eyes "so adjusted to Time" (p. 44), undergo various intellectual and physical transformations as they wander back and forth through time for a third of the book. The reader might perceive that he is witnessing a parody of Bergson's ideas of flux, but Lewis is more dependent than he would like to admit upon traditional satiric techniques for controlling the reader's response to his rather complicated concerns. For instance, perverted forms of sexuality are omnipresent in satire, which admits of no healthy sexual relationships. Thus the grotesque homosexuality which pervades The Childermass is generically orthodox. But, without a knowledge of the polemics, the reader will not be able to fathom the full meaning of Lewis' attack. A rather superficial account of what homosexuality means for Lewis appears at the end of the book in the debate between the Bailiff and Electryon. But this is a poor substitute for a knowledge of Lewis' treatment of homosexuality in The Art of Being Ruled. Electryon has to

explain to us that:

The Machine-Age has doomed the European Family and its integrating. The worker-paterfamilias with a wife who is little more than a private unsupervised body-servant is economically indefensible. Against this wasteful unit, the traditional Aryan family and its integrating, both Feminism and Homosexuality are directing their engines. The Male is the objective in both cases of the aggressive impulse. Behind "the Male" is "the Father", behind him the White Man. It is desired eventually to reduce the expensive conceited White Male, whose "home is his castle", to the status of a sepoy-black-boy or coolie in the ordinary average labouring and living. As a merely machine-minding automaton or inefficient adding-machine his position as a privileged "Male", as an amateur "Father", and as a not very intelligent "White Man", but with lordly pretensions, has become absurd and is incredibly out-of-date, so it is ending. As it is, because White he is still six times as expensive as if he were black or yellow, though perhaps half as quick strong or intelligent, which economically is superstition, so that he is white is perhaps worse than that he is a man, that is what the Machine-Age is saying. (p. 313)

Like Time and Western Man and The Art of Being Ruled, The Childermass is not created for an audience already there and so must educate its own audience. However, the reader can hardly be expected to perceive the implications of the satire without going outside the work itself.¹⁴ The abrupt change of approach that occurs in The Childermass with the prosaic debate at the Bailiff's court is an attempt to bring out the satire's broad philosophical implications. The fact that the debate is such thinly-disguised Lewisian polemic suggests that it is difficult to use satiric fictions to present the breadth and the detail that Lewis' ideas require.

The satiric effects in The Childermass take place against a background that reveals the cultural breadth of Lewis' concerns. The cumulative effect of the images of disease and decay and the wasteland scenery of the Time-flats constantly lead the work away from satire into another kind of cultural indictment:

It is a valley of rocks and sand. These are the suburbs of the wilderness, enclosed plots of desert, over each of which a peculiar solitary sun stands all day, glittering madly upon its apologetic fragments of vegetation, setting suddenly without fuss, but after some hour's absence returning, and without remark glittering again patiently and intensely upon every vestige of life for a new day. Only the wind has a certain versatility. (p. 84)

We may accept Lewis' definition of satire, and give it "a meaning so wide as to confound it with 'art'" (Men Without Art, p. 10), in which case it is possible to say that all of the effects in The Childermass are, generally speaking, satire. But a more usual way of describing the general impression left by the work would be to say that, like a great deal of modern literature, it contains identifiable satiric effects, but these are mixed with and tempered by other qualities which lead the reader's response beyond the confines of what would normally be regarded as satire. For instance, there is a pathetic grimness in the irony that Satters and Pulley "often experience a longing for life-on-earth" (p. 101). The implications of their position are too vast to be contained in a satiric mould. The "tragic wind" that Lewis claims blows through satire is frequently felt in The Childermass. Pulley explains their situation in terms that have a general symbolic implication too broad for satire:

'The fire-zone of the dantesque purgatory stretching between the terrestrial and celestial circles is pagan of course and I doubt if the Bailiff would admit it as an allowable opinion that we were behaviorist machines addressed to a static millennium of suffering for purposes of purification, our life staged in some such wilderness as that fixed by pagan thought outside the blessed spheres and the earthly as well, and yet I don't see how else he could account for our position, and he certainly has mentioned a millennium and hinted at a return to earth.'

A return to earth! out of the fire-zones, the restless kissing circles whose uproar you cannot help catching when you are too still, out of the machines of this mad millennium, out of the presence of this imperturbable ghost caressing these abstractions--oh! to be outside again for a refreshing holiday on the earth. (p. 78)

The use to which Lewis puts his characters in The Childermass is a further illustration of his attempt to give satire a broad, "metaphysical" function. They are combinations of so many abstract notions that their identities are dissipated. For instance, "Uncle Punch," the Bailiff who takes up so much of the second part of the book, does not represent a vice, a folly, or a satiric humour. He is a "puppet" compounded of just about all of the faults for which Lewis indicts the Machine Age. The extraordinary complexity of such a figure is likely to confuse the reader. Lewis provides guidance in the form of Hyperides and his faction, who stand for most of the things of which Lewis approves. They harangue the Bailiff and reveal to the reader his many evil ideologies. The Socratic debate in which this is done is the least inspired section of the book. But some kind of explanation of the issues at stake is necessary if the reader is to understand at all what is going on. Hyperides asks the Bailiff:

'Is not your Space-Time for all practical purposes only the formula recently popularized to accommodate the empirical sensational chaos? Did not the human genius redeem us for a moment from that flux? Are not your kind betraying us in the name of exact research to the savage and mechanical nature we had overcome; at the bidding, perhaps, of your maniacal and jealous God?' (p. 155)

This rather flat debate becomes a paraphrase of Time and Western Man; little pretence is made of maintaining a satiric fiction. Hyperides and his followers represent the "male principle" and "Greek" common sense;¹⁵ they attack the Bailiff because he is "drilling an army of tremulous earthworms to overthrow our human principle of life, not in open battle but by sentimental or cultural infection" (p. 159). "Uncle Punch" and his "puppets" encompass everything that Lewis attacks as mechanical:

We are the humble children of Progress. By the light of the

great orthodoxy of Science we will judge these Greeks--Greeks? What an absurd costume! But what--I should be glad to be told--can the Greeks mean to us at this time of the day or night? We are not Greeks the Lord of Hosts be praised, we are Modern Men and proud of it--we of the jazz-age who have killed sexishness and enthroned sensible sex, who have liberated the working-mass and gutted every palace within sight making a prince of the mechanic with their spoils, we deride the childish statecraft, the insensitive morals, the fleshly-material art, the naive philosophy of the Hellene. (p. 263)

In the later part of The Childermass a formal satiric fiction is all but abandoned as the ironist of the polemics with his schematic obsessions reasserts himself.

The difficulties that the reader is likely to encounter with The Childermass are not difficulties caused by a new art of satire. The newness of the book lies, rather, in the idiosyncratic views which inform it, and which cannot be adequately embodied in the modes and procedures of satiric fiction without expanding the boundaries of satire so far that the genre is confounded "with 'art.'" Lewis himself has testified to the biased simplicity of satiric art which confines itself to external observation. But the abstract conclusions which Lewis draws from his external observations are hardly likely to be immediately obvious to anyone else. Hence the necessity for explaining at length the interpretation he would like placed upon his satire. The burden of explanation is felt very heavily in the second part of The Childermass. New subject matter can be incorporated into satire, as it is, for instance, in Orwell's Animal Farm; but Lewis' notions are too eclectic and complex even for allegory. Lewis wishes to offer a comprehensive satiric account of all western cultural malaise by identifying all of its symptoms and showing their, hitherto, hidden connections.

In The Apes of God (1930), Lewis provides a number of aids for the

reader which make the book much more accessible than The Childermass. However, they involve a compromise with the older satire that, in Men Without Art, Lewis says the modern satirist should avoid. The new satire should be non-personal, non-moral and tragic. At one level The Apes of God contravenes each of these conditions. This is why, in retrospect, Lewis called the book his "purest" satire.¹⁶ It is the closest thing to formal traditional satire which he wrote, but it is not a pure example of the kind of satire he was advocating during his middle period. The reader is helped towards response because Lewis localizes the setting. Instead of the Time-flats before "Heaven" inhabited by wandering abstractions, The Apes of God presents a far more precise satiric target in post-war Bloomsbury with characters "taken from" real life originals. Because, at one level, The Apes is concerned with a special subject, the reader is liable to see it as a criticism of an "epidemic state" and not as an indictment of the "chronic ailment" of man. At one level it is undoubtedly a "period" piece. Further compromising guidance for the reader is provided in Zagreus' renderings of Pierpoint's encyclicals. This teach-as-we-go approach is not quite as clumsy as the debate in The Childermass. Pierpoint remains a presiding Lewisian intellect outside the action of the book, observing and theorizing about the mechanical apes and their social chaos. His views are better integrated into the form of the book than are those of Hyperides in The Childermass. This is because they are delivered by Zagreus who is "the worst ape of the lot" (p. 502) and a genuine part of the society being satirized. However, the broadcasts are further evidence of the difficulty inherent in Lewis' satiric position. He has to educate his audience concerning the broad cultural implications of their satiric laughter, and so the satire loses pace under the burden of information.

This built-in instruction includes elucidation of the "new satire," which gives the reader most of what he needs to know about Lewis' new satiric purpose:

'People feel themselves under the special protection of the author when they read a satire on their circle--am I right?' Horace exclaimed with discipular unction. 'It is always the other fellows (never them) that their accredited romancer is depicting, for their sport. Or is it that the Veneerings and the Verdurins read about themselves, see themselves right enough--and are unabashed?'

Horace Zagreus flung himself back for a moment staring blankly at Li, to see if he was opening up. He was not. Then Horace proceeded: 'At all events nothing happens. It would seem that it is impossible to devise anything sufficiently cruel for the rhinoceros hides grown by a civilized man and a civilized woman--along with the invulnerable conceit of a full stomach and fat purse. The satirist merely seems to put them on their nettle, according to that view. It is almost as if, when they saw him approaching, they exclaimed: "Here comes a good satirist! We'll give him some sport. We are just the sort of animals he loves." Then the official satirist fills his pages with monsters and a sprinkling of rather sentimental "personnages sympathiques", and everybody is perfectly happy. The satirist is, of course, quite as insensitive as his subjects, as a rule. Nothing really disgusts him.' (p. 268)

There is a modern self-consciousness about The Apes of God; large sections of the book are about the abstract theories behind, and the social implications of, the kind of art of which it is an expression.

It is not until much later, in Rude Assignment (1950), that Lewis acknowledges the compromises he makes in The Apes. During his middle period he is adamant that it is only the old type of satirist who picks out "disobligingly all that is objectionable and ill-favoured in a given system of persons and things." We are meant to accept his assurances that "certainly, such a 'satire' as The Apes of God is not that" (Men Without Art, p. 122). As a Machine-Age satirist, Lewis believes he is changing the nature and function of satire in order to deal with extraordinary conditions.

The Apes is a broad tableau depicting various manifestations of the mechanical malaise. Pseudo-artists, psychoanalysts, homosexuals, sham intellectuals, the youth cult, jazz, primitivism, and coteries of all kinds are present along with certain clearly identifiable celebrities such as Joyce, Huxley, the Sitwells, Gertrude Stein and Roy Campbell. However, Lewis would have us believe that the new satire should not be concerned with individuals; it should go beyond social criticism and get at the absurd qualities inherent in life itself. The Finnian-Shaws are not important as caricatures of the Sitwells but should be looked upon merely as symptoms of a society in decay. In his partisan zeal to shake the reader out of his apathy, Lewis, in his middle period, misjudges, somewhat, the nature of his own satire in The Apes.

Of course, at one level, The Apes of God does transcend the merely contemporary interest of badgering actual people. But all good satire does this. Some of the more universal implications of Lewis' portraits are evident without the aid of Lewis' own views, sublimated through the broadcasts, which point out the social and philosophical implications of this "insanitary trough" between the wars. But the broadcasts are not satire; they are an attempt to interpret and label a response which has already taken place or which will take place later. But also, no matter how broad are the implications of satire, the ridicule has to focus upon actual people in actual situations. We are not likely to find the ideas themselves ridiculous or tragic. It is human behavior to which we most easily respond with scorn or sympathy and fear. Lewis wishes to attack a "chronic ailment" which threatens the "human idea," and he tells us that he is not interested in people, only in the principles which motivate them. But, here again, principles in themselves do not excite the contempt that we might feel for the people who espouse them. Theoretically, Lewis tries to exclude actual

people from his "human idea," but in The Apes, fortunately, people insist on intruding themselves.

The Apes is more effective satire than The Childermass because it manages, to a greater extent, to achieve a vitality of its own quite apart from Lewis' satiric theories. The Childermass is a surreal allegory undertaken with satiric intent; The Apes, as Lewis later came to see, is "pure" satire. When the caricatures do not point to real people, they are recognizable as human types in a way, for instance, that the Bailiff in The Childermass is not a type. Dick, the "young spalpeen," for instance, is "a six-foot two, thirty-six-summered, army-and-public-school, Winchester and Sandhurst, firework-marked" caricature with "boyish high spirits" (Apes of God, p. 33). It may be that the tableau of apes constitutes an anatomy of the Machine Age; the broadcasts certainly tell us that this is the case. But the satire exists whether Zagreus-Pierpoint-Lewis is there to interpret it for us or not.

The Apes is an effective satire in the traditional "grand manner." Lewis' polemical concerns are not fully integrated into the book's structure. Snooty Baronet (1932), however, may not be as grandly impressive as The Apes or The Childermass, but it does manage to solve some of the structural problems inherent in Lewis' new theory of satire. As an example of the absurd, non-moral and non-personal satire, which Lewis believes is necessary for the Machine Age, it is the most authentic work of his middle period, even if, overall, it is the least impressive of his satiric fictions. It is so authentic, in fact, that critics for a long time missed the point and judged it according to the very criteria that Lewis wished to avoid. Hugh Kenner, for instance, thought that Snooty was Lewis' representative in the satire:

By making the Pierpoint-figure a character in the book like the others, Lewis has in fact destroyed the assumption on which the Apes seemed to rest: that there was somewhere in London a real person whose husks of thought the others collected. He [Lewis] is not unaware of the vacuum he has entered.¹⁷

Other critics have perpetuated this identification of Snooty with Lewis himself on the grounds that they cannot otherwise account for where Lewis stands in relation to the satire. William Pritchard calls Kenner's linking of Snooty and Pierpoint a "shrewd analysis" and concludes that Lewis, in Snooty Baronet, gives himself away. He is nothing more than a Behaviorist:

The Behaviorist assumptions about human beings which were so ridiculed in Time and Western Man (the sections on Professor Watson and the "testers") had, five years later, turned out to seem like such an accurate description of human beings that 'The only person the behaviorists had insulted, it appears, was Wyndham Lewis.'¹⁸

Even more recently, Robert Chapman tells us that "There is more than a little self-parody in Snooty's attitudes, for they are, in one sense, an extrapolation of Lewis's own."¹⁹ This identification of Lewis with Snooty, it has now been acknowledged, misses the whole point of the satire. In a very recent essay, "Snooty Baronet: Satire and Censorship" (1980), Rowland Smith emphasizes that the book's "absurd protagonist, Sir Michael Kell-Inrie, is a behaviorist author" and that Lewis' satiric wit is "at its finest" in those moments when "his hero reveals himself to be as much an automaton as the subjects of his behaviorist researches."²⁰ The whole point of the satire is that the behaviorist mind is a misguided, and inevitably destructive, product of the Machine Age. But the mistake of the earlier critics testifies to Snooty's fictive effectiveness. He is a congenial, amusing and persuasive "behaviorist," and Lewis has removed himself personally from the book so well that the reader has to face Snooty alone, without the help

of a Pierpoint or a Hyperides. The early critical reactions to the book illustrate Lewis' point about the old satire very well. The mistake which the critics have made in identifying Snooty with Lewis stems from the assumption that the satirist is always concerned to make an ally of the reader, either by relying upon a shared perspective or, as Lewis does in The Childermass and The Apes of God, by teaching the reader how he ought to respond to the subject matter of the satire. In Snooty Baronet, Lewis solves the difficulties of his "new satire" by selecting a typical specimen of the Machine Age and using him as a first-person narrator. The only Lewisian rule that this might be said to break is that we get the inside as well as the outside of Snooty. But Lewis does say that the "internal approach" can be used quite effectively for morons, children and imbeciles. We are presented with a view of the world through the eyes of a "Watsonian behaviorist." Snooty is a machine who really believes himself to be a machine surrounded by a world of machines. There is no "moral" judgment on the behaviorist position; it is merely reduced to an absurdity that is shown to be symptomatic of Machine-Age life. However, the book's slangy casualness should not be allowed to obscure its tragic and frightening conclusion. Snooty's breeziness is a fictional achievement, not a weakening of Lewis' recalcitrance to the Machine Age. The essential behaviorist position is dramatized for us in Snooty's encounter with a tailor's dummy. Standing with a crowd of people, mesmerized by a hatter's doll in a shop window, Snooty comes to an awareness of what his behaviorist position means:

There was something abstruse and unfathomable in this automaton. Beside me a new arrival smiled back at the bowing Hatter's doll. I turned towards him in alarm. Was not perhaps this fellow who had come up beside me a puppet too? I could not swear that he was not! I turned my eyes away from him, back to the smiling phantom in the window, with intense uneasiness. For I thought

to myself as I caught sight of him in the glass, smiling away in response to our mechanical friend, certainly he is a puppet too! Of course he was, but dogging that was the brother-thought, but equally so am I!²¹

The "tragedy" of Snooty is that "the inner meaning of 'Behavior,' as a notion, got in motion within [his] consciousness" (p. 163). Behaviorism, we are shown, turns against itself so that the observer is "placed in the position of the dummy!" (p. 163) This inevitably leads to the claustrophobic anxiety which is one of the chief symptoms of the Machine Age. Snooty realizes that, because of his mechanical beliefs, he has to "compete with these other creatures bursting up all over the imaginary landscape, and struggling against me to be real--like a passionate battle for necessary air, in a confined place" (p. 163). Unflinchingly, Lewis draws the social implications of this feeling. Snooty moves inevitably towards the only rebellious act that a behaviorist, trapped in a Machine Age, can make. His own life and the mechanical world are an absurdity to him, so he can only escape into gratuitous violence:

I cannot tell you upon what impulse I acted, but lifting my rifle I brought it down till it was trained just short of the rim of his white puggaree, and fired. In the general confusion my action went unnoticed. I saw Humph pitch forward upon his pony, he was hit. Then I fired a second shot, and you may believe me or not, but of all the shots I have ever fired, at all the game I have ever hunted (and this includes the hippopotamus) I don't believe that any shot ever gave me so much pleasure as that second one, at old Humph's shamyleathered, gusseted stern, before he rolled off his pony and bit the dust. (The first was not great fun--it was almost automatic. I scarcely knew I was doing it. But I knew all about the second.) (p. 290)

Snooty Baronet may lack the breadth of vision that we find in The Childermass, and it is certainly nothing like the tour de force that The Apes is, but the book demonstrates a shrewdness in its conclusions and predictions about

Machine-Age life that has a disturbing effect upon the reader. The uneasiness which we feel is the response which Lewis thought appropriate to modern life when he discussed satire in the abstract. It is certainly not communicated by the wooden debate in The Childermass or the "encyclicals" in The Apes. But Snooty, far from being a Lewis-Pierpoint figure, is an authentic character of new Lewisian satire. He is clearly recognizable as a symptom of the Machine Age, trapped within its terrifying absurdity. His slaying of Humph has no "moral" condemnation attached to it because, in a world of machines, morality has been replaced by cause and effect. The book is both absurd and terrifying in its implications. It is also disturbingly prophetic. Significantly, the symbol of Snooty's mechanicalness--his artificial leg--is the result of the First World War, and the fact that he is inevitably led to meaningless violence reveals that Lewis' insights into the way the Machine Age was moving were very close to the truth. Snooty is an ominous satiric premonition of what social psychologists such as Erich Fromm were later to call "homo mechanicus":

Homo mechanicus becomes more and more interested in the manipulation of machines rather than in participation in and response to life. Hence he becomes indifferent to life, fascinated by the mechanical, and eventually attracted by death and total destruction.²²

In manner and intent One-Way-Song (1933), belongs to the same cluster of satires as The Childermass, The Apes of God and Snooty Baronet. Like The Childermass, the artistic embodiment of polemic is often not equal to the sheer weight of the ideas being expressed. The new Machine-Age satire, as propounded by Lewis, is fraught with a particular danger to which One-Way-Song unfortunately succumbs. Lewis' refusal to allow his satiric humour to become a shared social experience means that he is always likely

to remain the reader's educator. He tells us, in Men Without Art, that he detests the inveterate prejudice which "sees in satire a work of edification," but One-Way-Song is little else but edification through Lewisian doctrine. Throughout, the reader feels he is being tested on his knowledge of Louisiana at the level of a cross-word puzzle. The reader cannot rely upon sustained satiric fictions for help and must constantly fall back upon his knowledge of the polemics if he is to follow what is going on. The several personae which make up the dramatization in verse are only "word deep." A change of scene is recognized through change of argument and idea and is accompanied by few visual effects. The lack of fictional dramatization and concreteness means a loss of satiric impact. In the "Envoi" we are told that "These times require a tongue that naked goes," and that we are meant to "get it, classic and clear, / Between the eyes, or in the centre of the ear!"²³ To readers unfamiliar with Lewis' polemics, the poem can mean very little; those who have been initiated "got it" long ago. The allusive word-play, ironic wit, and rhetorical inventiveness do not compensate for the beating to death of the old drum. Lewis' reluctance to compromise with the reader means that, once his ideas have been assimilated, the militant satiric pose loses its raison d'être, particularly when there are no imaginative qualities to redeem it. We do not mind being told we are stupid as long as we are being entertained. The "Enemy" pose, which gives it to us in "plain speech," is not justified in One-Way-Song by the abstract value of what we are told. Lewis' recalcitrance has hardened into an obsolete mannerism. His opacity is petty; he is more concerned with the ideas of Wyndham Lewis per se than with fulfilling his role as Machine-Age satirist:

The long and the short of this is I am not
A doll of set responses in a fixed cot.

I go about and use my eyes, my tongue
 Is not for sale--a little loosely slung
 Perhaps but nothing more. I esteem my role
 To be grand enough to excuse me, on my soul,
 From telling lies at all hours of the day!
 Of saying the thing that is not, Swift would say.
 If I am armed with bright invective, rare
 That is I agree--but mine is a dangerous affair.²⁴

The abstract satires of Lewis' middle period continue the preoccupations of the polemics and show Lewis trying to practise what he preached concerning the new kind of satire necessary for Machine-Age conditions. However we appraise the satires generally, their success in embodying the new principles is only partial. The "rhetorical kind of knowing" and "willed superimposition" of the polemics finds a fictional equivalent in the unsatisfactory debates of The Childermass, the "encyclicals" of The Apes and the "word-deep" arguments of One-Way-Song. All in all, Lewis' satire represents a vigorous resurgence of the satiric spirit during the inter-war years and a direct satiric response to Machine-Age anxieties. But Lewis, at the time, also felt that he was witnessing the emergence of a new age of satire, as he tells us in Men Without Art:

And, in any event, satire is a very live issue today, about that there can be little mistake. The most brilliant and interesting of the youngest poets, of the 'new signatures', Auden, is above all a satirist. Mr. Roy Campbell, in his Georgiad, has produced a masterpiece of the satiric art, which may be placed beside the eighteenth-century pieces without its suffering by that proximity. And what goes for prosody, goes for prose too. (p. 160)

It was also Lewis' belief that he had laid the "theoretic foundations for such work" (p. 160) so that others could follow him "across what is in fact an inconvenient and insanitary bog":

It has been my intention in short that other people, whose

business takes them in this direction, should make use of the road I have been constructing with such care. If temperamentally they prefer the difficult, of course that is another matter, and I know that many do. Let them by all means continue to use the tortuous and waterlogged paths as before. But cross this region they must, if they are to 'get anywhere'; and we see stuck all over it, as we approach it, melancholy (and they would have us say 'tragic') figures--the figures of people with little sense of direction, of feeble will, and a probably prenatal disposition to 'get stuck' and acquire merit by sombrely wrestling with insuperable obstacles--monuments of frustration, but also of vanity. However, all the world, or all the intelligent, are not like that; and here is a road of sorts--I may have too hastily referred to it as Roman, I do not know; but at least it is passably straight, from terra firma to terra firma, by the shortest route, though I do not claim you can pass by it under a few exacting hours of hard going; but if you know of a shorter, make it by all means; but cross the beastly stretch you must, as I have said. (pp. 172-3)

In my next two chapters I intend to trace the rather different path which Aldous Huxley took across "this waterlogged stretch of territory" (p. 173).

Notes

¹ Wyndham Lewis, Men Without Art (1934; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), p. 173. All further references to this book appear in the text.

² William Pritchard sees Lewis' assertion that satire alone is "adequate to deal with 'the disasters of the peace' as they revealed themselves in the 1930s" as being prompted by the same penchant for self-justification which lies behind the polemics:

The assertion--it is more an assertion than an argument--is that satire is good because it is true, true because it shuns the 'idealism' or 'romance' of other kinds of fiction, and therefore necessary in order to deal with the modern world in a sufficiently inclusive manner. In Lewis's boldest exaggeration, satire is fiction, and obviously (is it not obvious?) there was no more vital and productive a satirist than Wyndham Lewis.

William Pritchard, "Literary Criticism as Satire," in Wyndham Lewis: A Reevaluation, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: The Athlone Press, 1980), p. 201.

³ Wyndham Lewis, "Studies in the Art of Laughter," The London Mercury, 30; No. 180 (October, 1934), 509. All further references to this article appear in the text.

⁴ Roy Campbell, "The History of a Rejected Review," in Satire and Fiction, preceded by, The History of a Rejected Review, by Roy Campbell and Wyndham Lewis (1930; rpt. London: The Arthur Press, 1972), p. 16.

⁵ Wyndham Lewis, The Art of Being Ruled (London: Chatto and Windus, 1926), pp. 320-21.

⁶ Campbell, "History of a Rejected Review," p. 50.

⁷ Wyndham Lewis, "Art in a Machine Age," The Bookman, 86, No. 54 (July, 1934), 187.

⁸ Lewis, "Art in a Machine Age," p. 186.

⁹ Wyndham Lewis, The Apes of God (1930; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 278. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹⁰ Campbell, "History of a Rejected Review," p. 15.

¹¹ Wyndham Lewis, The Wild Body (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1928), p. 236. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹² Wyndham Lewis, The Childermass (1928; rpt. London: John Calder, 1965), p. 9. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹³ Frederic Jameson argues persuasively that the various "transformations" of Pullman and Satters are a "function" of Lewis' "official subject" which is "the personality itself and the threats the modern world holds in store for the 'strong' personalities of an intelligent elite":

What is clear even at the level of stylistic practice . . . is that the "personalities" of Pullman and Satters are far less real than whatever is happening to them. . . . The shaping power of apposition or epithet, which is the dominant stylistic device of The Childermass, and in terms of which its characters reappear in the varying disguises of "Ka Pullman," "Bill-Sykes-Satters," "big burning Gretchen," "the Styx-side sheikh," marks the priority of some global stereotype of these various moments over the characterization of any of its individual elements, including the subject of "character" itself.

Frederic Jameson, Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist (London: University of California Press, 1979), p. 54. The result, argues Jameson, is that "in Lewis's narrative such categories as 'irony' and 'point of view' are no longer relevant" (p. 54), because it is Lewis' intention to leave the reader without "an ethical framework" within which his various satiric targets can be judged (p. 55). The object of Lewis'

satire is not to judge human conduct from the point of view of moral norms but to fictionalize the disintegration of human personality itself. This interpretation of Lewis' narrative style accords with my conclusions about modern satire at the end of my thesis, as well as with some of the general tendencies which I noted in Chapter II concerning the approach to the human character which the satirists mentioned therein tend to adopt. As I pointed out in Chapter II, modern satirists are less inclined to judge human conduct than they are to warn the reader against the disintegration of human personality that the Machine Age has caused.

¹⁴ I think this is still true despite Alan Munton's remarks in "A Reading of The Childermass": "There is little substance to Hugh Kenner's objection that The Childermass is 'simply The Art of Being Ruled dramatised,' for it has many of the attributes of fiction, while we should expect this form of satire to be associated with works of theory, rather than otherwise. As a satire, The Childermass has impeccable credentials." Alan Munton, "A Reading of The Childermass," in Wyndham Lewis: A Revaluation, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: The Athlone Press, 1980), p. 122. Even if we agree with Munton that The Childermass belongs to the "Menippean" tradition so that we should expect to find "works of theory" in it, the reader might still be forgiven for failing to grasp the full implications of the satire. For in this case the relevant "works of theory" are highly idiosyncratic, not to mention deliberately evasive. As I pointed out in Chapter III, some critics feel that it is pointless to look for "theory" in the polemics because they are, in the end, exercises in self-aggrandizement.

¹⁵ Alan Munton warns us that we should not make the mistake of believing that the Hyperideans are to be completely condoned: "Despite possessing many of the correct Lewisian arguments the Hyperideans' reality is limited by

their chosen 'Greek' identity as homosexuals; they can never become sufficiently complex to be 'real'" ("A Reading of The Childermass," p. 131).

¹⁶ Wyndham Lewis, Rude Assignment: A Narrative of My Career Up-To-Date (London: Hutchinson and Company, 1950), p. 52:

'The Apes of God' is the only one of my books which can be described as pure Satire (unless we wish to speak of verse); there is much farce, comedy and other things there too, but as a satire it must generally be classed. The violent abuse of which I am the object still, even today, must, I surmise, belong to the aftermath of this book; although it was first published a decade and a half ago.

In Rude Assignment Lewis elaborates upon "a most important distinction" which must be made "between the classical conception of Satire and our own." He points out that when, in his earlier writings, he claimed "where there is truth to life there is satire" this involved a "less strict use" of the word "satire" (p. 46). By the time of Rude Assignment he feels that "the most logical thing would be to confine the use of it [satire] to work where, as with Dryden, or in Swift, a conventional machinery is used; and the characters as embodied ideas, are rendered incapable of breathing the same atmosphere with us, so that we know that they are not people such as ourselves, but a symbolic company" (p. 46). Lewis continues to insist in Rude Assignment that, apart from The Apes of God, he is a realist and not a satirist. It is a significant trait of "the times" that people now use "satire" to describe what is merely "objective truth": "What in another age would have been described as truth would today be called caricature, or satire" (p. 50).

¹⁷ Hugh Kenner, Wyndham Lewis (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions Books, 1954), p. 111.

¹⁸ William H. Pritchard, Wyndham Lewis (New York: Twayne Publishers,

1968), p. 112.

¹⁹ Robert T. Chapman, Wyndham Lewis: Fictions and Satires (London: Vision Press, 1973), p. 110.

²⁰ Rowland Smith, "Snooty Baronet: Satire and Censorship," in Wyndham Lewis: A Reevaluation, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: The Athlone Press, 1980), p. 190.

²¹ Wyndham Lewis, Snooty Baronet (1932; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1971), p. 159. All further references to this book appear in the text.

²² Erich Fromm, The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 58.

²³ Wyndham Lewis, One-Way-Song (1933; rpt. London: Methuen, 1960), p. 132.

²⁴ One-Way-Song, pp. 66-7.

Chapter V

Aldous Huxley and the Machine Age

Huxley's period of concern over "machinery" coincides with that of Lewis. Towards the end of the twenties and during the early years of the thirties his social essays frequently isolate the machine as the "modern menace" in political, social and cultural problems. He sees the inter-war years as a critical period in the "history of machinery" which "still goes on growing and embodying itself in ever new forms":

The germinal notion of machines has grown in the minds, and been progressively embodied by the hands, of successive craftsmen-thinkers, until now machinery is our master and we are compelled to live, not as we would like to live, but as it commands. The history of the next few centuries will be, among other things, the history of men's efforts to redomesticate the monster they have created, to reassert a human mastery over these bits of embodied thought at present so domineeringly rebellious.¹

Huxley's concept of machinery is both more "popular" and more literal than Lewis'. He often sees the machine as Butler saw it: an evolutionary monster bent upon achieving an all-pervasive physical and spiritual presence. It is a Leviathan which has spawned habits of thought detrimental to human life itself. Also, it threatens to obliterate all other systems of thought. It has come into existence and "obeying the laws of its notional being, proceeds to grow with all the irresistibility and inevitability of a planted seed" ("Obstacle Race," Music at Night, p. 170). This evolutionary monster poses grave problems both for the individual and for society. It has taken such a grip upon life that it has all but expunged human meaning and value: "mechanisation has already affected us profoundly, not only as political

beings, but also as suffering and enjoying individuals, even as thinkers."²

Huxley, in the twenties, differs from Lewis in his suggestions for counteracting the influence of machinery and in his basic view of human nature. Yet both satirists agree in many ways on what are the major manifestations of the machine's influence upon "politics and the behavior of the individual." For instance, Huxley never tires of pointing out how the ethic of the machine has meant the "total sacrifice of individual interests to the interests of the mechanized community" ("Machinery, Psychology and Politics," Spectator, p. 750). In the modern world no compromise is possible between the machine and man. Once the machine is set in motion, everyone must function according to its processes. This state of affairs makes nonsense out of any notion of political democracy. Hence, thinking people "are becoming increasingly contemptuous of the thing they fought so desperately to make the world safe for." Social and political success in the modern world "can only be achieved by those who accept the ethic of the machine"; but, inevitably, "the acceptance of that ethic means the abandonment of individual and political democracy." The way of life that the machine dictates is "synonymous with human imbecility." In order to create a mass uniformity of behavior and thought suitable for its ends, the machine "promotes stupidity by producing on an enormous scale such spiritual opiates and thought-substitutes as the daily paper and magazine, the cinema, the radio" ("Machinery, Psychology and Politics," Spectator, p. 750). Huxley is extremely pessimistic about "human" prospects in the face of this inexorable tyranny:

Is it possible for a human being to be both a man and a citizen of a mechanized state? Is it possible to combine the material advantages which accrue to those living in a mechanized world with the psychological advantages enjoyed by those who live in

pre-mechanical surroundings? Such are the questions which future politicians will have to ask and effectively answer in terms of laws and regulations. What sort of answers will they give? Who knows? Not I, at any rate. I am even a little doubtful whether the questions are answerable.

("Machinery, Psychology and Politics," Spectator, p. 751)

The lack of originality in Huxley's criticism of "machinery" when compared with that of Lewis is immediately evident. He adds little to the earlier perspectives of Arnold, Butler and Forster, which he has obviously assimilated. His fear that the machine is about to carry the world into abysmal catastrophe is orthodox for the period. He is acutely aware of the blind, destructive forces that have, between the wars, achieved a complete mastery. The Machine Age makes life "fundamentally unlivable for all." The consequences of a world totally given over to "homo mechanicus" are seen as appalling:

With every fresh elaboration of the social organization, the individual finds himself yet further degraded from manhood towards the mere embodiment of a social function; now that ready-made, creation-saving amusements are spreading an ever intenser boredom through ever wider spheres,--existence has become pointless and intolerable. Quite how pointless and how intolerable the great masses of materially-civilized humanity have not yet consciously realized. Only the more intelligent have consciously realized it as yet. To this realization the reaction of those whose intelligence is unaccompanied by some talent, some inner urge towards creation, is an intense hatred, a longing to destroy.³

The time is not far off when life under the machine will become intolerable for everyone. The result, Huxley tells us, will be a nihilistic revolution:

Destruction for destruction's sake. Hate, universal hate, and an aimless and therefore complete and thorough smashing up of everything. And the levelling up of incomes, by accelerating the spread of universal mechanization (machinery is costly), will merely accelerate the coming of this great orgy of universal nihilism. ("Revolutions," Do What You Will, p. 226)

Also, Huxley, during this period of his work, is close to Spengler in the

way that he sees man's "Faustian passion" producing a social malaise and cultural decline that will end, inevitably, in the destruction of the whole of western civilization.

In his social essays Huxley reveals himself to be in a similar position to Lewis as regards the ultimate basis of his criticism. He wishes to examine and criticize various aspects of modern life but he is careful to point out that he cannot present a "coherent system." In Proper Studies (1927), for instance, he admits that the most that can be said for his various insights is that "they are all situated, so to speak, at points on the outline of a possible system."⁴ He, also, is concerned to analyse the differences between the "real" and the "unreal," not the differences between "good" and "bad." However, unlike Lewis, Huxley does not claim an exclusive objectivity for himself. Nor does he see "detachment" as an absolute virtue. The positive values which inform his criticism are not hard to find. He is quite overtly searching for a new morality and can confidently condemn the machine as immoral; "We are forced to conclude that mechanization militates against abundance of individual life and is therefore immoral" ("Machinery, Psychology and Politics," Spectator, pp. 750-51). He subscribes to a notion of individual and social "completeness" which he sees the machine destroying. From this traditional base he criticizes and satirizes the Machine Age. He wishes people to ask themselves "how long can human beings survive a state of things that necessarily condemns them to a partial stultification as individuals?" ("Machinery, Psychology and Politics," Spectator, p. 751) He is as suspicious as Lewis of "Mr. Everyman" and feels that most people prefer "to go on existing dimly in the semi-coma of mechanized labour and mechanical leisure" ("Pascal," Do What You Will, p. 228). However, Huxley does not see mechanical unconsciousness as an inevitable state for "99 per cent" of

man-kind. He believes that, latent in all men, is the means of escape from machinery. So he can assert that, apart from the machinery of each man's life, "there remains a vast domain that cannot be accurately explored with the surveying instruments of physical science."⁵ But Huxley does not believe that the "vast domain" is commensurate with conventional "righteousness." During the twenties and early thirties, Huxley is thrown back upon a vague vitalism as an antidote to machinery. Although, during his later career, he finds various spiritual alternatives to machinery, during this period he only hints at possible solutions to the problem.

In an essay entitled "Spinoza's Worm," from Do What You Will (1929), Huxley tells us that machinery is dangerous because it has removed the therapeutic safety-valve that man's creative instincts once afforded him:

The machine is dangerous because it is not only a labour-saver, but also a creation saver. Creative work, of however humble a kind, is the source of man's most solid, least transitory happiness. The machine robs the majority of human beings of the very possibility of this happiness. Leisure has now been almost as completely mechanized as labour. Men no longer amuse themselves, creatively, but sit and are passively amused by mechanical devices. Machinery condemns one of the most vital needs of humanity to a frustration which the progress of invention can only render more and more complete. (p. 86)

Huxley believes that modern man's "passivity and subservience to machinery" will be difficult to remedy; the "first symptoms of mass insanity are everywhere apparent" (p. 89). However, unless men can be persuaded to revive the atrophied imaginative and instinctive side of their natures, the "races of the industrialized West are doomed" (p. 89). Such Luddite warnings are not new, but Huxley rejects the usual backward-looking solutions of thinkers such as William Morris. The modern situation makes a return to a pre-industrial past impossible. Huxley takes it as given that "machines

must stay" (p. 87), even though they are inflicting a huge psychological injury upon humanity that could "prove fatal." The soaring population of the industrialized west depends upon the existence of machinery to maintain it, so that to destroy machines would be to "kill at least half the population" (p. 86). Hence, modern man is faced with the most dangerous of dilemmas, beside which other problems pale into insignificance:

The vital problem of our age is the problem of reconciling manhood with the citizenship of a modern industrialized state. The modern Good Citizen, who is nothing more than a Good Citizen, is less than human, an imbecile or a lunatic-- dangerous to himself and to the society in which he lives.
(p. 91)

Like Lewis, Huxley emphasizes that he is attacking modern "normality." The "normal man" is a distortion of "the human" because of his unquestioning acceptance of machinery and his apparent willingness to live an "automatic simulation of life." Huxley is convinced that if the "subhuman insanity" which currently passes for normality is allowed to continue, the result will be gratuitous violence and destruction: "from madness in the long-run comes destruction" (p. 91).

However, Huxley's "true" view of the world, which the myopia of the "normal" man prevents him from apprehending, differs significantly from Lewis'. For Huxley sees "common sense" as manifesting itself in an awareness of multiple perspectives. Machinery will brook no rivalry, with the result that modern man is necessarily incomplete; he can only look at the world from the point of view which machinery dictates to him. Unconscious of the various perspectives from which any event can be considered, the "normal" man lives a life of "non sequiturs." In practice, each "normal" person is never aware of more than one aspect of each event at any particular time. Huxley's super-normal artist can shed this debilitating myopia and achieve

a more comprehensive understanding of events. Juxtaposing events and perspectives, the artist will, inevitably, Huxley believes, see the world in an ironic light:

Our life is spent first in one water-tight compartment of experience, then in another. The artist can, if he so desires, break down the bulk-heads between the compartments and so give us a simultaneous view of two or more of them at a time. So seen, reality looks exceedingly queer. Which is how the ironist and the perplexed questioner desire it to look.

("And Wanton Optics Roll the Melting Eye," MUSIC at Night, p. 41)

We can see from this passage how much of Huxley at this stage of his career is secularized Arnold. Escape from machinery means a breaking loose from stock notions and habits. Huxley, like Lewis, is, at one level, providing us with an explanation of his own position as a critic and modern satirist. His satires of the twenties are based upon this very theory of "point-counter-point"; an "ironic incongruity" of perspective is at the centre of his satiric theory and practice. The notion is explained to us several times within the satires themselves. Calamy, for instance, examining his own hand in Those Barren Leaves (1925), educates the reader in Huxley's own views:

'It exists simultaneously in a dozen parallel worlds. It exists as electrical charges; as chemical molecules; as living cells; as part of a moral being, the instrument of good and evil; in the physical world and in mind. And from this one goes on to ask, inevitably, what relationship exists between these different modes of being. What is there in common between life and chemistry; between good and evil and electrical charges; between a collection of cells and the consciousness of a caress? It's here that the gulf begins to open. For there isn't any connection--that one can see, at any rate. Universe lies on top of universe, layer after layer, distinct and separate.'

Initially in his satires, as in his social essays, the mechanical perspective seems to represent only one mode of incompleteness for Huxley. But

we see it gradually coming to dominate the other modes in Huxley's mind as he begins to use his satire for a direct attack upon modern evils. In Brave New World (1932), the machine has subsumed all other forms of imbalance. Because Huxley cannot accept Arnold's equating right reason with the will of God, escape from machinery leads him, at first, into a relativist position. So, initially, he sees machinery merely as one of the great "modern menaces" working against an awareness of relative perspectives. But acceptance of a relativist perspective brings him no comfort; he speculates upon various ways of reconciling the "water-tight compartments" of modern life. Perhaps, as Galamy suggests, "if one could stand the strain of thinking really hard about one thing--this hand, for example--really hard for several days, or weeks, or months, one might be able to burrow one's way right through the mystery and really get at something--some kind of truth, some explanation."⁷ Because the machine dictates a mindless passivity, no assimilation or transcendence of perspectives is possible for the normal man. His life must remain an isolated and incomplete series of "non sequiturs."

Huxley's commitment to a "common sense" view of reality based upon multiple perspectives is very different from Lewis' spatial reality of static and soulless things. For Huxley, it is the relationship between the object and the mode of perception which is all-important. Lewis' "philosophy of the eye" is merely one of many perspectives; his insistence upon a "natural" concrete base for perception is incompatible with Huxley's pluralism. The "objectivity" of Huxley's artist enables him, ironically, to "juxtapose two accounts of the same human event, one in terms of pure science, the other in terms of religion, aesthetics, passion, even common sense; their discord will set up the most disquieting reverberations in the mind" ("And Wanton Optics," Music at Night, p. 40). However, like Lewis,

Huxley believes that the ancient Greek world confirms his position. Greece, for Huxley, is the "retrospective Utopia of those who . . . find that the citizenship of a modern state is dehumanizing" ("History and the Past," Music at Night, p. 144). The great fault of the modern world is that it makes it impossible for men to escape a mechanical and debilitating incompleteness. Hence he admires the Greeks because he feels that they were able to preserve the "unstable equilibrium between so many mutually hostile elements":

We do not really want to realize the full extent of the difference between the Greek world-view, the Greek way of life, and our own. For most of us the realization would be too disturbing; so we shut our eyes on all that would force it upon us and continue to visualize the Greeks, if we visualize them at all . . . as a race of very nice, handsome, and intelligent English public-school boys. But in fact the Greeks were neither nice nor boyish. They were men--men how incomparably completer and more adult than the decayed or fossil children who, at our Universities, profess themselves the guardians of the Greek tradition.

("Spinoza's Worm," Do What You Will, p. 80)

Huxley feels that in disregarding Greek completeness and refusing to face their own isolation and fragmentation, men are mindlessly placing their faith in machinery of one sort or another. The machine has been so effective that it has convinced mankind that it is their only salvation when, in fact, it is at the root of their problems. Once again, Huxley's affinities with Arnold are more than obvious.

One of the "besetting dangers" which particularly concerns Huxley is the implicit faith which men have in a future egalitarian state when, "served by mechanical domestics, exploiting the incessant labour of metallic slaves, the three-hundred-a-year man of the future state will enjoy an almost indefinite leisure" ("Liberty and the Promised Land," Music at Night, p. 123). He goes on in the same essay to say he feels that such a vision is misleading

propaganda used to further the ends of the machine. Those who are duped by it fail to take into account a "malignant deity" called the "Law of Diminishing Returns" which will inevitably prevent any such egalitarian nirvana:

'Perfected machinery,' say the prophets, 'will give us increasing freedom from work, and increasing freedom from work will give increasing happiness.' But leisure also is subject to the law of diminishing returns. Beyond a certain point, more freedom from work produces a diminished return in happiness. Among the completely leisured, the returns in happiness are often actually negative and acute boredom is suffered. (p. 127)

The same principle holds good "in almost every part of our human universe" (p. 125). Prosperity, education, the democratization of political institutions, travel, and all other hopes of a "continuous general progress" are merely faith in machinery. For, "to extend privileges is generally to destroy their value" (p. 131), and "the greater the number which avails itself of this liberty, the less will this liberty be worth" (p. 129).

Huxley shares Lewis' disapproval of the ways in which the modern mechanical state legislates against all kinds of natural intelligence and ability. The old culture-snobbery has disappeared but has been replaced by the "new snobberies of stupidity and ignorance." In the industrial state "highbrows" are liable to resent the processes of the machine. They make bad consumers, so "long live stupidity and ignorance":

If by some miracle the dreams of the educationists were realized and the majority of human beings began to take an exclusive interest in the things of the mind, the whole industrial system would instantly collapse. Given modern machinery, there can be no industrial prosperity without mass production. Mass production is impossible without mass consumption. Other things being equal, consumption varies inversely with the intensity of mental life.

("Foreheads Villainous Low," Music at Night, p. 207)

The new "snobberies" are everywhere promoted by the vast mesh of advertising propaganda, itself made possible by the processes of the machine.

Huxley selects several modern trends as being particularly ominous examples of the influence of the machine. Communism, for example, is paradigmatic of modern political movements which aim to transform individuals into component cells of that mechanical monster called "Collective Man":

Individuals must be organized out of existence; the communist state requires, not men, but cogs and ratchets in the huge 'collective mechanism.' To the Bolshevik idealist, Utopia is indistinguishable from one of Mr. Henry Ford's factories. It is not enough, in their eyes, that men should spend eight hours a day under the workshop discipline. Life outside the factory must be exactly like life inside. Leisure must be as highly organized as toil. Into the Christian Kingdom of Heaven men may only enter if they have become like little children. The condition of their entry into the Bolshevik's Earthly Paradise is that they shall become like machines.

("The New Romanticism," Music at Night, p. 214)

Huxley feels that there is no real difference between Communism, Fordianism or Freudianism. They are each the outcome of applying the mechanical laws of the physical universe to the individual and to social organization. In none of this does he differ substantially from Lewis. However, Huxley's preference for a "chaotically vital" and "mystically organic" individual with a soul, personal tastes and special talents places him within the Romantic, Bergsonian tradition that Lewis attacks as one of the chief symptoms of the Machine Age. While both writers agree upon certain manifestations of the machine's influence on modern life, they nevertheless differ fundamentally in what they see as alternatives to machinery. For instance, Lewis' faith in "intellect" is not shared by Huxley:

Circumstances have led humanity to set an ever-increasing premium on the conscious and intellectual comprehension of things. Modern

man's besetting temptation is to sacrifice his direct perceptions and spontaneous feelings to his reasoned reflections; to prefer in all circumstances the verdict of his intellect to that of his immediate intuitions.

("Wordsworth in the Tropics," Do What You Will, p. 123)

Paley reflecting Lawrence, Huxley warns that "if one would live well, one must live completely, with the whole being--with the body and the instincts, as well as with the conscious mind" ("Wordsworth," Do What You Will, pp. 123-4). However plagiaristic and unconvincing Huxley may sound in this vein, his warnings qualify the "willed superimposition" of Lewis' polemics:

We must be aware of attributing actuality to . . . convenient abstractions; we must resist the temptation to fall down and worship the intellectual images carved by ourselves out of the world (whether objective or subjective, it makes no difference) with which experience has made us familiar. True, the temptation is strong; for the intellect has a special weakness for its own creations.

("Pascal," Do What You Will, p. 229)

Huxley has more in common with Lewis' "popular" approach to the Machine Age in The Doom of Youth and Paleface than he has with Lewis' egotistic iconoclasm in Time and Western Man and The Art of Being Ruled. For instance, he agrees with Lewis' condemnation of the modern effusive worship of primitive people; "Mr. Wyndham Lewis, in his Paleface, probably does well to be angry" ("History and the Past," Music at Night, p. 145). But Huxley himself would not escape Lewis' indictments, for his views are inimical to the Lewis of Time and Western Man and The Art of Being Ruled. Nothing reveals their fundamental polarity better than their respective attitudes towards Time. In his essay, "Time and the Machine," Huxley discusses the ways in which, for him, the machine has created a new time consciousness which "has been purchased at the expense of the old consciousness."⁸ His

interpretation is, characteristically, quite literal: "The time of which we have knowledge is artificial, machine-made time. Of natural, cosmic time, as it is measured out by sun and moon, we are for the most part almost wholly unconscious."⁹ Lewis, on the other hand, sees a new and dangerous time-consciousness emerging from the very "chaotic vitalism" which Huxley sees as an alternative to machinery. The influence of Bergson's vital flux-- as an alternative to what Huxley would call "machine-made time"--upon modernists such as Joyce and Pound is, for Lewis, at the very root of Machine-Age problems.

Huxley sees another ominous Machine-Age symptom in "abstract art," a topic he discusses in "The New Romanticism," from Music at Night (1931). "Cubism" in particular is regarded as a dehumanization of art which addresses itself to an "Aesthetic Man" who "stands in much the same relation to the real complex human being as does the Economic Man of the socialists, or the mechanized component of the Bolshevik's Collective Man" (p. 217). Cubism is mechanical because "Cubists deliberately eliminated from their art all that is 'mystically organic,' replacing it by solid geometry" (p. 216). In fact, Huxley feels that all of the anthropocentric "spiritual and individual values" which make life significant are missing from modern art in general. Among the worst offenders are the new Romantics of the machine who have taken the dehumanization process to its ultimate extreme:

Fragments of machinery are generously scattered through modern painting. There are sculptors, who laboriously try to reproduce the forms invented by engineers. The ambition of advanced architects is to make dwelling-houses indistinguishable from factories; in Corbusier's phrase, a house is a 'machine for living in.' (p. 217)

If Huxley's diagnosis seems rather superficial in this passage, it should

be remembered that the late nineteen-twenties saw the apotheosis of the machine at the Machine Age Exposition held in New York in 1927. The catalogue to the Exposition was full of what the Criterion reviewer of the time called "pathetic sentimentality." The following extract, for instance, is typical of the general tone of the whole affair:

From the appearance of the first Futurist Manifesto of Marinetti up until today, there has been a ceaseless searching and questioning in the field of art. Boccioni in his book, Futurist Sculpture and Painting (1914) [sic] stated that the era of the great mechanical individualists has [sic] begun; that all the rest is paleontology. Luigi Rursole (in 1913) with his invention of the noise-makers constructed new mechanical instruments to give value to new musical sounds inspired by noise, while Luciano Folgare in his poem the Chant of the Motors (1914) [sic] exalted the mechanical beauty of workshops and the overpowering lyricism of machines. Later, in my manifesto entitled Absolute Constructions in Motion-Noise (1915), [sic] I revealed by means of new plastic constructions the unknown constructive virtues of the mechanical aesthetic. While the painter Gino Severini confirmed by means of an admirable theoretical essay in the Mercure de France (1916) [sic] the theory that "the process of the construction of a machine is analogous to the construction process of a work of art."

.....
 Is not the machine today the most exuberant of the mysteries of human creation? Is it not the new mythical deity which weaves the legends and histories of the contemporary human drama? The Machine in its practical and material function comes to have today in human concepts and thoughts the significance of an ideal and spiritual inspiration.

WE THEREFORE PROCLAIM

1. The Machine to be the tutelary symbol of the universal dynamism, potentially embodying in itself the essential elements of human creation; the discoverer of fresh developments in modern aesthetics.¹⁰

In the face of this jingoistic exuberance, Huxley's objections are perfectly understandable. He recognizes in Machine Romanticism a childish regression which is taking the world towards chaos; "The new romanticism, so far as I can see, is headed straight towards death" ("New Romanticism," Music at Night, p. 226).

Underlying such political, social and aesthetic trends is a desire for "newness" for its own sake; this is a direct result of the processes of the machine taking over and monopolizing human consciousness. "The topsy-turvy romanticism which exalts the machine, the crowd, the merely muscular body" ("Art and the Obvious," Music at Night, pp. 29-30) is the result of a "machine-spawned" philosophy. Modernity or "up-to-dateness" has taken on a moral value and has become "one of the first duties of man." The machine ensures its own propagation by elevating its own movements into a whole ethos:

Modernity-snobbery, though not exclusive to our age, has come to assume an unprecedented importance. The reasons for this are simple and of a strictly economic character. Thanks to modern machinery, production is outrunning consumption. Organized waste among consumers is the first condition of our industrial prosperity.

("Selected Snobberies," Music at Night, p. 223)

All of this waste has to be justified theoretically by a new kind of philosophy which gratuitously assumes that "human nature has radically changed in the last few years and that the modern man is, or at least ought to be, radically different from his ancestors" ("Art and the Obvious," Music at Night, p. 30). Like Lewis in this respect, Huxley sees the ubiquitous love of revolution and change as the result of the deep entrenchment of mechanical processes into human consciousness.

During Huxley's Machine-Age period he contemplates various alternatives to the "water-tight compartments" of passive mindlessness which the tyranny of machinery forces upon modern man. He hints at spiritual and mystical solutions and at a diluted Lawrentian vitalism which he feels might fill the vacuum left by man's loss of individual and social completeness. However, these alternatives remain latent possibilities which he was to advocate more

forcefully later in his career. His chief occupation at this time lies in an ironic analysis of the modern situation. The notions of his polemical essays inform both the concerns and the forms of his satiric art. However, he differs from Lewis in that a knowledge of his social criticism is less essential for an understanding of his satire. This is because Huxley's notions about the machine are rather conventional and literal. Unable to offer categorical alternatives to "mere machinery," the spirit that informs his criticism, nevertheless, leads straight back to Arnold and to Butler. He adds little to their positions except a feeling of anxiety and doom. Unlike his spiritual and theoretical precursors, he is forced to acknowledge the fact that the machine is "here to stay" and that the process cannot be reversed or abandoned: "Ours is a spiritual climate in which the immemorial decencies find it hard to flourish. Another generation or so should see them definitely dead. Is there a resurrection?" ("Silence is Golden," Do What You Will, p. 61).

In writing satire in response to the Machine Age, Huxley is faced with problems similar to those of Lewis. He, also, shows an awareness that a new kind of satiric art is necessary to deal with the dangers of a situation that is somewhat unprecedented in its potential for complete human destruction. Unable to commit himself to a prescribed system of traditional morals, he yet feels a need to satirize a mechanical world that is fragmented and tragically "absurd; but then the human spirit is absurd, the whole process of living is utterly unreasonable" ("Obstacle Race," Music at Night, p. 169).

Notes

¹ Aldous Huxley, "Obstacle Race," Music at Night and Other Essays (1931; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1970), pp. 170-71. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.

² Aldous Huxley, "Machinery, Psychology and Politics," The Spectator, 143, No. 5,291 (November 23, 1929), 749. All further references to this article appear in the text.

³ Aldous Huxley, "Revolutions," Do What You Will: Essays (London: Chatto and Windus, 1929), p. 225. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.

⁴ Aldous Huxley, Proper Studies (London: Chatto and Windus, 1927), p. xv.

⁵ Proper Studies, p. viii.

⁶ Aldous Huxley, Those Barren Leaves (1925; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1940), pp. 346-7.

⁷ Those Barren Leaves, p. 340.

⁸ Aldous Huxley, "Time and the Machine," The Olive Tree and Other Essays (1936; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1947), p. 124.

⁹ "Time and the Machine," The Olive Tree, p. 124.

¹⁰ Enrico Frampolini, "The Aesthetic of the Machine and Mechanical Introspection in Art," in Machine Age Exposition Catalogue, Little Review, 12 (May, 1927), 9-10.

Chapter VI

The Satire of Aldous Huxley

In the essays and in the fiction which he wrote during the twenties, Huxley explains why a satiric response to the evils of the Machine Age is necessary. Like Lewis, he tells us that a new kind of satiric art is required. However, unlike Lewis, Huxley is a reluctant satirist and often seems temperamentally unsuited to the role he assigns himself during this period. For instance, he is repulsed by Swift's scatological misanthropy and thinks that it is "profoundly silly."¹ He feels that Swift's powers as a satirist are "marshalled on the side of death, not life" ("Swift," Do What You Will, p. 103). He wishes to celebrate man's animality and claims to find in it a source of strength: "To hate bowels, to hate the body, as Swift hated them, is to hate at least half of man's entire vital activity. It is impossible to live completely without accepting life as a whole in all its manifestations" ("Swift," Do What You Will, p. 103). Hence the mood of mourning for a lost completeness that we find in Grope Yellow (1922), Antic Hay (1923), Those Barren Leaves (1925) and Point Counter Point (1928). Huxley becomes a satirist of the Machine Age because it has produced a bewildering "fragmentation" of the human wholeness that he would prefer to celebrate. Peter Firchow, for example, has written of Huxley in his early novels as directing the "main thrust" of his satiric attack against "imbalanced humanity, or to revise his own phrase, against an incomplete mankind."² While Lewis is committed to bringing to our attention the basic "mechanical" nature of human life, Huxley is never fundamentally misanthropic. The principal characters of his satires are presented more as victims of forces beyond their control than as targets

for our unqualified scorn. Generally speaking, in his early satires, Huxley keeps off-stage the Machine-Age forces responsible for this regrettable human fragmentation. We become aware of them as the characters discuss "modern life" and struggle confusedly with the incompleteness within themselves. From Crome Yellow (1922) to Point Counter Point (1928) we see Huxley steadily moving "machinery"--the real culprit--to the centre of his fiction.. After Point Counter Point he reveals that he is a disillusioned idealist, rather than an inveterate satirist, by giving full expression to his Machine-Age anxieties in the dystopia of Brave New World (1932).

Although he eventually holds "machinery" completely responsible for the "modern condition," at first the machine appears in his fiction as only one of the "menaces" that threaten "immemorial decencies." He bases his theory of satire upon the ironic incongruities everywhere apparent in the "fragmented" modern world. When these incongruities are fictionalized and discussed in his novels, the machine remains in the background as the agent most actively responsible for the human fragmentation that is both a tragedy and a farce.

In his book, Aldous Huxley: Satire and Structure (1969), Jerome Meckier seeks to "isolate Huxley's major satiric themes and to insist on their perennial nature."³ Meckier claims that Huxley's satire is directed against "egocentrics" and "split-men" and "aims at turning them back towards the demands of society."⁴ But I think that Huxley believed himself to be using satire in a new way. He makes it clear in his satires that there is no normal society whose demands the "egocentrics" and "split-men" are ignoring. I feel that Meckier's summary of Huxley's position in his early novels is somewhat inconsistent:

The world of Huxley's novels is without a centre and the characters in it fragmentary. Each flies off from the norm and sets up a world of his own. The odd-ball characters once confined in Swift's Academy of Lagado--men who devoted their whole lives to such projects as extracting sun rays from cucumbers--cover the earth.⁵

Meckler is right to stress what Huxley himself saw as an important difference between his own and Swift's position as a satirist: Swift's distortions now "cover the earth." But this is at odds with Meckler's other point that Huxley's characters fly off "from the norm." Huxley's point is that the fragmentation of personality and the void at the centre of society are the norm.

It is the bizarre nature of the modern situation which most impresses Huxley and which calls forth from him a satiric response. The world is bad in the old ways, only it is more inexorably threatening than it has ever been before. Also, there is no obvious remedy available for modern ills. Throughout his early essays, Huxley reiterates the same question: "And what is the remedy?" He sees the world constantly living out in a very real way the satiric fictions of the past. "Satiric distortion has become the new reality:

But the remarkable thing about re-reading Candide is not that the book amuses one, not that it delights and astonishes with its brilliance; that is only to be expected. No, it evokes a new and, for me at least, an unanticipated emotion. In the good old days, before the Flood [World War I], the history of Candide's adventures seemed to us quiet, sheltered, middle-class people only a delightful fantasy, or at best a high-spirited exaggeration of conditions which we knew, vaguely and theoretically, to exist, to have existed, a long way off in space and time. But read the book today; you feel yourself entirely at home in its pages. It is like reading a record of the facts and opinions of 1922; nothing was ever more applicable, more completely to the point. The world in which we live is recognizably the world of Candide and Cunégonde, or Martin and the Old Woman who was a Pope's daughter and the betrothed of the sovereign Prince of Massa-Carrara. The only difference is that

the horrors crowd rather more thickly on the world of 1922 than they did on *Candide's* world. The manoeuvrings of Bulgare and Abare, the intestine strife in Morocco, the earth-quake and auto-da-fé are but pale poor things compared with the Great War, the Russian Famine, the Black and Tans, the Fascisti, and all the other horrors of which we can proudly boast.

This is the same inversion of reality which Lewis claims as justification for his satire. Both writers feel that the nightmarish distortions of traditional satire are today's common-place happenings. Modern normality is so bizarre that "we have discovered, in the course of the somewhat excessively prolonged Histoire à la Candide of the last seven years, that astonishment is a superogatory emotion" ("On Re-Reading Candide," On the Margin, p. 15). Modern satire must deal with a world in which "all things are possible" and in which it is the rule for the "human" to be violated for no apparent purpose. So Huxley, like Lewis, tells us that he is a satirist because satire is merely a presentation of the "truth" of the modern situation, not because he wishes to distort for a comic effect. I discussed at the beginning of Chapter II why satirists between the wars felt this way. Satire is no longer "a laughing matter." It is, rather, a presentation of reality as nightmare: "The subject of any European government to-day feels all the sensations of Gulliver in the paws of the Queen of Brobdingnag's monkey--the sensations of some small and helpless being at the mercy of something monstrous and irresponsible and idiotic" ("How the Days Draw In," On the Margin, p. 103). What is more, the nightmare of Machine-Age normality must go on without a Brobdingnagian King to restore sanity by denouncing the odious vermin for their "narrow Principles and short Views." The overwhelming need to condemn and protest is negated by crippling doubt.

Huxley is neither a moral satirist nor a vitriolic scourge. He uses satire as a means of seeking out and presenting a truth about the modern

world. Satire, he believes, is the genre which shows most clearly the way things are. Tragedy, for instance, would not suit modern conditions because it is not compatible with the "Whole Truth":

To make a tragedy the artist must isolate a single element out of the totality of human experience and use that exclusively as his material. Tragedy is something that is separated out from the Whole Truth, distilled from it, so to speak, as an essence is distilled from the living flower. Tragedy is chemically pure.

In a fragmented world, "pure tragedy" has lost its meaning as a genre; when we are brought into contact with tragedy, "the elements of our being fall, for the moment at any rate, into an ordered and beautiful pattern, as the iron filings arrange themselves under the influence of the magnet" ("Tragedy and the Whole Truth," Music at Night, p. 13). Satire is more suitable for conveying the "Whole Truth" because the "Wholly Truthful" writer places the pure agonies of tragedy in a larger context and examines them from several perspectives. Looked at in this way they seem ironic, and their "chemical purity" is dissipated:

In recent times literature has become more and more acutely conscious of the Whole Truth--of the great oceans of irrelevant things, events and thoughts stretching endlessly away in every direction from whatever island point (a character, a story) the author may choose to contemplate. To impose the kind of arbitrary limitations, which must be imposed by anyone who wants to write a tragedy, has become more and more difficult--is now, indeed, for those who are at all sensitive to contemporaneity, almost impossible. (p. 17)

The "Wholly Truthful" writer, conscious of "contemporaneity," will juxtapose various accounts of the same event to create the "most disquieting reverberations in the mind." The overall effect will be disturbingly ironic. The human pretensions, which are the domain of the traditional

satirist, will be seen against a larger ironical background, revealing the frightening disconnectedness of the modern human condition. In this sense, Huxley's satire is meant to be "more deeply truthful" and "much more profitable" than tragedy could be.

But Huxley's works are far from being satirically "pure." There is a self-confidence about traditional satire which would be as out of place as "pure tragedy" in the world "after the Flood." Huxley's theory of ironic juxtaposition commits him to using various genres in his presentation of the present impasse. The tragic, the fantastic, the comic and the realistic are found side by side in his work. For in the world as Huxley sees it, farce and tragedy are closely related. A tragic wind blows through Huxley's satire as it blows through Lewis'. As the ridiculous kneeling husband says in the play scene of Antic Hay: "The people we don't know are only characters in the human comedy. We are the tragedians."⁸ Satire usually predominates over other elements, but Huxley's fiction in the twenties is really satiric only in the sense that it conveys an overall feeling of ironic absurdity.

Like Lewis, Huxley claims to be making a definite break with what he sees as the practices of traditional satirists. He does not wish to encourage the reader into feeling superior towards an object of mutual scorn. He is as determined as Lewis to attack the reader's own apathy and to bring him to an understanding of the "various poisons which modern civilization, by a process of auto-intoxication, brews quietly up within its own bowels" ("Pleasures," On the Margin, p. 46). His concern is not with the folly of individuals but with the whole social malaise:

The dangers which confront our civilization are not so much the external dangers--wild men, wars and the bankruptcy that wars bring with them. The most alarming dangers are those which menace it from within, that threaten the mind rather than the body and estate of contemporary man.
("Pleasures," On the Margin, p. 46)

This situation requires the purgative effect of "ruthless laughter." The modern satirist cannot preach morality at people, nor can he share with them a consensus of values and beliefs. He must aim to make people "uncomfortable" in order to dispel their apathy and complacency and to alert them to the dangers which threaten to destroy all that is of value in life. Passivity and an unquestioning acceptance of normality are the greatest forces working against the continuance of human worth. For Huxley, as for Lewis, the effect of satire must be cathartic: "A good dose of . . . mockery, administered twice a year at the equinoxes, should purge our minds of much waste matter, make nimble our spirits and brighten the eye to look more clearly and truthfully on the world about us" ("Ben Jonson," On the Margin, p. 202).

Also like Lewis, Huxley feels the need constantly to educate his readers to his new satiric approach. We find much comment about satire and the mixing of genres in the satires themselves. Unable to invite his audience to join him in ridiculing the vice and folly that all reasonable men must despise, he realizes that the reader might be in some doubt as to how to respond. For instance, in Those Barren Leaves, Mary Thriplow and Cardan are made to discuss "satire" for the benefit of the reader for much the same reason that Zagreus discusses it in The Apes of God. Miss Thriplow, a novelist, confuses her own readers by writing "sentimental tragedies in terms of satire and they see only the satire."⁹ Huxley is really explaining his own practice. He makes the point rather heavily that the reader is hardly likely to understand the new situation. Cardan explains the problem to Miss Thriplow for our benefit:

"If you must complicate the matter by writing tragedy in terms of farce you can only expect confusion. Books have their destinies like men. And their fates, as made by generations of readers, are very different from the destinies foreseen for them by their authors. Gulliver's Travels, with a minimum of

expurgation, has become a children's book; a new illustrated edition is produced every Christmas. That's what comes of saying profound things about humanity in terms of a fairy story.' (p. 55)

Huxley sees himself, of course, saying "profound things about humanity" in terms of farce and tragedy. We receive further instruction in Those Barren Leaves on how people are necessarily comic because human existence is fundamentally contradictory: "The most ludicrous comedies are the comedies about people who preach one thing and practice another, who make imposing claims and lamentably fail to fulfil them. We preach immortality and we practice death. Tartuffe and Volpone are not in it" (p. 335).

The great tragedy about human aspirations is, we are told, that eventually they are undermined by the flesh: "Sooner or later there are no more thoughts, but only pain and vomiting and stupor" (p. 334). Depending upon perspective, this tragic fact makes a farce of human life: "The farce is hideous," thought Mr. Cardan, "and in the worst of bad taste" (p. 334). The reader is also told that "fools do not perceive that the farce is a farce" (p. 334), and knows that he must regard the world farcically if he wishes to escape the ranks of the stupid:

'It takes a certain amount of intelligence and imagination to realize the extraordinary queerness and mysteriousness of the world in which we live. The fools, the innumerable fools, take it all for granted, skate cheerfully on the surface and never think of inquiring what's underneath. They're content with appearances, such as your Harrow Road or Café de la Rotonde, call them realities and proceed to abuse anyone who takes an interest in what lies underneath these superficial symbols, as a romantic imbecile.' (p. 370)

Huxley's declared satiric purpose is to explore beneath the surface of things; the reader is left in little doubt that he is meant to follow and receive instruction.

The machine appears in Huxley's satires as a symptom and as a unifying symbol of modern malaise, not as an ineradicable and fundamental part of human nature. The concept of a pre-lapsarian period before the Machine Age is implicit in Huxley's position. There is a unity about his books from Crome Yellow (1922) to Brave New World (1932) that is best understood as a process of bringing modern problems into focus. The Machine Age is present in each of the satires, but, in both a formal and thematic sense, it does not occupy the foreground of the satire until Brave New World. This is evident in a very elementary way. For instance, we can see it in the settings used in each of the books. Crome Yellow portrays a comfortably isolated, bucolic world within which modern problems are presented indirectly through discussion. In Antic Hay (1923), the satire darkens as the scenery of Machine-Age London is brought into the picture and linked thematically with the personal problems of the characters. Those Barren Leaves juxtaposes the "rabbit" life of modern London with rural Italy, but the vacuum at the centre of Antic Hay is also the central symbol of modern reality in Those Barren Leaves. With Point Counter Point (1928), there are various settings (Huxley is using his method of ironic juxtaposition), but, as with Antic Hay, it is the urban wasteland which sets the prevailing tone. Combining the anxieties underlying the earlier books, Brave New World is a cacotopia in which the mechanical world has obliterated everything else. However, even as early as Crome Yellow, the machine world is not far away. Denis hears it in Scogan's voice when the "diabolical prophet" recommends the delicacy of "our modern machine." Picking out the symptoms of the present world that will shape the future, Scogan expands upon his vision "with the insistence of a mechanical noise":

"In the Rational State," he heard Mr. Scogan saying, "human beings

will be separated out into distinct species, not according to the colour of their eyes or the shape of their skulls, but according to the qualities of their mind and temperament. Examining psychologists, trained to what would now seem an almost superhuman clairvoyance, will test each child that is born and assign it to its proper species. Duly labelled and docketed, the child will be given the education suitable to members of its species, and will be set, in adult life, to perform those functions which human beings of his variety are capable of performing."¹⁰

Crome, with its "superbly mellow" atmosphere, is an escape from the mechanical "unreal city" but Scogan's description of life in the rapidly-approaching future state, which will be ruled by the "Goddess of Applied Science" reveals that the fears which inform Brave New World are very much with Huxley even in this early work. The parable of Sir Hercules portrays the fate of a dwarfed, human mode of existence unable to cope with the forces of the massive Fernando. The only escape from the inexorable and marauding future is suicide. For, without control and conditioning, mass civilization will eventually break in and destroy the "mellow" atmosphere of present Crome. No matter what happens, the victory for the insensitive machine is complete. It has created the "herd" and the machinery to control it. Everyone will have to be "moulded by a long process of suggestion" (p. 233), or destruction will come very soon:

'In the upbringing of the herd, humanity's almost boundless suggestibility will be scientifically exploited. Systematically, from earliest infancy, its members will be assured that there is no happiness to be found except in work and obedience; they will be made to believe that they are happy, that they are tremendously important beings, and that everything they do is noble and significant.' (p. 234)

The machine has brought with it political, social and psychological procedures to deal with mass man. Behaviorism, for instance, is a Machine-Age concept based upon the assumption that men, like mere physical matter, are

governed by the laws of cause and effect. The machine created the masses and has assured its own continuation by making itself indispensable for their control. Groms's position in this inexorable process becomes immediately evident after Scogan has finished describing his rational state. We are shown just how close the new mechanical philistinism is: "There was a silence, and in a growing wave of sound the whirl of the reaping machines swelled up from the fields beyond the garden and then receded into a remoter hum" (p. 236). In Groms Yellow the "insistent mechanical noise" lies just beyond the garden hedge; it becomes more insistent with each of Huxley's subsequent satires.

There are, roughly, three ways in which the machine manifests itself in Huxley's satires. First of all, there are actual machines, such as Lord Hovenden's motor car in Those Barren Leaves, or Shearwater's "stationary bicycle" in Antic Hay, which have a thematic and symbolic significance for the works in which they appear. Secondly, we are shown symptoms of Machine-Age culture, such as popular newspapers, jazz and advertising. And thirdly, there are various modes of thought and artistic expression which show the machine's increasing dominance over man's mental, emotional and spiritual life. Scogan's "Rational State" and Shearwater's attempts to provide a purely quantitative account of human possibilities are obvious examples of Machine-Age thought, while Cubism is the most prominent artistic embodiment of the new forces. In Brave New World each of these categories is assimilated into a prophetic dystopia which emphasizes their inter-dependence.

In the satires which lead up to Brave New World the various manifestations of Machine-Age culture are not integrated. Huxley's satiric purpose in these novels is principally to draw our attention to the ironic disparities found everywhere in the fragmented modern world. As the characters

wrestle with individual and social dissociation, the machine culture lurks in the background ready to claim complete victory once the few remnants of a former human state--the only ones aware that there was once an alternative to mass, mechanical uniformity--have disappeared. We are shown the machine gaining victory by default; the principal characters are ridiculously obsolete. They are unable to offer resistance not only because they are the few against the marauding, philistine masses but also because they are bankrupt of the values necessary to make a stand. They are hollow exiles in their country-houses, awaiting death without honour.

The formal disparities of the satires are intentional in the sense that Huxley is seeking a fictional expression of the "ironic incongruities" that he feels it is the satirist's role to portray. But, over and above this, there is a general impression left by the books that Huxley has not found the right form for what he wishes to say. For instance, one often feels that there is little connection between setting, character and the interminable ideas that come up for discussion. The three are often not mutually supportive. Huxley obviously felt this himself because, in Point Counter Point, he has Philip Quarles discuss the limitations of the novel of ideas. Basically, we are told that in order to present ideas in the novel, it is necessary to use the kind of characters who would feasibly have ideas to express. As the Machine Age creates total unawareness, its true products are hardly likely to be blessed with an awareness of their own shortcomings. The characters who can discuss the problems created by Machine-Age life are the more intelligent, isolated victims of the mass culture. They will be those privileged enough to know, or to have known, a different culture.

The ideas discussed in Crome Yellow come from characters who have the leisure and the intellectual capabilities to go to a country-house for the

weekend and chat about ideas. Antic Hay is much more successful because, even if the characters seem to have an inordinate amount of leisure, they wander aimlessly through the streets of modern London so that character and setting both reflect the mechanical emptiness of the twenties. The problems of the modern world discussed at Grome lose some of their immediacy because they emerge rather fortuitously from the love-intrigues and comfortable leisure of the country-house weekend. For instance, one of the numerous Machine-Age issues that is discussed at Grome is birth-control. Instead of incorporating this topic within the love-intrigues which are so much a part of the genre Huxley has chosen, it remains abstract and incidental: "With the gramophone, the cinema, and the automatic pistol, the goddess of Applied Science has presented the world with another gift, more precious even than these--the means of dissociating love from propagation" (pp. 49-50). Scogan, the mechanical rationalist, is there to sing the praises of this technological advance; he believes that an "impersonal generation will take the place of Nature's hideous system":

"In vast incubators, rows upon rows of gravid bottles will supply the world with the population it requires. The family system will disappear; society, sapped at its very base, will have to find new foundations; and Eros, beautifully and irresponsibly free, will flit like a gay butterfly from flower to flower through a smelt world." (p. 50)

Birth-control, we are told, is typical of the whole modern attitude towards sex which is now enjoyed with a "scientific ardour." The reaction against Victorian repression in sexual matters has led not towards a vital, animal openness but towards the laboratory. Havelock Ellis' work is cited as an example of this tendency:

"The reaction, when it came--and we may say roughly that it set in a little before the beginning of this century--the reaction

was to openness, but not the same openness as had reigned in the earlier ages. It was to a scientific openness, not to the jovial frankness of the past, that we returned. . . . Professors wrote thick books in which sex was sterilized and dissected."

(pp. 151-2)

The inevitable theme of the city and the country is presented in the same way. We are told what the problems are; we are not shown them. Country pleasures have been stamped out; the "country was desolate, without life of its own, without indigenous pleasures" (p. 183). The young have forsaken the old ways and have been sucked into the metropolis, where the mechanical pleasures of the Jazz Age have devoured them. This time it is William Morris' name which is thrown out for discussion. His organic mediaevalism is no longer viable:

"The house of an intelligent, civilized, and sophisticated man should never seem to have sprouted from the clods. It should rather be an expression of his grand unnatural remoteness from the cloddish life. Since the days of William Morris that's a fact which we in England have been unable to comprehend. Civilized and sophisticated men have solemnly played at being peasants. Hence quaintness, arts and crafts, cottage architecture, and all the rest of it. In the suburbs of our cities you may see, reduplicated in endless rows, studiously quaint imitations and adaptations of the village hovel. . . . We now employ our wealth, our technical knowledge, our rich variety of materials for the purpose of building millions of imitation hovels in totally unsuitable surroundings. Could imbecility go farther?" (pp. 101-2)

Crome itself, where all of the novel's action takes place, represents the world which is disappearing because of the Machine Age. Most of the characters come from outside, usually from the city, bringing various symptoms of the malaise with them. Barbeque-Smith, for instance, the successful journalist and false teacher, is more of a traditional satiric character than the others in the book, but he only appears very briefly. He represents Huxley's notion that success in the modern world demands

commitment to the ethic of the machine. Barbeque-Smith reduces human ability, creativity and spirituality to the physical laws of cause and effect. Huxley caricatures Machine-Age man in his appearance and theories. He has a very large head and no neck, but this is a source of pride to him because he believes that "all the world's great men have been marked by the same peculiarity, and for a simple and obvious reason": "Greatness is nothing more nor less than the harmonious functioning of the faculties of the head and heart; the shorter the neck, the more closely these two organs approach one another; argal . . . It was convincing" (p. 30).

Barbeque-Smith is one of the few characters in Grome Yellow who is presented in a purely satiric light. The imagery of machinery dominates his "mystical" theories. He is the author of a book entitled "Pipe-lines to the Infinite" in which he expounds the theory that the cosmos supplies the subconscious with inspiration in much the same way that a factory is supplied with raw materials. Denis asks him whether the Universe does not sometimes make mistakes over its supplies: "I don't allow it to," Mr. Barbeque-Smith replied. "I canalise it. I bring it down through pipes to work the turbines of my conscious mind" (p. 60). This mechanical mystic is snatched away from Grome in a motor car which transports him to the station; "a faint smell of burning oil commemorated his recent departure" (p. 99). Barbeque-Smith is not the embodiment of a satiric humour; he represents an absurd way of reducing human character, thought and action to concepts based upon the movement of machinery. His physical deformity is a correlative of his intellectual deformity. Huxley satirizes wrong-thinking rather than wrong-doing or wrong-believing. As Firchow points out, Huxley may have had real people in mind as models for his characters, but "Huxley is interested not so much in his characters as personal caricatures as he is

in their representing certain attitudes towards life and reality."¹¹ This is particularly evident, for instance, in his presentation of Scogan, the book's "diabolical prophet," who meticulously adumbrates for us the horrors of Brave New World.

Because, in Scogan, Huxley attacks the inadequacies of mere intellect, it is tempting to think of him as being diametrically opposed to Lewis in his concept of machinery. Lewis recommends intellect as the antidote to machinery, while Huxley condemns unquestioning dependence upon it as a Machine-Age symptom. But Huxley's emphasis is upon dry and abstract reason, while Lewis regards the intellect as a combination of vital, creative faculties and powers of scrutiny and differentiation. They clearly mean something quite distinct. Scogan's desire to "harness the insanities to the service of reason" has resulted in a "metallic rigidity." But Scogan is an enigmatic figure. We are meant to condemn his purely cerebral response to the world, and yet he shows an awareness of both social problems and his own limitations which often places him above ridicule. If Jenny's little book of caricatures is intended as a guide to the reader, we are meant to see him in a light that is "more than slightly sinister" and which is "diabolic" (p. 245). But his insight into his own "incompleteness" is commendable and places him above the other characters in the book as regards his self-awareness:

"Out of the ten octaves that make up the human instrument, I can compass only two. Thus, while I may have a certain amount of intelligence, I have no aesthetic sense; while I possess the mathematical faculty, I am wholly without the religious emotions; while I am naturally addicted to venery, I have little ambition and am not at all avaricious. Education has further limited my scope. Having been brought up in society, I am impregnated with its laws." (p. 259)

Huxley further dilutes our satiric response to Scogan by making him pathetic in a way that is not quite commensurate with satiric disapproval. His regretful sense of his own inadequacy elicits sympathy. He appears as the victim rather than as the originator of his metallic rigidity:

"In my youth I was always striving--how hard!--to feel religiously and aesthetically. Here, said I to myself, are two tremendously important and exciting emotions. Life would be richer, warmer, brighter, altogether more amusing, if I could feel them. I try to feel them." (p. 260)

Faced with art, Scogan is able to recount the factual history of a painting or the life of the painter, but he can feel "none of that strange excitement and exaltation which is . . . the true aesthetic emotion" (p. 261). He confesses to feelings of "great weariness" and of resignation: "I go on cultivating my old stale daily self in the resigned spirit with which a bank clerk performs from ten till six his daily task" (p. 261). This lament for the loss of his spirit and emotion clearly elicits a broader response than would "pure" satire. Scogan's plight as an individual deserves pity; the social implications of what he represents are sinister rather than ridiculous.

Scogan is an exponent of Cubism, which we are told is the artistic equivalent of the dry philosophical logic associated by Huxley with Bertrand Russell. Huxley presents Cubism in Crome Yellow as a manifestation of modern man's inability to face the vital chaos of the natural world. It is an escape into artificial and mechanical forms in the same way that Scogan's scientific rationalism is an escape from the chaos of "natural" reality. Scogan confesses his appreciation of modern art:

"I for one, without ever having had the slightest appreciation of painting, have always taken particular pleasure in Cubism."

I like to see pictures from which nature has been completely banished, pictures which are exclusively the product of the human mind. They give me the same pleasure as I derive from a good piece of reasoning or a mathematical problem or an achievement of engineering. Nature, or anything that reminds me of nature, disturbs me; it is too large, too complicated, above all too utterly pointless and incomprehensible."

(p. 239)

Like the architect of Brave New World, Scogan is another satiric example of "homo mechanicus" and it is significant that, like Lewis' Snooty, he is associated with gratuitous destruction. However, unlike Snooty, Scogan does not himself behave violently; he merely predicts the coming cataclysm:

Denis looked and listened while the witch [Scogan] prophesied financial losses, death by apoplexy, destruction by air-raids in the next war.

"Is there going to be another war?" asked the old lady to whom he had predicted this end.

"Very soon," said Mr. Scogan, with an air of quiet confidence. (p. 270)

Scogan is a "diabolic prophet" who presides over the book. The lighter comedy which makes up the country-house theme is only surface deep. Dark forebodings constantly invade the "mellow" world of Grome. Scogan's spiritual home, he tells us, is not Grome but a subterranean world of machines. He looks forward to the world that Forster described in "The Machine Stops"; in Grome Yellow, that world, even if it does not appear in the book, is no longer a complete fantasy:

"But travel by Tube and you see nothing but the works of man-- iron riveted into geometrical forms, straight lines of concrete, patterned expanses of tiles. All is human and the product of friendly and comprehensible minds. All philosophies and all religions--what are they but spiritual Tubes bored through the universe! Through these narrow tunnels, where all is recognizably human, one travels comfortable and secure, contriving to forget that all round and below them stretches the blind mass of earth, endless and unexplored. Yes, give me the Tube and Cubisus every time; give me ideas, so snug and neat and simple and well

made. And preserve me from nature, preserve me from all that is inhumanly large and complicated and obscure." (p. 241)

Man's "Faustian passion" began as a reaction against the dangerous forces of the natural universe, but it has produced mechanical dangers which are inimical to a truly human life. Towards the end of Grome Yellow, Henry Wimbush, the present owner of Grome, is seduced by Scogan's theories and optimistically looks forward to the coming of Brave New World. Sir Hercules, Wimbush's ancestor, tried to isolate himself from the philistine threat by retreating into a utopia of civilized values. The utopia to which Wimbush wishes to escape is, ironically, a utopia of machines:

"How gay and delightful life would be if one could get rid of all the human contacts! Perhaps, in the future, when machines have attained to a state of perfection--for I confess that I am, like Godwin and Shelley, a believer in perfectibility, the perfectibility of machinery--then, perhaps, it will be possible for those who, like myself, desire it, to live in a dignified seclusion, surrounded by the delicate attention of silent and graceful machines, and entirely secure from any human intrusion. It is a beautiful thought." (p. 288)

One of the major differences between the characters of traditional satire and Huxley's main characters is the extent to which the latter are aware of, and can articulate, their own problems. Huxley feels this is inevitable in a novel of ideas, but it necessarily dilutes the satire. He usually insists on juxtaposing an external with an internal view of character. A character such as Barbeque-Smith is purely satiric because we are not shown a suffering individual behind the ridiculous exterior. But Huxley presents most of his major characters as individuals as well as symptoms. In Antic Hay great stress is laid upon the balance between the two perspectives. The overall effect is meant to be a mixture of tragedy and farce, for "every man is ludicrous if you look at him from outside,

without taking into account what's going on in his heart and mind";

'You could turn Hamlet into an epigrammatic farce with an inimitable scene when he takes his adored mother in adultery. You could make the wittiest Guy de Maupassant short story out of the life of Christ, by contrasting the mad rabbi's pretensions with his abject fate. It's a question of the point of view. Everyone's a walking farce and a walking tragedy at the same time.' (Antic Hay, p. 214)

The same relativist position is shown to hold true in other contexts. In Crome Yellow, Henry Wimbush's splendid isolationism is shown to be impossible in the city where everyone, depending upon the perspective from which they are considered, is both an individual and a part of the "mass";

'Does it occur to you,' he went on, 'that at this moment we are walking through the midst of seven million distinct and separate individuals, each with distinct and separate lives and all completely indifferent to our existence? Seven million people, each one of whom thinks himself quite as important as each of us does. Millions of them are now sleeping in an empested atmosphere. Hundreds of thousands of couples are at this moment engaged in mutually caressing one another in a manner too hideous to be thought of, but in no way differing from the manner in which each of us performs, delightfully, passionately and beautifully, his similar work of love. Thousands of women are now in the throes of parturition, and of both sexes thousands are dying of the most diverse and appalling diseases, or simply because they have lived too long. Thousands are drunk, thousands have over-eaten, thousands have not had enough to eat. And they are all alive and separate and sensitive, like you and me. It's a horrible thought. Ah, if I could lead them all into that great hole of centipedes.' (pp. 56-7)

Antic Hay provides a comment upon Henry Wimbush's hopes for a future mechanical seclusion by showing that Machine-Age life is anathema for all except "the fools, the innumerable fools" who skate over the surface. In Antic Hay there is a change of setting from bucolic Crome to the mass civilization of modern London, but the endless discussions still have an unconvincing ring to them. The principal characters are too much the

analysts of the mass world to be completely a part of it. They are constantly standing back and looking on. For instance, Gumbriel informs an old man in a train that "this frightful increase in population is the world's most formidable danger at the present time" (p. 192). Gumbriel and the old gentleman are really the remnants of a culture by-passed by the war. One is an isolated relic, the other is a rootless and shiftless nonentity with an artificially imposed identity. They look out from a train window in a small suburban station at the tragic effects of urban sprawl:

'It's not the architecture I mind so much,' retorted the old gentleman, 'that's merely a question of art, and all nonsense so far as I'm concerned. What disgusts me is the people inside the architecture, the number of them, sir. And the way they breed. Like maggots, sir, like maggots. Millions of them, creeping about the face of the country, spreading blight and dirt wherever they go; ruining everything. It's the people I object to.' (p. 191)

Most of the problems are presented this way in discussions and soliloquies. There is no real reason, for instance, why Mr. Bojanus, Gumbriel's tailor, should be blessed with such insight into the stultifying effects of modern mechanized leisure:

'People don't know 'ow to entertain themselves now; they leave it to other people to do it for them. They swallow what's given them. They 'ave to swallow it, whether they like it or not. Cinemas, newspapers, magazines, gramophones, football matches, wireless, telephones--take them or leave them if you want to amuse yourself. The ordinary man can't leave them. He takes; and what's that but slavery?' (p. 35)

Modern architecture and modern art, deprived alike of human grandeur, are discussed in much the same way. Lypiatt, the book's modern artist, has energy and heroic ideals which are admirable, but his art falls pathetically short of his aspirations. His abstract paintings have "no life in them.

Plenty of noise there was, and gesticulation and a violent galvanized twitching; but no life":

It was one of Casimir's abstract paintings: a procession of machine-like forms rushing up diagonally from right to left across the canvas, with as it were a spray of energy blowing back from the crest of the wave towards the top right-hand corner. 'In this painting,' he said, 'I symbolize the artist's conquering spirit--rushing on the universe, making it its own.'

(p. 77)

Having succumbed to "abstraction," Lypiatt betrays the cause of his artistic and personal barrenness.

We can see Huxley, throughout Antic Hay, attempting to correlate character and ideas. Shearwater's personal tragedy, for instance, is the result of his mathematical rationalism. Like Scogan in Crome Yellow he wishes to account for the "human" in purely quantitative terms. He has reduced love to an algebraic equation:

' $x^2 - y^2$,' Shearwater was saying, '= $(x+y)(x-y)$. And the equation holds good whatever the values of x and y It's the same with your love business, Mrs. Viveash. The relation is still fundamentally the same, whatever the value of the unknown personal quantities concerned. Little individual tics and peculiarities--after all, what do they matter?' (pp. 64-5)

As a symptomatic Machine-Age mind, Shearwater is totally ridiculous. He can cope with life only by applying the laws of mechanical physics to it. His idea of getting to know someone, as his name suggests, is to place him on an ergometer in a heated chamber, make him work and collect his perspiration: "He'd sweat, of course, prodigiously. You'd make arrangements for collecting the sweat, weighing it, analysing it and so on. The interesting thing would be to see what happened at the end of a few days" (pp. 67-8). Involuntarily he succumbs to the charms of Mrs. Viveash, but his adherence

to mechanical formulas leaves him with no means of coping with such an emotional reaction. We see him finally as a prisoner in his own mechanical universe, desperately trying to live according to the laws he has set for himself. As such, he is organic to the meaning of the whole book. He deserves ridicule for his mechanical pedantry, but he is equally a tragic victim caught in a mechanical, nightmare world:

Shearwater sat on his stationary bicycle, pedalling unceasingly like a man in a nightmare. The pedals were geared to a little wheel under the saddle and the rim of the wheel rubbed, as it revolved, against a brake, carefully adjusted to make the work of the pedaller hard, but not impossibly hard.

.....
Inside that little wooden house, which might have reminded Lancing, if he had had a literary turn of mind, of the box in which Gulliver left Brobdingnag, the scenes of intimate life were the same every time he looked in. Shearwater was always at his post on the saddle of the nightmare bicycle, pedalling, pedalling. The water trickled over the brake. And Shearwater sweated. (p. 249)

The comparison with Swift is meant to remind us of Huxley's contention that the nightmare distortions of traditional satire are the modern reality. The Machine-Age symptoms in Antic Hay accrue into a general indictment of social and individual decline. At the centre of the book is a cultural vacuum which cannot be satisfactorily embodied within the forms of traditional satire, but which, in its macabre detail, constantly recalls satiric nightmare. The age is, as Gumbriel Senior tells us, a "concert of Brobdingnagian cats. Order has been turned into a disgusting chaos. We need no barbarians from outside; they're on the premises, all the time" (p. 133). The vacuum is repeatedly shown to be leading to inevitable, gratuitous destruction: "Several million people were killed in a recent war and half the world ruined; but we all busily go on in courses that make another event of the same sort inevitable" (p. 136).

Modern nihilism is portrayed in the character of Mrs. Viveash. Her life, which is a spiritual "death-bed on which her restless spirit for ever and wearily exerted itself" (p. 66), is the thematic centre of Antic Hay. She holds a siren-like fascination over those with whom she comes in contact. Her condition, as Lypiatt explains, is personally tragic but socially absurd: "'And you, Myra--what do you suppose the unsympathetic gossips say of you? What sort of farce of the Boulevards is your life in their eyes? For me, Myra, you seem to move all the time through some nameless and incomprehensible tragedy'" (p. 214). She has the insight to be able to tell Gumbriel that "'We're all in the vacuum'" (p. 226) and her answer to all questions is a universal nihilism:

'Nil, omnipresent nil, world-soul, spiritual informer of all matter. Nil in the shape of a black-breeched moon-basined Toreador. Nil, the man with the greyhound's nose. Nil, the faces, the faces one ought to know by sight, reflected in the mirrors of the hall. Nil this Gumbriel whose arm is round one's waist, whose feet step in and out among one's own. Nothing at all.' (p. 170)

In the desperate taxi ride which she takes with Gumbriel, Mrs. Viveash's personal tragedy is linked with the book's broad social statement. She likes "'driving for driving's sake'" because it is like the "'Last Ride Together'" (p. 241). As they drive aimlessly through London looking at the epileptic symbols of "'all that's most bestial and idiotic in contemporary life'" (p. 230), Gumbriel interprets the Machine-Age symptoms for her as forms of "'restlessness, distraction, refusal to think, anything for an unquiet life'" (p. 230). But she adores the glaring mechanical signs of modern London because "'They're me,' said Mrs. Viveash emphatically. 'Those things are me'" (p. 231).

Huxley's satire of social disintegration forms the back-cloth for his

treatment of individual fragmentation which is, for the most, concentrated in the character of Gumbriel Junior. Gumbriel's attempts to transform himself into Toto, the Rabelaisian or Complete Man, make Huxley's point about the new role of satire very well. The amusement we derive from Gumbriel's antics comes from our perception of the difference between what he is--an Incomplete Man--and his pretending to be what he is not--the Complete Man. Rather than the satirist distorting a character in order to reveal that character's inadequacies, we are presented with an inadequate character who takes great pains to distort himself into a full person. Unlike the traditional satiric caricature, Gumbriel Junior is very much aware of his inadequacies, and this awareness affects the reader's response to him. We cannot completely scorn a character who knows his own shortcomings, and we might even begin to sympathize with his farcical attempts to remedy them. Huxley makes a similar point to the one which Waugh makes in Decline and Fall in relation to Paul Pennyfeather. Antic Hay is about the impossibility of someone like Gumbriel Junior even having a personality. Like other modern satirists, Huxley's concern is not characters but character. His satiric fictions dramatize the disintegration of human personality and the concomitant destruction of a cohesive society.

• Although the action of Those Barren Leaves (1925), is, for the most part, removed from direct contact with the ideas and problems discussed, the same aimless vacuum that we find in Antic Hay lies at the centre of the book. As in Crome Yellow, there is a great deal of discussion about a future mechanical world towards which present conditions are clearly tending. The fears about mass civilization are as evident in Those Barren Leaves as they are in the two previous books, and, once again, they are often merely discussed rather than integrated into the book's structure. To escape the

present "one must look forward to at least the year 3000" for it is probable that "the millennial state of a thousand years hence will be millennial only because it has contrived to make slavery, for the first time, really scientific and efficient" (Those Barren Leaves, p. 93). Henry Wimbush's anticipation in Crome Yellow of a dignified, mechanical seclusion was shown to be illusory. The same point is made in Those Barren Leaves:

"The more material progress, the more wealth and leisure, the more standardized amusements--the more boredom. It's inevitable, it's the law of Nature. The people who have always suffered from spleen and who are still the principal victims, are the prosperous, leisured and educated. At present they form a relatively small minority; but in the Utopian state where everybody is well off, educated and leisured, everybody will be bored; unless for some obscure reason the same causes fail to produce the same effects. Only two or three hundred people out of every million could survive a lifetime in a really efficient Utopian state. The rest would simply die of spleen. In this way, it may be, natural selection will work towards the evolution of the super-man. Only the intelligent will be able to bear the almost intolerable burden of leisure and prosperity. The rest will simply wither away, or cut their throats--or, perhaps more probably, return in desperation to the delights of barbarism and cut one another's throats, not to mention the throats of the intelligent." (p. 317)

The satire in Those Barren Leaves is subservient to a continuing discussion which is carried on, principally, by a committee of three: Galamy, Cardan, and Chelifer. Huxley's main concern is to bring the problems which "the fools, the innumerable fools" cannot see, into the open where they can be examined. Satire is obviously useful as a critical, ironic tool in this process, but a direct satiric presentation of the modern malaise occurs only occasionally. As with Crome Yellow, there is often no necessary link between characters, plot, events and the ideas which are constantly being discussed. Huxley's technique is again to tell rather than to show. The general impression created by the other characters, particularly

Mrs. Aldwinkle, is that they are "sadly ludicrous." This is because their beliefs and aspirations are clearly pathetic in the light of the forces which lie just outside their secluded world. The values of the past are obsolete in the present. The characters are ridiculous because they are so manifestly ineffective. It seems that the most which can be hoped for is an awareness of the present human predicament and an intelligent sounding of possible individual solutions. All questions of right and wrong are now absurd:

'As long as you don't talk about moral laws and all that sort of thing there's no absurdity. For, it's obvious, there are no moral laws. There are social customs on the one hand, and there are individuals with their individual feelings and moral reactions on the other: What's immoral in one man may not matter in another.' (Those Barren Leaves, p. 70)

Criticism, which can no longer occupy itself with moral judgments, must turn to the "deepest of all realities--stupidity, the being unaware" (p. 150). It is Huxley's intention to explore for the reader the problems with which the modern individual is faced and the ways in which the present situation differs from the past. In a very artificial debate between the committee of three, we receive various attitudes towards the present:

'I don't see that it would be possible to live in a more exciting age,' said Calamy. 'The sense that everything's perfectly provisional and temporary--everything, from social institutions to what we've hitherto regarded as the most sacred scientific truths--the feeling that nothing, from the Treaty of Versailles to the rationally explicable universe, is really safe, the intimate conviction that anything may happen, anything may be discovered--another war, the artificial creation of life, the proof of continued existence after death--why, it's all infinitely exhilarating.'

'And the possibility that everything may be destroyed?' questioned Mr. Cardan.

'That's exhilarating too,' Calamy answered, smiling.

Mr. Cardan shook his head. 'It may be rather tame of me,' he said, 'but I confess, I prefer a more quiet life. I persist

that you made a mistake in so timing your entry into the world that the period of your youth coincided with the war and your early maturity with this horribly insecure and unprosperous peace. How incomparably better I managed my existence! I made my entry in the late fifties--almost a twin to The Origin of the Species. . . . I was brought up in the simple faith of nineteenth-century materialism; a faith untroubled by doubts and as yet unsophisticated by that disquieting scientific modernism which is now turning the staunchest mathematical physicists into mystics. We were all wonderfully optimistic then; believed in progress and the ultimate explicability of everything in terms of physics and chemistry, believed in Mr. Gladstone and our own moral and intellectual superiority over every other age.' (pp. 34-5)

The setting of the book keeps the triumvirate geographically separated from the conditions of the Machine Age which they so ardently discuss. Also, their awareness and insight into human problems mean that they are not ridiculous. Characters such as Mary Thriplow, or Mrs. Aldwinkle, who are more despicable, have little to do with modern problems. They are ineffectual and seem blithely unaware of the dangers which lurk just outside their narrow, egocentric worlds.

There are, however, two specific episodes in Those Barren Leaves when events do have a direct bearing upon the discussion. Recalling the work of Sinclair Lewis, Huxley places Chelifer at the centre of a new social reality. His office in Grog's Court is situated "at the very heart of it, the palpitating heart" (p. 97). He believes that "'In a few generations it may be that the whole planet will be covered by one vast American-speaking tribe, composed of innumerable individuals, all thinking and acting in exactly the same way, like the characters in a novel by Sinclair Lewis'" (p. 372). Chelifer makes himself face the world of "Babbitts" which, he feels, is the basic social reality of the modern world. He turns down an academic career to become the editor of the "Rabbit Fanciers' Gazette." His confrontation with Mr. Boak is one of the more direct satiric sequences

of the novel:

'And then, Mr. Chelifer,' he said, 'we don't very much like, my fellow directors and I, we don't much like what you say in your article on "Rabbit Fancying and its Lesson to Humanity." It may be true that breeders have succeeded in producing domesticated rabbits that are four times the weight of wild rabbits and possess only half the quantity of brains--it may be true. Indeed, it is true. And a very remarkable achievement it is, Mr. Chelifer, very remarkable indeed. But that is no reason for upholding, as you do, Mr. Chelifer, that the ideal working man, at whose production the eugenicist should aim, is a man eight times as strong as the present-day workman, with only a sixteenth of his mental capacity. Not that my fellow directors and I entirely disagree with what you say, Mr. Chelifer; far from it. All right-thinking men must agree that the modern workman is too well educated. But we have to remember, Mr. Chelifer, that many of our readers actually belong to that class.' (p. 105)

Chelifer has sought out the "heart of reality" and, although he is fully aware of the "complete imbecility" of what he is doing, has neither the resolve nor the means to escape it: "My whole time is passed on the switch-back; all my life is one unceasing slide through nothing" (p. 108).

Chelifer's aimless slide through nothingness is linked thematically with Lord Hovenden's motor car journey. The ineffective Hovenden resolves his personal difficulties by allying himself with the machine:

Lord Hovenden detached from his motor car was an entirely different being from the Lord Hovenden who lounged with such a deceptive air of languor behind the steering-wheel of a Vauxhall Velox. Half an hour spent in the roaring wind of his own speed transformed him from a shy and diffident boy into a cool-headed hero, daring not merely in the affairs of the road, but in the affairs of life as well. The fierce wind blew away his diffidence; the speed intoxicated him out of his self-consciousness. All his victories had been won while he was in the car. (p. 272)

In the same way that Forster associates the Wilcox men in Howard's End with the motor car, Huxley associates Hovenden's loss of sensitivity with his success with machinery. The motor car has taken over his sexual drives.

As a hesitating and confused individual, he fails to impress Irene. After a fast drive in his motor car, her attitude towards him completely alters.

But the motor journey in Those Barren Leaves has much wider thematic implications. Mechanical progress underlies the confusing array of perspectives which so perplexes the characters and which is at the centre of Huxley's theory of satire. As the book repeatedly points out, nothing can be counted upon in the modern world. Everything is bewilderingly fragmented. This is symbolized by the motor journey:

Time and space, matter and mind, subject, object--how inextricably they got mixed up, next day, on the road to Rome! The simple-minded traveller who imagines himself to be driving quietly through Umbria and Latium finds himself at the same time dizzily switchbacking up and down the periods of history, rolling in top gear through systems of political economy, scaling heights of philosophy and religion, whizzing from aesthetic to aesthetic. Dimensions are bewilderingly multiplied, and the machine which seems to be rolling so smoothly over the roads is travelling, in reality, as fast as forty horses and the human minds on board can take it, down a score of other roads, simultaneously, in all directions. (p. 286)

The journey shows the characters caught on a switchback which carries them on a ceaseless slide through the nothingness.

Before Brave New World, Huxley's vision of the "horribly insecure and unprosperous peace" receives its most extended treatment in Point Counter Point (1928). In Crome Yellow, Antic Hay and Those Barren Leaves the dividing line between fiction and mere exposition is frequently very thin, and Huxley is far less successful than Lewis at finding appropriate fictions to convey his ideas and to educate the reader to the implications of the modern nightmare. None of the incongruous and unsatisfactory elements of the first three books is removed in Point Counter Point, which continues to juxtapose illustrative situations and abstract commentary. It differs from the previous

books in the comprehensiveness of the expository material which it provides and in the degree of emphasis it places upon the counter-point technique. Each of the several situations and social problems is better integrated and its links and parallels better exposed, but this mainly takes place at a theoretical, discursive level. But this increase in thematic clarity is at the expense of fictional qualities; satire is almost entirely replaced by critical anger.

Point Counter Point continues Huxley's warnings against mass civilization and presents several examples of the kind of "quantitative" man represented by characters such as Scogan and Shearwater in the earlier books. We are told a great deal about those "great machines that having been man's slaves are now his masters."¹² Mr. Quarles, for instance, takes an inordinate delight in machinery: "'Here,' said Mr. Quarles and raised the cover. The dictaphone was revealed. 'Wonderful invention!' He spoke with profound self-satisfaction. It was the sudden rising, in all its effulgence, of his moon. He explained the workings of the machine'" (p. 356). Mr. Quarles is foolish enough to believe that mechanical paraphernalia such as "filing cabinets and typewriters, portable, polyglottic, calculating" (p. 357) are all that is necessary for creativity. Machinery controls his instincts to such an extent that it forms the basis of his sexual pleasure. He surveys the object of his desires:

His eyes followed the curves of the lustrous sunburn. But what fascinated him most to-day was the black leather belt flicking up and down over the left haunch, with the regularity of a piece of machinery, every time she moved her leg. In that rise and fall the whole unindividualized species, the entire sex semaphored their appeal. (p. 369)

Lord Edward, also, is a quantitative man who has devoted his life to a theoretical treatise on physical biology in which he intends to set forth,

in La Mettrie fashion, a "quantitative and mathematical illustration" of the animal life of the universe. He sees "mechanism" in everything and is uncomfortable with all people except those such as Lord Gottenden, who is searching for the "most extraordinary mathematical proof of the existence of God" (p. 187).

Through these examples of "homo mechanicus" Huxley fictionalizes the twenties debate in which the hitherto unquestioned laws of Newtonian physics were being held up for scrutiny. Relativity and quantum theories had destroyed the caste-iron laws of Newtonian mechanism, and yet the world proceeded to organize itself according to the old shibboleths. The major culprits behind the modern malaise are, for Huxley at this time, a rather anomalous trio made up of Jesus, Newton and Henry Ford: "'It's Jesus's and Newton's and Henry Ford's disease. Between them, the three have pretty well killed us. Ripped the life out of our bodies and stuffed us with hatred'" (Point Counter Point, pp. 161-2).

In the character of Illidge we are provided with an illustration of defunct but dangerous modes of mechanical thought. Illidge is a communist:

'You can't be a true communist without being a mechanist. You've got to believe that the only fundamental realities are space, time and mass, and that all the rest is nonsense, mere illusion and mostly bourgeois illusion at that. Poor Illidge! He's sadly worried by Einstein and Eddington. And how he hates Henri Poincaré! How furious he gets with old Mach! They're undermining his simple faith. They're telling him that the laws of nature are useful conventions of strictly human manufacture and that space and time and mass themselves, the whole universe of Newton and his successors, are simply our own invention.' (p. 213)

Philip Quarles speculated on the unprecedented advance of quantitative man and becomes aware of the Machine Age taking over his inner life. Of the various forms of modern imbalance illustrated in Point Counter Point, Philip Quarles suffers from the excess of intellect (at the expense of emotion)

that Huxley consistently represents as a major Machine-Age symptom:

By this suppression of emotional relationships and natural piety he [man] seems to himself to be achieving freedom--freedom from sentimentality, from the irrational, from passion, from impulse and emotionalism. But in reality, as he gradually discovers, he has only narrowed and desiccated his life; and what's more, has cramped his intellect by the very process he thought would emancipate it. (p. 474)

"Imbalance" and "fragmentation" are presented in varying degrees of satire and tragedy. Lord Edward and Mr. Quarles, for instance, are totally ridiculous figures but, for the most, the other characters are shown to be tragically crippled or caught in a dark web of absurdities. The book differs from the previous three in its presentation of alternatives to Machine-Age life. But these in no way improve its fictional deficiencies.

In Point Counter Point Rampion is the answer to fragmentation and desiccation. His diagnosis of present ills adumbrates Huxley's imaginative presentation of the same problems in Brave New World. The conversation between Philip Quarles and Rampion in which the latter is made the critic of a notion of progress reminiscent of the visions of H. G. Wells is typical of the book's preference for bald censure over satire:

'They all believe in industrialism in one form or another, they all believe in Americanization. Think of the Bolshevik ideal. America but much more so. America with government departments taking the place of trusts and state officials instead of rich men. And then the ideal of the rest of Europe. The same thing, only with rich men preserved. Machinery and government officials there. Machinery and Alfred Mond or Henry Ford here. The machinery to take us to hell; the rich or the officials to drive it. You think one set may drive more cautiously than the other? Perhaps you're right. But I can't see that there's anything to choose between them. They're all equally in a hurry. In the name of science, progress and human happiness! Amen and step on the gas.'

.....
'Can't the imbeciles see that it's the direction that matters, that we're entirely on the wrong road and ought to go back--preferably on foot, without the stinking machine?' (pp. 415-6)

As an alternative to "homo mechanicus" Rampion recommends a "real complete human being. Not a newspaper reader, not a jazzer, not a radio fan" (p. 418). But the future seems irretrievably committed to machinery and must face the destructive consequences: "'Machinery's the only thing for them. They're infected with love of death. It's as though the young were absolutely determined to bring the world to an end--mechanize it first into madness, then into sheer murder'" (p. 437).

It is questionable whether in these books Huxley can be said--in the normal sense of the word--to be writing satire at all. Both Huxley and Lewis claim to be presenting a new kind of truth about the world rather than a fictional distortion. They are presenting, for the reader's edification, a world that is itself distorted. But Huxley, far more than Lewis, tends to use satire as an analogue for the bizarre and frightening present, rather than presenting the new reality in a satirically critical way. This is evident in the frequency with which--both in the novels and in talking about social problems generally--Huxley cites traditional satiric situations as comparisons for present problems. His characters are like Gulliver in the paws of the Queen of Brobdingnag's monkey; the years following the war resemble the world of Candide. His satiric allusions and the few real satiric situations in the early books are only part of a far more general indictment of western culture based, ultimately, upon a vision of tragic absurdity. In the same way the The Waste Land contains satiric sequences but is far too broad in its sweep to be considered pure satire, so Huxley's early books are fictional expositions of an ubiquitous cultural malaise and frequently use satiric elements to make their point.¹³ They are satiric in the sense that they present a dark and terrifying irony about the modern world, not because they consistently use the fictional modes that we

associate with satire.

After Point Counter Point, Huxley makes a direct attack upon the Machine Age in Brave New World (1932), in which we are shown a civilization which, "the Controller" tells us, has "chosen machinery and medicine and happiness."¹⁴ The genetic and emotional "engineering" which have made the happiness possible have also made "individuality"--the centre-pin of "true humanity"--impossible. All of this is explained to us at some length in the final chapters of the book which are taken up with a debate between Mustapha Mond and the Savage. The book concludes with the Savage trying to get back to painful basics in an isolated lighthouse. His aids to "true individuality" are "four viscose-woollen blankets, rope and string, nails, glue, a few tools, matches (though he intended in due course to make a fire drill), some pots and pans, two dozen packets of seeds, and ten kilogrammes of wheat flour," and he has made up his mind to avoid all "loathsome civilized stuff."¹⁵ But mechanical "civilization" will not leave him alone and the Savage has to commit suicide in order to escape the "pea-nuts" and "packets of sex-hormone chewing gum" which are thrown at him by "civilized" non-individuals. The message is that even primitive "vitalism" is no match for the Machine Age.

Some critics have thought Brave New World a "bitterly destructive satire,"¹⁶ but the reader is subjected to more straight discussion than vituperative ridicule. The overall effect is what John Wain has described as a "'prophetic' framework," interspersed with "wit (the jokes about Ford, etc.)."¹⁷ As Lawrence Brander has pointed out in discussing Brave New World and Orwell's 1984:

Both books are dismal developments of one of the Utopian traditions in English writing. The other tradition is the optimistic idealism in More's Utopia (1516), right through to Morris's News From Nowhere (1890), and Wells's Modern Utopia (1905). The

satirical tradition develops from Swift's Gulliver's Travels (1726) to Butler's Erewhon (1872), and the same vigorous, satirical inventiveness is seen in Brave New World and 1984. Each strain is critical and corrective.¹⁸

However we classify Brave New World, whether as "dystopia," "satiric parable," or "satire" proper, the book presents us with a deeply pessimistic view of the chances for survival of "individuality" and "true humanity" in the Machine Age. It is this deep pessimism which distinguishes Brave New World from its literary precursors: "It is our modern preoccupation with social and political insanity which colours our modern Utopias, and makes Brave New World and 1984 so different even from the satirical Utopias which went before."¹⁹ The generic qualities of the "satirical Utopia" lend themselves easily to the modern satirist's purpose of explaining and warning that human personality itself is about to disintegrate or disappear. For Brave New World is a parable which deals with the fate of the "individual" within the modern, mass community, and the book seems to suggest that extinction is inevitable.

The fate of the Savage in Brave New World represents Huxley's conclusions concerning the "primitive vitalism" that is mooted in Point Counter Point as an alternative to machinery and a means to becoming the "full man." As Peter Firchow has pointed out, in the figure of Rampion Huxley brought "Lawrence's ideas across the gulf without bringing along Lawrence's vitality and personality,"²⁰ but Lawrence's influence in the development of Huxley's response to the Machine Age prompts an inevitable comparison with Wyndham Lewis' attitude to Lawrence. As I pointed out in my chapters on Lewis, Lawrence was, for Lewis, a prominent Machine-Age symptom. In fact, it is in what D. H. Lawrence represents for the two principal satirists in my discussion that we can distinguish clearly between them. Their views on

what is the opposite of "mere machinery" involve totally different reactions to D. H. Lawrence. For this reason I intend to conclude my genealogy of Machine-Age satirists with a brief chapter on D. H. Lawrence.

Notes

- 1 Aldous Huxley, "Swift," Do What You Will: Essays (London: Chatto and Windus, 1929), p. 99. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.
- 2 Peter Firchow, Aldous Huxley: Satirist and Novelist (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), p. 74.
- 3 Jerome Meckier, Aldous Huxley: Satire and Structure (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969), p. 4.
- 4 Meckier, p. 16.
- 5 Meckier, p. 24.
- 6 Aldous Huxley, "On Re-Reading Candide," On the Margin: Notes and Essays (London: Chatto and Windus, 1923), pp. 13-14. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.
- 7 Aldous Huxley, "Tragedy and the Whole Truth," Music at Night and Other Essays (1931; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1970), pp. 12-13. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.
- 8 Aldous Huxley, Antic Hay (1923; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1971), p. 173. All further references to this book appear in the text.
- 9 Aldous Huxley, Those Barren Leaves (1925; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1940), p. 54. All further references to this book appear in the text.
- 10 Aldous Huxley, Grome Yellow (1922; rpt. New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1957), p. 231. All further references to this book appear in the text.

- 11 Firchow, p. 59.
- 12 Aldous Huxley, Point Counter Point (1928; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1947), p. 295. All further references to this book appear in the text.

13 The pervasive influence of The Waste Land on the literature of the twenties and thirties has been well documented. But the poem has a special significance for the satire of the period. This is emphasized by Jerome Meckier in his book on Aldous Huxley:

The influence of T. S. Eliot's poetry on satiric novels of the 1920's and 30's has never been sufficiently stressed. In Waugh's A Handful of Dust (1934), the title of which comes from The Waste Land, F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (1925), and in Antic Hay (1923), past and present are ludicrously contrasted and characters are dwarfed by roles their ancestors played with ease. (Meckier, pp. 67-8)

- 14 Aldous Huxley, Brave New World (1932; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1967), p. 192.
- 15 Brave New World, p. 202.
- 16 Firchow, p. 133.
- 17 John Wain, "Tracts Against Materialism: After Many a Summer and Brave New World," in Aldous Huxley: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Robert E. Kuehn (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 28.
- 18 Laurence Brander, Aldous Huxley: A Critical Study (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1969), p. 62.
- 19 Brander, p. 63.
- 20 Firchow, p. 114.

Chapter VII

The Satire of D. H. Lawrence

Both Lewis and Huxley are generally acknowledged to be satirists. They consciously adapt literary modes to convey their opposition to what they see as undesirable cultural trends. As I have tried to emphasize in my chapters on these two authors, Lewis is the more original and provocative critic of the Machine Age. I have treated their work at some length in order to show that the concerns which, as I noted in Chapter II, seem generally to have occupied satirists in the inter-war years are explored in some depth by Lewis and Huxley in their criticism of "the times," and receive detailed elaboration in their satiric fictions. The vigour and scale of their satiric response to those Machine-Age anxieties which I outlined in Chapter I demand that they be singled out and examined at some length in my discussion. On the other hand, the satiric response of D. H. Lawrence to "the times"--much less single-minded than either Lewis or Huxley, and more peripheral for my discussion--demands special, though much more limited, attention for other reasons.

To begin with, Lawrence is an important literary Luddite whose opposition to Machine-Age culture is even better known generally than that of either Lewis or Huxley. Hence, in a discussion concerned with literary responses to Machine-Age anxieties, his views require some acknowledgement. Secondly, Lawrence, because of his literary eminence at a time when Lewis and Huxley were producing their attacks upon the Machine Age, is a figure whom neither of my principal satirists could ignore. He arouses strong, though very different, feelings in both of them. I have mentioned how, for

Lewis, Lawrence was a prominent symptom of mechanical culture and his values the very antithesis of Lewisian "intellect." In the case of Huxley, Jerome Meckier has gone so far as to say that Lawrence was the "biggest challenge Huxley ever faced" and "was perhaps the central event in Huxley's life and art."¹ Hence, a brief discussion of Lawrence's own satiric reaction to the Machine Age is needed to clarify the relative positions of Lewis and Huxley.

It is not my intention to make a contribution to the vast amount of critical literature dealing with Lawrence. Nor am I attempting even to summarize Lawrence's culture criticism at the end of the twenties. My concern is simply with a satiric tendency of the period which I believe can be detected in some of Lawrence's verse and which is relevant to the general pattern I am trying to trace. Lawrence's general condemnation of the Machine Age only occasionally becomes satiric. At first sight, the rather personal kind of satire which he wrote seems to have little in common with the work of Lewis and Huxley. But besides providing a useful contrast in satiric styles, many of Lawrence's short satiric pieces exhibit similar tendencies to the ones found in the more sustained efforts of other Machine-Age satirists.

In his "Notes on the Comic," in The Dyer's Hand (1948), Auden asserts that a pre-requisite of satiric humour is that "there is not only a moral human norm, but also a normal way of transgressing it."² The procedures of "pure" satire express the confidence that the reader will agree with the satirist concerning the limits of the normal. As I have tried to show, both Lewis and Huxley reject this position as being untenable in the modern world. Their satire is concerned with the analysis of a distorted normalcy, not with the confident condemnation of aberrations. They both believe that, for the time being, a "moral human norm" is impossible and the satirist must

content himself with critical scrutiny and exposition. This basic position affects the generic qualities of their work. At its purest, in The Apes of God, Lewis' satire abrogates his own theories and concerns itself with coteries and actual people, even though, theoretically, he denies the value of such an approach. In the light of the pervasive dangers which threaten modern man, the ridicule of individuals and groups is pedantic. This means that a satire written in a traditional vein, such as Roy Campbell's Georgiad (1932), should be seen from the point of view of Lewis' satiric theory as myopic and falsely confident in its personal vituperation and categorical judgments.³

In order to express better the realities of the Machine Age, both Lewis and Huxley seek to produce a hybrid compounded (in varying degrees) of satire and elements taken from other genres. This is particularly evident, for instance, in Huxley's Antic Hay, which evokes the "unreal city" of tragic nightmare, or in Lewis' image of Satters and Pulley wandering through the desiccated landscape of the Time-flats in The Childermass. The condition of modern man is seen as being too serious to be a matter for mere ridicule. Pure satire is only possible at a local level. Auden goes so far as to deny the possibility of putting satire to the broad use to which we see it being put in the work of Lewis and Huxley:

Satire flourishes in a homogeneous society where satirist and audience share the same views as to how normal people can be expected to behave, and in times of relative stability and contentment, for satire cannot deal with serious evil and suffering. In an age like our own, it cannot flourish except in intimate circles as an expression of private feuds; in public life the evils and suffering are so serious that satire seems trivial and the only possible kind of attack is prophetic denunciation.

("Notes on the Comic," The Dyer's Hand, p. 385)

When Lawrence becomes satirical he, for the most, avoids the "intimate

circles" and "private feuds" that Auden feels are the domain of pure satire. Also, like Lewis and Huxley, he is without an audience of "right thinking" people and is concerned with the condemnation of modern normalcy. Hence he is often, as Auden says, concerned with "prophetic denunciation."

Lawrence's intense period of concern over machinery coincides with that of Lewis and Huxley. However, Lawrence's assessment of the mechanical malaise exposes the rather pale literalness of Huxley's early analysis and seriously qualifies Lewis' commitment to the "intellect" as a way out of the impasse. The warning that the mesh of the machine must be broken is, of course, everywhere apparent in Lawrence's work. The opening lines of Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928), for instance, inform us that "Ours is essentially a tragic age"⁴ and that we occupy the ruins left after the great social cataclysm of the war. The book is a response to the same vacuum that lies at the centre of Huxley's satires, particularly evident in Antic Hay. The "false inhuman war" has swept away all meaning from the world and "mechanical anarchy" has rushed in to fill the void. Connie finds herself, at first, on the same "empty treadmill" that traps Myra Viveash: "Nothingness! To accept the great nothingness of life seemed to be the one end of living. All the many busy and important little things that make up the grand sum-total of nothingness" (Lady Chatterley, p. 100). The "insistent mechanical noise" that lies in wait just outside the walls of Crome has invaded Wragby completely. The rattling engines of Stacks Gate Colliery bray ominously throughout the book.

The fault lay there, out there, in those evil electric lights and diabolical rattlings of engines. There, in the world of the mechanical greedy, greedy mechanism and mechanized greed, sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic, there lay the vast evil thing, ready to destroy the wood, and the bluebells would spring no more. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running of iron. (p. 167)

Clifford Chatterley is literally half-man and half-machine. Connie watches the wheels of his motorized invalid's chair as they "jolt over the wood-ruff and the bugle, and squash the little yellow cups of the creeping jenny" (p. 236). Like Lewis and Huxley, Lawrence prophetically links the coming of "homo mechanicus" with a future of inevitable, meaningless destruction. Mellors writes to Connie that "nothing lies in the future but death and destruction, for these industrial masses" (p. 362). He explains how "every generation breeds a more rabbit generation, with indiarubber tubing for guts and tin legs and tin faces. Tin People! It's all a steady sort of Bolshevism just killing off the human thing, and worshipping the mechanical thing" (p. 272). Like Huxley, Lawrence assumes a pre-lapsarian, organic state of "being which the Machine Age has superseded."

It is important to clarify Lawrence's attitude towards mechanism because he appears on several occasions in Lewis' work as a prominent Machine-Age symptom. In Snooty Baronet, the "gospel of Mithras according to St. Lawrence"⁵ is satirized. The mechanical Snooty associates his views with those of Lawrence: "D. H. Lawrence and Yours Truly however are on the same side of the argument--both of us are Nature cranks."⁶ An extended assault on Lawrence appears in Paleface where Lewis discusses what he believes to be the Lawrentian "insistence upon mindlessness as an essential quality of what is admirable."⁷ For Lewis, Lawrence is a paradigm of the "Bergson-Spengler School" of philosophy:

For in his work we see the impulses of the evolutionist, organic philosophy reaching the glorification of the 'consciousness in the abdomen'--a sort of visceral, abdominal, mind, involved with the gonadal affective apparatus, and establishing in these 'centric parts' a new revolutionary capital, the rival and enemy of the head, with its hated intellect, the aristocratic prerogative of the human being, that is such an offense to communism.

(Paleface, p. 178)

Although Lawrence sees himself as a critic of the "Bolshevism" that is killing the "human thing," Lewis believes that Lawrence is "the natural communist" (Paleface, p. 180) who recommends an attitude to life of which "Bolshevism is the religion" (Paleface, p. 182). Lewis takes up an attitude towards the Machine Age which he feels is fundamentally opposed to Lawrentian "mindlessness."

However, for Lawrence as for Lewis, the machine provides a point of reference for "all that is wrong with the modern world. Lawrence feels that society will perish unless the "organic" is allowed to reassert itself against the "mechanical":

Obviously a system which is established for the purposes of pure material production, as ours is today, is in its very nature a mechanism, a social machine. In this system we live and die. But even such a system as the great popes tried to establish was palpably not a machine, but an organization, a social organism. There is nothing at all to be gained from disunion, disintegration, and amorphousness. From mechanical systemization there is vast material productivity to be gained. But from an organic system of human life we shall produce the real blossoms of life and being.

There must be a system; there must be classes of men; there must be differentiation; either that or amorphous nothingness. The true choice is not between system and no-system. The choice is between system and system, mechanical and organic.⁸

There is nothing in the general import or in the terminology of this passage that differs from Lewis' recommendations. The difference lies in the meanings elsewhere ascribed to fundamental terms such as "machine," "organism," and "differentiation."

Lawrence sees modern social organization as the outward form of an inherent human trait. He is Spenglerian, as Lewis points out, because he recognizes the "Faustian passion" within the human psyche itself gaining a fateful victory over other parts of human nature. The battle between the mechanical and the spontaneous goes on inside men as well as in society at

large:

What is wrong, then? The system. But when you've said that you've said nothing. The system, after all, is only the outcome of the human psyche, the human desires. We shout and blame the machine, but who on earth makes the machine, if we don't? And any alterations in the system are only modifications in the machine. The system is in us, it is not something external to us. The machine is in us, or it would never come out of us. Well, then, there's nothing to blame but ourselves, and there's nothing to change except inside ourselves.

("Education of the People," Phoenix, p. 591)

Unlike Lewis, Lawrence does not conceive of an absolute division of human kind into "machines" and "natures." The modern malaise is the result of an imbalance of different psychic states which lies within each person.

Mechanism, for Lawrence, is not an ineradicable state of existence for the majority of persons; Lawrence has his own version of what Arnold saw as being two sides of human nature:

Man's nature is balanced between spontaneous creativity and mechanical-material activity. Spontaneous being is subject to no law. But mechanical-material existence is subject to all the laws of the mechanical-physical world. Man has almost half his nature in the material world. His spontaneous nature just takes precedence.

("Democracy," Phoenix, p. 714)

The "Fall" from spontaneous being which is the tragic flaw in modern man is the result of his succumbing to the "two great temptations" which have beset all men: "Desires tend to autonomize into fixed aspirations or ideals";

Falling into the first temptation, the whole human will pivots on some function, some material activity, which then works the whole being; like an idée fixe in the mental consciousness. . . . The second great temptation is the inclination to set up some fixed centre in the mind, and make the whole soul turn upon this centre. This we call idealism.

("Democracy," Phoenix, p. 714)

Both functionalism and idealism are nothing more than "mechanism of the self." In allowing the disintegration of the "living integrity of their being" modern men have become "automatic units, determined entirely by mechanical law." This is true of men of all political persuasions: "This is horribly true of modern democracy--socialism, conservatism, bolshevism, liberalism, republicanism, communism; all alike. The one principle that governs all the isms is the same: the principle of the idealized unit, the possessor of property" ("Democracy," Phoenix, p. 717). Both a capitalist system and a communist system impose mechanization upon man because both are based upon industrialism.

The fundamental difference between Lewis and Lawrence is that the latter places the highest attainment of the "human" in "living understanding--not intellectual understanding. Intellectual understanding belongs to the technical activities" ("Education of the People," Phoenix, p. 607). Lewis' assertion that Lawrence recommends "mindlessness" as an alternative to machinery is not accurate. Lawrence objects to a modern imbalance in human consciousness which he seeks to correct: "We don't find fault with the mental consciousness, the daylight consciousness of mankind. Not at all. We only find fault with the One-and-Allness which is attributed to it" ("Education of the People," Phoenix, p. 636). From Lawrence's point of view--he feels that "each thing, living or unliving, streams in its own, intertwining flux" ("Art and Morality," Phoenix, p. 525)--Lewis' insistence upon a static world of soulless things is the very essence of machinery. Lawrence denies that natural strength and creativity can be found in the intellectual function. The rule of the intellect is anathema to him because the intellect can only produce false, mechanical abstractions. Lawrence sees a deep divide between two ways of approaching life:

You can have life two ways. Either everything is created from the mind, downwards; or else everything proceeds from the creative quick, outwards into exfoliation and blossom. . . . The actual living quick itself is alone the creative reality. Once you abstract from this, once you generalize and postulate Universals, you have departed from the creative reality, and entered the realm of static fixity, mechanism, materialism.

("Democracy," Phoenix, p. 712)

Despite their differences concerning the value of intellect, their different modes of perception, and their disagreement over what constitutes basic reality, both Lawrence and Lewis predict the destruction of "the human" in the mass society of the Machine Age. In "Education of the People" from Phoenix, Lawrence reveals himself to be as fearful of the encroaching "mass" culture as are both Huxley and Lewis: "We want quality of life, not quantity. We don't want swarms and swarms of people in back streets. We want distinct individuals, and these are incompatible with swarms and masses. A small, choice population, not a horde of hopeless units" (p. 607). Also, for similar reasons, Lawrence is unsympathetic to industrial democracy as a means of political organization. Democracy as it exists in the twentieth century is a system of government based upon quantitative, mechanical values. In a human, "organic" world the "one is more than many" (p. 637). Vast and incoherent masses can only find expression and meaning through the "great individuals of their race and time" (p. 609). But democracy obscures or ostracizes individuals, thus, in the end, denying a social meaning to the life of the masses. Lawrence describes his social hierarchy in a language rich in rhythm and imagery. His style separates him immediately from the pale social theorizing of Huxley and the "willed superimposition" of Lewis' prose:

There is a first of men; and there is the vast basic Demos; always, at every age in every continent. The people is an organic whole, rising from the roots, through trunk and branch

and leaf, to the perfect blossom. This is the tree of human life. The supreme blossom utters the whole tree, supremely. Roots, stem, branch; these have their own being. But their perfect climax is in the blossom which is beyond them, and yet which is organically one with them.

("Education of the People," Phoenix, p. 610)

Lewis opposes mechanical democracy because it frustrates a natural aristocratic division between "machines" and "natures." For Lawrence, democracy perverts a natural inter-dependent gradation of human life.

Lawrence emphasizes, as much as Lewis and Huxley, the diseased "normality" of the Machine Age. In order for men to rid themselves of the machine, they must "utterly break the present picture of a normal humanity."⁹ The "normals" are neurotic and are quite unable to live a life of their own. They have been presented with a "picture" of how they ought to behave. This "picture" demands a prostitution of self to the processes of the machine: "The 'normal' activity is to push your own interests . . . to get on, to get ahead, at whatever cost."¹⁰ But the "normals" cannot help revealing the utterly depraved nature of their mechanical conformity:

And then the normals betray their utter abnormality in a crisis like the late war. There, there indeed the uneasy individual can look into the abysmal insanity of the normal masses. The same holds good of the Bolshevik hysteria of today, incipient social insanity. And the last great insanity of all, which is going to tear our civilization to pieces, the insanity of class hatred, is almost entirely a "normal" thing, and a "social" thing. It is a state of fear, of ghastly collective fear. And it is absolutely a mark of the normal.¹¹

In a quantitative world the "human" has ceased to be a measure of social or individual health; normality is defined in terms of the greatest number of people who happen to behave in a particular way. The machine prevents any disinterested appreciation of this situation because it has completely taken over man's instincts and aspirations. Lawrence is as

elitist as both Lewis and Huxley in his belief that real "human" conduct is beyond the capabilities of all but a few isolated individuals: "A few are my fellow-men / a few, only a few."¹² Significantly, he finds a satiric parallel for this state of affairs. Like Huxley, he sees that the normal world has become the kind of nightmare that, in the past, was only found in satiric fiction:

For the uninstrutable outnumber the instructible by a large majority. Behold us then in the grimy fist of Jimmy Shepherd, the uninstrutable Brobdingnag. Fools we are, we've put ourselves there; so if he pulls all our heads off, serves us right. He is Brobdingnagian because he is legion. Whilst we poor instructible mortals are Lilliputian in comparison. And the one power we had, the power of commanding reverence or respect in the Brobdingnags, a power God-given to us, we ourselves have squandered and degraded. On our heads be it. ("Education of the People," Phoenix, pp. 596-7)

Although Lawrence is far more willing than either Lewis or Huxley to say what "ought" to be done, his "moral human norm" is merely a possibility for the future. Lewis wishes, through constant scrutiny, to keep the "human idea" alive during what is, he hopes, only a period of mechanical transition. Lawrence's "morality" is basically a similar kind of social appeal to work towards a new kind of personal and social organization:

We have got to discover a new mode of human relationship--for man is the world to man. We have blundered blind into a new world, and we don't know how to get on. It behoves us to find out.

We have got to discover a new mode of human relationship. Which means incidentally, that we have got to get a new conception of man and of ourselves. And we have then to establish a new morality. ("Education of the People," Phoenix, p. 615)

So, when he turns to satire, Lawrence is an outsider attacking a diseased normality from the point of view of a set of values and norms that have not yet been realized. He occupies a similar isolated position as a satirist of the Machine Age to that of Lewis and Huxley, although his

diagnosis and prescription show significant differences.

The nature of Lawrence's satire reflects his position as an outsider. He confines himself to a rather narrow band of the satiric spectrum and ranges from blunt invective to burlesque. It is the kind of satire behind which the author's own voice is never hard to find because there is little attempt to embody criticism in elaborate fictions. He relies upon the staple techniques of ironic indirection such as sarcasm, mockery, parody, and caustic vituperation. It is satire in its most personalized form. Richard Aldington disapproves of Lawrence's Pansies and Nettles, thinking them to be little more than a "series of scoldings": "They are one long hammer, hammer, hammer of exasperation."¹³ Few commentators have shown any real enthusiasm for the rather brief satiric period in Lawrence's career.¹⁴ Some have shown complete distaste:

Before the end, the travelling back and forth was to find a substitute by entering blind alleys, oscillating, trembling with the fury of the little Pansies, fragments of doggerel out of which poured pus and venom. I have already said that Pansies were a species of journalism, a function by which Lawrence emptied his veins of the bile that turned his blood into a poisonous amber fluid. Had he concerned himself greatly with these minor excretions and given them a surface of wit, he might well have turned himself into another Alexander Pope. But his hatred could not flow into the neat channels of epigram--petty, malicious anger made him dull, and the visions that he held in his mind's eye dissolved into yellow waters that fed a sewer.¹⁵

It is ridiculous to suggest that Lawrence might have imitated the polished modes and procedures of Pope. Entertaining, civilized wit is the very thing that the Machine Age makes impossible for the modern satirist who is aware of the horrible implications of the cultural situation. Auden is sympathetic to Lawrence's "certain kind of satire" and explains why he has to use the particular forms that he does:

It is a different kind of satire from that written by Dryden and Pope. Their kind presupposes a universe, a city, governed by, or owing allegiance to, certain eternal laws of reason and morality; the purpose of their satire is to demonstrate that the individual or institution they are attacking violates these laws. Consequently, the stricter in form their verse, the more artful their technique, the more effective it is.

("D. H. Lawrence," Dyer's Hand, p. 295)

Lawrence is an outsider attacking the moribund normality of the Machine Age; his satiric procedures reflect his isolation and lack of common human ground. There is no living society left to share the values embodied in traditional forms. He is a master of satiric doggerel which, according to Auden, "presupposes no fixed laws": "It is the weapon of the outsider" ("D. H. Lawrence," Dyer's Hand, p. 295).

There are a handful of satiric pieces in which Lawrence gives vent to his frustration over the way the authorities have reacted towards his work. Occasional poems such as "My Naughty Book" or "Mr. Squire" are satiric tirades against specific people and real episodes. This cathartic blood-letting is part of a long tradition of personal, satiric feuding which does not change from age to age. However, most of Lawrence's satire is of a more general kind, which does share the preoccupations of other satirists of the modern world.

When he turns from his own frustrations to the condition of modern man, his satire takes on many of the characteristics that I have mentioned in relation to the other satirists in my discussion. In his non-satiric utterances Lawrence discusses the "extraordinary nature" of the modern condition. He, also, claims to be presenting the reader with a new "truth" about the modern world. Further, the reader is not to be set at his ease above the satiric target, but must be implicated in the examination or attack that is taking place in the poem he is reading. He exhorts everyone to "Search

for nothing any more, nothing / except truth. / Be very still, and try and get at the truth. / And the first question to ask yourself is: / How great a liar am I?" ("Search for Truth," Complete Poems, p. 661) Lawrence also articulates his awareness of the inadequacy of traditional genres for embodying the new "truth." He tells us, in a general sense, that "ours is a tragic age" but, like Huxley, he attacks "traditional" tragedy for distorting and obscuring the real nature of things. In a flat, literal poem, of little artistic merit, he explains the situation:

"Tragedy"

Tragedy seems to me a loud noise
louder than is seemly.

Tragedy looks to me like man
in love with his own defeat.
Which is only a sloppy way of being in love with yourself.

I can't very much care about the woes and tragedies
of Lear and Macbeth and Hamlet and Timon:
they cared so excessively themselves.

And when I think of the great tragedy of our material-mechanical
civilization
crushing out the natural human life
then sometimes I feel defeated; and then again I know
my shabby little defeat would do neither me any good
nor anybody else.

(Complete Poems, p. 508)

Because "Our epoch is over, / a cycle of evolution is finished" ("Dies Irae," Complete Poems, p. 510), the needs and occasions which gave rise to tragic art have also passed away. Present human activity is without meaning: "The tragedy is over, it has ceased to be tragic, the last pause / is upon us. / Pause, brethren, pause!" ("Nullus," Complete Poems, pp. 509-10). Things are so bad at the moment that they have moved beyond the sphere of traditional generic expression: "When things get very bad, they pass beyond

tragedy" and mankind is left to howl in a vacuum: "We can but howl the lugubrious howl of idiots, / the howl of the utterly lost / howling their nowhere-ness" ("At Last," Complete Poems, p. 514). It is within this transitional vacuum, beyond the reach of traditional genres, that Lawrence creates his satires.

Lawrence's characteristic note as a satirist is a healthy and energetic profanity against the complacent indifference of the "normals" who have acquiesced in the processes of the machine. The vacuum itself, created by the machine, is beyond the scope of satiric expression, as it is beyond tragedy. When Lawrence attempts to treat it directly, satire is replaced by explanation and profane denunciation. A poem such as "Wages," for instance, uses satiric techniques but is ultimately concerned with something that is too serious for satire:

The wages of work is cash.
 The wages of cash is want more cash.
 The wages of want more cash is vicious competition.
 The wages of vicious competition is--the world we live in.

The work-cash-want circle is the vicious circle
 that ever turned men into fiends.

Earning a wage is a prison occupation
 and a wage-earner is a sort of gaol-bird.
 Earning a salary is a prison overseer's job,
 a gaoler instead of a gaol-bird.

Living on your income is strolling grandly outside the prison
 in terror lest you have to go in. And since the work-prison covers
 almost every scrap of the living earth, you stroll up and down
 on a narrow beat, about the same as a prisoner taking his exercise.

This is called universal freedom.

(Complete Poems, p. 521)

The poem's satiric tone comes from the clever repetitions of the first stanza and from the grim irony of the final line commenting upon the circular

image of entrapment which forms the basis of the whole poem. The way in which Lawrence presents the entrapment within the body of the poem recalls a traditional satiric technique. One of the ways in which satires differ generally from comedies is that, at the end of a satire, the problems and conflicts with which the criticism deals have not been resolved. This often leads to a formal circular effect which, if emphasized, can be used to make a telling critical point. In Orwell's Animal Farm, for instance, this procedure is used to great advantage. It embodies the most significant point that Orwell has to make and summarizes the whole book for us. Lewis uses it in The Apes of God; the opening and concluding scenes with Lady Fredigonde frame and synoptically comment upon the satire of the intervening episodes. Lawrence is using this common satiric effect in "Wages," but he is using it as an analogue to present a "truth" about the modern person's commitment to a pointless life in the "work-cash-want circle." In pure satire the procedure would be an intentional distortion, but here it becomes a way of representing what Lawrence sees as a modern reality. When the circular movement is reinforced by the image of the prison, we are carried beyond the range of satire into a Kafkaesque nightmare of modern life.

The use to which Lawrence puts a traditional satiric technique in "Wages" recalls Huxley's practice of using situations from traditional satire as analogues for his vision of the modern "truth." In this sense it might be argued that the poem is not satiric at all; it merely has a satiric flavour about it. When Lawrence is purely satiric, he does not directly attack the "machine that in itself is nothing / a centre of the evil world-soul" ("Death is Not Evil, Evil is Mechanical," Complete Poems, pp. 713-14). His pure satires attack indifference to mechanical emptiness and his characteristic satiric profanity is a goad used against the myopic "normals."

In his tirades against what Tom Marshall has called "the parasitic inflexibility of spirit of the mechanical modern man,"¹⁶ Lawrence uses various forms of mockery. There is the type of caustic mimicry of which "The Oxford Voice" is, perhaps, the most memorable example: "We wouldn't insist on it for a moment / but we are / we are / you admit we are / superior" (Complete Poems, pp. 433-4). Or there is the dramatic vignette such as "The Editorial Office" in which the inertia of the establishment is burlesqued for much the same motives that lie behind "The Oxford Voice":

Applicant for post as literary critic: Here are my credentials,
Sir!--

Editor: Er-quite. But--er--biologically! Have you been fixed?--
arrange--you understand what I mean?

Applicant: I'm afraid I don't.

Editor (sternly): Have you been made safe for the great British
Public? Has everything objectionable been removed from you?

Applicant: In what way, quite?

Editor: By surgical operation. Did your parents have you
sterilised?

Applicant: I don't think so, Sir. I'm afraid not.

Editor: Good morning! Don't trouble to call again. We have the
welfare of the British Public at heart.

(Complete Poems, p. 582)

Equally typical is Lawrence's own brand of irreverent doggerel of which "Nottingham's New University" (Complete Poems, p. 488) is one of his more successful examples. Each of these forms is spiked with a great deal of derisive ribaldry which only a prude would describe as "pus" and "venom." In "The Young and Their Moral Guardians," for instance, we are told that "When a low bull-mongrel starts declaiming, / there's not a young man in the whole / of England with the guts to turn round on him, aiming / a good kick at his dirty old hole" (Complete Poems, pp. 493-4).

Although the gelded bourgeois is strongly mocked in Lawrence's satire, his badinage against the working classes is equally disrespectful. This can

be seen in one of his more successful satires that manages to avoid the heavy-handed preaching that is his main fault and shows how much more contemptuous he can sound when he maintains a formal control over his subject matter:

"The British Workman and the Government"

Hold my hand, Auntie, Auntie,
Auntie, hold my hand!
I feel I'm going to be naughty Auntie,
and you don't seem to understand.

Hold my hand and love me, Auntie,
love your little boy!
We want to be loved, especially, Auntie,
us whom you can't employ.

Idle we stand by the kerb-edge, Auntie,
dangling our useless hands.
But we don't mind so much if you love us, and we feel
that Auntie understands.

But wages go down, and really, Auntie,
we get a pretty thin time.
But so long as we know that Auntie loves us
we'll try to act up sublime.

Hold my hand, Auntie, Auntie,
Auntie, hold my hand!
Perhaps I'm going to be naughty, Auntie,
and you don't seem to understand.

If Lawrence's derision has one basic purpose, it is to taunt the dupes and cohorts of the machine. As he turns away from the machine's minions for a more direct confrontation with the monster itself, the nature of his satire changes; the ridicule subsides and a sardonic invective takes its place. When, for instance, he scorns a Machine-Age pastime such as the cinema, anger begins to replace humour:

"When I Went to the Film"

When I went to the film, and saw all the black-and-white feelings
that nobody felt,

and heard the audience sighing and sobbing with all the emotions
 they none of them felt,
 and saw them cuddling with rising passions they none of them for
 a moment felt,
 and caught them moaning from close-up kisses, black-and-white
 kisses that could not be felt,
 It was like being in heaven, which I am sure has a white
 atmosphere
 upon which shadows of people, pure personalities
 are cast in black and white, and move
 in flat ecstasy, supremely unfelt,
 and heavenly.

(Complete Poems, p. 443)

When he finally turns to a direct attack upon the machine, ridicule is replaced completely with "prophetic denunciation." The last section of "The Triumph of the Machine" has left satire behind completely for the flat proselytizing typical of Lawrence at his worst:

So mechanical man in triumph seated upon the seat of his machine
 will be driven mad from within himself, and sightless, and on
 that day
 the machines will tangle up in a long-drawn-out crash of collision
 and engines will rush at the solid houses, the edifice of our life
 will rock in the shock of the mad machine, and the house will
 come down.

(Complete Poems, p. 623)

Like Huxley, Lawrence is a reluctant satirist. His role is forced upon him by the exigencies of the age. Satire is only one tool which aids his general purpose. He uses it to goad his reader into an awareness of the destruction towards which the world is heedlessly heading. The satires of Pansies and Nettles appear distorted if they are read out of context. They are best understood in relation to their companion poems which explain them and widen their application. Both books create a general impression of human entrapment and social decay. Mechanical emasculation has destroyed man's identity: people are "corpse-like fishes hooked and being played / by some malignant fisherman" ("The People," Complete Poems, pp. 585-6).

In the fanatical vein reminiscent of some mad prophet who fails to see that his audience has fallen asleep, Lawrence links his views on human helplessness in the face of machinery to a whole tradition of literary Ludditism.

Satire gives way to "prophetic denunciation":

"Dark Satanic Mills"

The dark, satanic mills of Blake
 how much darker and more satanic, they are now!
 But oh, the streams that stream white-faced, in and out,
 in and out when the hooter hoots, white-faced, with a dreadful gush
 of multitudinous ignominy,
 what shall we think of these?
 They are millions to my one!

They are millions to my one! But oh
 what have they done to you, white-faced millions.
 mewed and mangled in the mills of man?
 What have they done to you, what have they done to you,
 what is this awful aspect of man?

Oh Jesus, didn't you see, when you talked of service
 this would be the result!
 When you said, Retró me, Satanás!
 this is what you gave him leave to do
 behind your back!

And now, the iron has entered into the soul
 and the machine has entangled the brain, and got it fast,
 and steel has twisted the loins of man, electricity has exploded
 the heart
 and out of the lips of people jerk strange mechanical noises
 in place of speech.

What is man, that thou art no longer mindful of him?
 and the son of man, that thou pitiest him not?
 Are these no longer men, these millions, millions?
 What are they then?

(Complete Poems, p. 628)

Notes

¹ Jerome Meckler, Aldous Huxley: Satire and Structure (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969), p. 123.

² W. H. Auden, "Notes on the Comic," The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays (New York: Random House, 1948), p. 384. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.

³ This did not prevent Lewis from praising Campbell's Georgiad as "a masterpiece of the satiric art, which may be placed beside the eighteenth-century pieces without its suffering by that proximity" [Men Without Art, (1934; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1964), p. 160]. But we have to reconcile this praise with Lewis' assertion, in the same collection of essays, that "there is no being 'Elizabethan,' or being 'Georgian,' any more, for the man who is in fact an artist. All that is over except as a pretty period-game" (Men Without Art, p. 126).

⁴ D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928; rpt. London: William Heinemann, 1960), p. 47. All further references to this book appear in the text.

⁵ Wyndham Lewis, Snooty Baronet (1932; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1971), p. 94.

⁶ Snooty Baronet, p. 94.

⁷ Wyndham Lewis, Paleface: The Philosophy of the 'Melting-Pot' (1929; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1969), p. 176. All further references to this book appear in the text.

⁸ D. H. Lawrence, "Education of the People," Phoenix: The Posthumous

Papers of D. H. Lawrence, ed. Edward D. McDonald (1936; rpt. New York: The Viking Press, 1972), p. 611. All further references to essays contained in this book appear in the text.

⁹ Lawrence, review of The Social Basis of Consciousness by Trigant Burrow, in Phoenix, p. 382.

¹⁰ Review of Social Basis of Consciousness, Phoenix, p. 380.

¹¹ Review of Social Basis of Consciousness, Phoenix, p. 381.

¹² D. H. Lawrence, "Fellow Men," The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, eds. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 638. All further references to poems contained in this book will appear in the text.

¹³ Richard Aldington, introduction to Last Poems in The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, p. 595.

¹⁴ When Pansies appeared, the reviewer in The Times Literary Supplement (July, 1929) employed the hackneyed terminology of those who regard all satire as unwholesome and completely negative. The inevitable comparison with Swift's "fascinated loathing" was made and the health of the satirist's own mind called into question: "He writes from a fixed point of prejudice, a small island in a sea of disgust" and, at times, his "hatred becomes uncontrollable" [Unsigned review in The Times Literary Supplement in D. H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage, ed. R. P. Draper (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 309]. At the other extreme, Vivian de Sola Pinto has praised the poems which Lawrence wrote "at the end of his life" as having "a peculiar quality of freshness and directness" because we can hear in them "the voice of a very wise man who is also humorous, completely disillusioned yet never cynical, a man who loves life but is saddened and embittered at the way in which it is being fouled and violated by mass

'civilization'" ["Poet Without a Mask," in The Critical Quarterly, III (Spring, 1961), 5-18, included in D. H. Lawrence: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Mark Spilka (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 138]. Even though "some of the Pansies and Nettles" may be "written in a mood of exasperation" many of them are "brilliant and incisive satiric commentaries on Western civilization." In a more balanced judgment, Tom Marshall is of the opinion that "Pansies has many more successes (some of them very slight pieces, to be sure) than has generally been acknowledged. Nettles is a much shorter and inferior collection; nevertheless, it contains a forceful vision of the industrial world Lawrence detested" [Tom Marshall, The Psychic Mariner: A Reading of the Poems of D. H. Lawrence (London: Heinemann, 1970), p. 165]. Marshall thinks that the "'More Pansies' part of Last Poems is a more "even collection than Pansies. It is also more hopeful in its assertion of an eventual machineless future" (p. 183).

¹⁵ Horace Gregory, Pilgrim of the Apocalypse: A Critical Study of D. H. Lawrence (London: Martin Secker, 1934), pp. 112-13.

¹⁶ Marshall, p. 172.

Conclusion

The perception that human beings can think and behave like machines has always been one basis for satiric humour. Aristophanes, in The Clouds, attacks Socrates for his "Model of the Universe according to the Convection Principle," and uses a "potbellied stove" as a reductive symbol of the mental rigidity which can conceive of the universe as a "Cosmic Oven" and of people as "little bits of charcoal blazing away."¹ Samuel Butler, in Hudibras, uses mechanical symbols to represent intellectual delusion. Sidrophel, whose theoretical concepts blind him to the truth of things, is compared with a dog trapped in a mechanical spit:

But, as a Dog that turns the spit,
Bestirs himself, and plys his feet,
To clime the Wheel; but all in vain,
His own weight brings him down again:
And still he's in the self same place,
Where at his setting out he was.²

Dr. Johnson, early in Rasselas, disposes of the "man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanick powers," by showing us what happens to people who place too much faith in mechanical knowledge: "He waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake."³ Swift, in particular, explains the ridiculous tragedy of human delusion in the "Mechanical Operation" of man's mind and the dangerous automatism deriving from myopic habits. He frequently uses mechanical symbols and images to satirize man's foolish refusal to see things as they really are. His machines represent the mental and social rigidity that

occurs when "a Man's Fancy gets astride on his Reason, when Imagination is at cuffs with the Senses, and common Understanding, as well as common Sense, is Kickt out of Doors."⁴ The vice and folly spawned by mechanical delusion

also form the basis of theories of humour. Henri Bergson, for instance (who has little else in common with Swift's conception of life), sees that "something mechanical encrusted upon the living"⁵ is the source of all that is ridiculous in human beings and in the "automatic regulation of society."⁶

In modern satire the destructive effects of the "Mechanical Operation" of the human mind continue to be a fundamental concern. But modern satirists face a world in which the mechanical has become the basis of all human activity and is accepted as the "normal" way of things by the majority of the inhabitants of the Machine Age. The machine has taken complete control of the human mind and has thus excluded any appeal to "Reason" and "common Sense" that have hitherto been its opponents. The continuing concern of satirists with various forms of automatism reveals a perennial target for their critical energies, but modern satirists are different in that they are in retreat from a victorious machine and must satirize without the benefit of a "right thinking" audience to whom they can appeal for sanity. Lawrence, for instance, both detests and fears the "robot-classes and the robot-masses,"⁷ but has to admit that, for the time being at least, the machine has achieved complete control:

"Oh Wonderful Machine!"

Oh wonderful machine, so self-sufficient, so sufficient unto
yourself!
You who have no feeling of the moon as she changes her quarters!
You who don't hear the sea's uneasiness!
You to whom the sun is merely something that makes the thermometer
rise!

Oh wonderful machine, you are man's idea of godliness,

you who feel nothing, who know nothing, who run on absolved
 from any other connection!
 Oh you godly and smooth machine, spinning on in your own Nirvana,
 turning the blue wheels of your own heaven
 almighty machine
 how is it you have to be looked after by some knock-kneed wretch
 at two pounds a week?

O great god of the machine
 what lousy archangels and angels you have to surround yourself with!
 And you can't possibly do without them!

(Complete Poems, p. 643)

Far more than a reductive metaphor, the machine here symbolizes an ubiquitous social force, and the "knock-kneed wretch" is both its victim and the minion who secures its perpetuation. Swift dismisses as ridiculous the mechanical "Enthusiasts" growing so "Epidemick"⁸ in the world around him, but Lawrence, grudgingly, has to allow the machine an effectiveness within its own terms; it is a "smooth" machine, spinning in its own "Nirvana." Lawrence, as a satirist, finds himself isolated in a mass society over which the machine has taken complete, withering control. Only "a few" are now his fellow men, "a few, only a few" ("Fellow Men," Complete Poems, p. 638).

If Lawrence is a satirist "in retreat" unable to act as spokesman for a consensus of values, this does not mean that his satire is without positives. Against the "base forcing of all human energy into a competition of mere acquisition,"⁹ he has a vision of other possibilities for human attainment and social organization. But these are only realizable in a possible future state that has freed itself from the machine. The present is destined to remain nothing more than a mechanical trap. Other modern satirists, with quite different alternatives from those suggested by Lawrence, also have a dark vision of the mechanical present. For Wyndham Lewis, for instance, the "base forcing" and mental rigidity are, for the majority of

mankind, an intrinsic part of what it means to be human. Lewis, in his theories of satire at least, emphasizes the inevitable encroachment of the machine on "the human idea" as long as present trends are allowed to persist.

The ubiquitous nature of the machine's influence and its total victory over "human" values affects the forms of modern satire. For Swift, machine images are weapons of ridicule used against what is obviously ridiculous conduct. However, when Lewis explains the basic theme of his Wild Body stories as being "the fascinating imbecility of the creaking men machines,"¹⁰ satire becomes something quite different from confident condemnation of human folly. Its function as a critical genre based upon ascertainable norms of value disintegrates. The conclusions we are meant to draw from the mechanical rituals of Lewis' Breton primitives in The Wild Body are explained by Lewis himself: "We have in most lives the spectacle of a pattern as circumscribed and complete as a theorem of Euclid" (p. 234). While Lawrence can find relief from the "robot-masses" in the vitalism of at least "a few," the feeling which informs Lewis' early satire is a "sense of absurdity" at the "madness of our life" which is "at the root of every true philosophy" (Wild Body, p. 245).

Lewis' account of "the comic" (he means the satiric branch of comedy) is a grim twist of Bergson's theory of people behaving as "things." Lewis sometimes seems to be saying that "man is ridiculous fundamentally, he is ridiculous because he is a man, instead of a thing" (Wild Body, p. 249) so that "all men are necessarily comic: for they are all things, or physical bodies, behaving as persons" (Wild Body, p. 247).

Lewis' early vision does not encompass all views of the mechanical in modern satire. It is not even a complete account of his own satiric practice.¹¹ However, it is symptomatic of certain tendencies that have

changed the nature and function of modern satire. For Lewis' belief that "every man is profoundly open to some criticism or ridicule from any opponent who is only different enough" (Wild Body, p. 246) demonstrates an awareness that the traditional justifications and explanations of satiric art can no longer be considered certain or normative.

The disappearance of a generally accepted "common sense" as a base for satiric criticism accounts for the rareness with which the genre appears in a "pure" form in modern literature. The inevitable facing of the fact that most men must remain "units" in an anonymous social machine, or that, perhaps, man is a machine in his very nature, is inimical to the formal procedures of traditional satire. The following extract from Roy Campbell's Georgiad, for instance, shows a glibness in its condemnation and ordered couplets that somehow seems over-confident for the modern world:

Now chatter fills the great baronial hall,
 The boarders at their evening gossip sprawl,
 While in the centre Georgiana sits,
 The high-priestess of their funereal wits--
 But suicide was in her looks and air
 And in her eyes the darkness of despair.
 Her gruff moustaches drooping from her mouth,
 One to the North, the other to the South,
 Seemed more the whiskers of some brine-wet seal
 Than of a priestess of the High Ideal--
 Spent passion from her eyes had sprung a leak
 And from her fountain-pen; that very week
 She had been jilted more than seven times
 And couldn't cope with it for all her rhymes. 12

This extract forms part of Campbell's attack upon the coterie values of "Georgiana's Summer School of Love." "Pedantry" masquerading as "passion," self-indulgence, affectation and dullness are dealt with in a conventional mock-heroic fashion. In the grotesque "moustaches," the reductive animal comparison and the crowded scene of sprawling gossips we recognize the vituperative barbs of formal satire. The solemn fools of Georgia, with a

few vices and follies of their own, have succeeded the denizens of Grub-street.

This is "pure" satire, doctrinaire and vitriolic, demanding from the reader an unequivocal response towards various travesties of good judgment and serious literary worth. The Georgiad uses traditional satiric modes in a vituperative condemnation of actual people. Georgiana is, after all, Victoria Sackville-West. It assumes and suggests alternative forms of behavior that are commensurate with common sense and human worth and which the Georgians could adopt. Such formal satire emphasizes individual responsibility for conduct in a way that most modern satire does not, or cannot. In the modern world, where it is quite normal to think of men as machines or as part of a Darwinian continuum of cause and effect or where social behavior is thought to be controlled by psychological complexes, the intransigent nature of Campbell's judgments might seem to be too pedantic. Campbell knows exactly the kind of satire he wishes to write, and which he feels is needed for modern conditions. Tired of the "gentle ping-pong of the Hecatasuries played over a table of fifty years against a dead and dying generation,"¹³ he wishes to return to the satire of the great tradition. He wants the "riss sardonious" that follows an overdose of strychnine,¹⁴ but the lack of credibility in his own positive values mitigates his categorical condemnation of others:

I'll own my fault--that what I love is rare:--
 The shapely limbs, the teasing flame of hair,
 The eyes whose flame a winged-aylgh reveals
 Riding to battle on their crystal wheels;
 The body tigered with blue stripes of napole,
 The limbs that spring resilient, to the tussle,
 The diamond valour that has for more worth
 Than golden crowns and dignity of birth.¹⁵

Even Wyndham Lewis, whom Campbell claims as a member of the "great tradition" of vitriolic satire, recognizes that this kind of personal attack is no longer useful and that the "habits that were Swift's" are difficult to imitate when, perhaps, life is "not worth the proverbial potato!"¹⁶

The confident tone of The Georgiad is not the usual tone of modern satire, which is more often a "vein of mockery,"¹⁷ or a mood "stiffening"¹⁸ other attitudes and intermingling with the conventions of other literary forms. Unable to grant men complete responsibility for their own conduct, most modern satirists have shifted their critical focus away from individuals and coteries towards broad social trends. Rather than expose moral turpitude, they have tried to make readers consider the direction in which modern civilization is heedlessly drifting. Eliot deals with the decline of western civilization; Orwell considers the major political issues of the twentieth century and the possible future of civilization; Waugh documents the decline of an English social hierarchy and its replacement by an anarchic jungle; Pound indicts a "botched civilization"; Lewis satirizes the "social decay of the insanitary trough between the two great wars."

This shift in motive and focus has affected the form of modern satire. Deprived of its base of moral common sense, modern satire is sometimes merely a tone of ironical disaffection rather than a formal genre. In turning from a criticism of men to a criticism of the forces which mould and control men, satire has become less distinct as a literary mode, and satirists have become extremely dissimilar concerning the social changes they would like to see. The satiric rearguard action between the wars against the "base forcing" of human worth is fraught with contradictions and anomalies over what should be done to cure society of its worship of the

machine. Modern satirists seem united in their conviction that there is something dreadfully wrong with society, but they differ greatly in their insights of how to deal with the world that the machine has created. But the same concerns recur in satirists of vastly different persuasions. The inter-war years can be seen as containing a variety of satiric responses to a cluster of common anxieties.

The recurrent anxieties and fears over the disappearance of human values centre on the "Mechanical Operation" of inhuman forces. The machine is associated with the habitual, with the robots, puppets and automatons incapable of free will and independent thought who are everywhere in modern satire. It is also associated with absence of feeling, with emotional dryness, deserts and desiccation. Encrusted upon the vital are the mechanically stagnant, the infertile and the old. To be mechanical is also to be the victim of conditioned response, to be controlled by basic instincts and destructive drives; hence the animalism and mindless sensuality of satiric apes who, with "sickly motion from the thighs," jackknife "upward at the knees."¹⁹ The mechanical and the animal are often combined. Lawrence, for instance, satirizes men as "monkeys minding machines" (Complete Poems, p. 450). Furthermore, the rule of the machine leaves man a prey to anarchy and destruction; hence the mood of approaching doom which hangs over modern satire.

The satiric impulse is only one reaction to these anxieties in modern literature. But, despite the infrequency of pure satire, there is, after "the satiric desert of Victoria,"²⁰ a resurgence of satire in response to the exigencies of the modern world. Too diverse to subserve a single quality or function, satire, in its new age, embraces miscellaneous motives and forms. The word may designate a formal genre, militant ironic intent,

or no more than a literary mood.²¹ Numerous gradations and mutations prevent any strict definition of its means and ends. However, as I have tried to show, it is possible to see many satirists responding to the period's common enemy and continuing satire's perennial battle against man's predilection for mechanical living. It is the various reactions to common anxieties symbolized by the machine which make the period, at least in tone, an "age of satire."

The satiric responses which I have examined are an attempt to counteract and warn against decay, confusion, isolation and loss of identity brought on by rampant mechanical-material forces. I have pointed to some of the changes which take place within the genre itself as a result of this reaction. Generally speaking, modern satire is less concerned with judgment and ridicule than it is with demonstrating to the reader that human personality is itself disintegrating under the pressure of Machine-Age forces. But the search for new satiric forms evident throughout the period is also a search for values that will make constructive criticism possible in the new mechanical world. Traditional satire frequently seeks to ridicule men by the use of mechanical and animal reductionism. This reductionism is difficult to sustain in an age in which a body of respectable opinion thinks that man is a machine, or, at best, an organized animal. Behaviorism, Marxism, Freudian psychology and the "social sciences" are seen as denying the individual responsibility for his social conduct. In so doing they remove the critical base that satire has traditionally assumed. The various versions of modern satire that I have mentioned are attempts to find a new base and a new function for satiric criticism. In the course of these changes the generic meaning of satire is altered and extended until its function and tone often become difficult to distinguish. The protean nature

of satire throughout the period reflects a general debate about what motivates and controls men and the possible role that art can play in relation to social organization.

The traditional targets of satire--mechanical behavior, dullness, violence, anarchic appetite--are considered by many to be ineradicable traits of what it means to be human, and most lives are destined to remain within patterns of behavior "as circumscribed and complete as a theorem of Euclid." There is an increasing assumption that the forces which make for the "Mechanical Operation" of the human mind are indestructible tendencies within human nature itself that have somehow triumphed and which will, henceforth, dictate the course of future social organization. Modern satire emerges both as a critical tool in the detection of this process and as an art form which makes a plea for individual autonomy that is desperately needed to keep the "human idea" alive during an age which, at their most optimistic, modern satirists see as a "period of transition."

Notes

¹ William Arrowsmith, ed., Three Comedies by Aristophanes (East Lansing: University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 16

² Samuel Butler, Hudibras, ed. John Wilders (1663; rpt. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 158.

³ Samuel Johnson, The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 33.

⁴ Jonathan Swift, A Tale of a Tub, To which is added, The Battle of the Books, and the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit, eds. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1920), p. 171.

⁵ Henri Bergson, "Laughter," in Comedy, ed. Wylie Sypher (New York: Doubleday and Anchor, 1956), p. 93.

⁶ Bergson, "Laughter," p. 90.

⁷ D. H. Lawrence, "Impulse," The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, eds. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 639. All further references to poems contained in this book appear in the text.

⁸ Jonathan Swift, "A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit & C.," in The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939), I, p. 175.

⁹ D. H. Lawrence, "Nottingham and the Mining Country," Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, ed. Edward McDonald (1936; rpt. New York: The Viking Press, 1972), p. 138.

¹⁰ Wyndham Lewis, The Wild Body (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1928),

p. 233. All further references to this book appear in the text.

¹¹ In a recent essay, "Machine and Puppet: A Comparative View" (1980), John Holloway argues that "Lewis's fiction employs two rather distinct models of the non-human or sub-human." He suggests that, on the one hand, there is the model "of the engine: active producer of the mechanical," and, on the other, "that of the puppet, mere product of the mechanical" [John Holloway, "Machine and Puppet: A Comparative View," in Wyndham Lewis: A Reevaluation, ed. Jeffrey Meyers (London: The Athlone Press, 1980), p. 10]. Holloway suggests that this is more than a "mere factitious contrast" and represents, within Lewis' work as a whole "two fundamental movements whose nature, for Lewis, was to diverge" (p. 12). Holloway's main point in suggesting the distinction is that "there is something, for Lewis, in a puppet that is beyond a machine: it can come to life," and "what most interested Lewis, in these matters, seems to have been two not parallel, but contrary movements: that of humanity into machine, and that of the puppet who, wonderfully, reanimates into humanity" (p. 13).

If this distinction exists, it suggests that, perhaps, we should not accept Lewis' satiric misanthropy--"man is ridiculous fundamentally" because he is a "thing" behaving like a "person"--at its face value. But Holloway is obviously intent upon qualifying somewhat Lewis' reputation as a writer with a very low opinion of his fellow humans: "One of the most interesting literary problems about Lewis is how his relatively infrequent passages of humanity and tenderness emerge out of the general tissue of his fictional satire" (p. 5). By "general tissue" Holloway means the whole of Lewis' fiction, and he invites us to treat it all as "fictional satire." He bases his case--and I see nothing to dispute here--for "passages of humanity and tenderness" upon Tarr (1918), The Revenge for Love (1937) and Self-Condemed

(1954). But these are very different books from the satires that I have been discussing. As Alan Munton has said in relation to The Apes of God and The Childermass, such works are not "novels" and are "more accurately described as satires, and we should not read The Childermass with the same expectations that we bring to a novel like The Revenge for Love" (Alan Munton, "A Reading of The Childermass," in Wyndham Lewis: A Revaluation, p. 121)

The "novels" contain satiric effects but we should be very wary of combining them into a "general tissue" with the "satires" as though Lewis was about a similar business in both. Even Holloway admits that his distinction between "machine" and "puppet" is not "wholly adequate" and that, rather than a clear division, "there is sure to be something of a continuous gradation--or more precisely, of a discontinuous one--and those who are interested will be able to call to mind the cases" (p. 12). As far as The Childermass, The Apes of God, Snooty Baronet and One-Way-Song are concerned, I do not think we will get very far if we try to "call to mind the cases" and go looking for "passages of humanity and tenderness." As a "satirist" Lewis is "misanthropic" or more accurately, "elitist," for he does not really examine other people in his "satires," in which, as William Chase says, "Lewis was never as interested in the determination of the truth as he was in the exercise of his self-hood" (William Chase, "On Lewis's Polemics: The Polemics Polemically Answered," in Wyndham Lewis: A Revaluation, p. 162). In the "novels" I think we are shown quite a different side of Lewis and we can expect "puppets" who, "wonderfully," reanimate into "humanity."

¹² Roy Campbell, The Georgiad, The Collected Poems of Roy Campbell (London: The Bodley Head, 1949), I, 228.

¹³ Roy Campbell, "Reviewer's Preface," in Satire and Fiction, Preceded by, The History of a Rejected Review, by Roy Campbell and Wyndham Lewis

(1930; rpt. London: The Arthur Press, 1972), p. 14.

¹⁴ Campbell, "Reviewer's Preface," p. 15.

¹⁵ Campbell, The Georgiad, Collected Poems, I, 218.

¹⁶ Wyndham Lewis, "Engine-Fight-Talk," One-Way-Song (1933; rpt. London: Methuen, 1960), p. 15.

¹⁷ James Reeves, A Vein of Mockery: Twentieth-Century Verse Satire (London: Heinemann, 1973).

¹⁸ Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 233: "In many respects ours is a satirical age; yet while a number of our writers have stiffened their work with satire, one could hardly call the twentieth century an age of great satire, or think of its leading authors as pre-eminently satirists."

¹⁹ T. S. Eliot, "Sweeney Erect," Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (London: Faber, 1970), p. 44.

²⁰ Humbert Wolfe, Notes on English Verse Satire (London: Hogarth Press, 1929), p. 134.

²¹ David Worcester, The Art of Satire (New York: Russell and Russell, 1960), p. 8:

Among writers of the twentieth century, some use the word 'satire' to signify the particular kind of verse known as formal satire, some will allow it to embrace any type of verse written with satiric intent; some would have it that satire is a formal genre of literature, one that, including prose as well as verse, yet possesses uniform characteristics; some, finally, convinced that any formal theory must involve contradictions and anomalies, identify a work of literature as satire by its motive and spirit alone.

See also, Leonard Feinberg, "Satire: The Inadequacy of Recent Definitions," Genre, 1, No. 1 (January, 1968), 31.

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